TITLE

Early retirement attributed to Rheumatoid Arthritis and its predictors

SUMMARY

Early retirement is a common consequence of Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) with economic implications for both the patient and society as a whole. Despite the more recent advances in management and treatment of RA, early retirement remains as a major problem when dealing with working-age RA patients. Older age, lower educational level, lower household income and physically demanding type of work have been associated with early retirement in international cohort studies. Scarce information is available on disease-related factors associated with early retirement. While initial aggressive drug treatment has been shown to be a protective factor, severe morning stiffness has been pointed out as a major detrimental factor. We intend to evaluate the prevalence of early retirement attributed to RA and its main predictors, especially if susceptible to medical intervention, in a national RA cohort. We believe disease activity plays an important role in this decision but we speculate other disease characteristics (like seropositivity, presence of erosions, extra-articular manifestations, disease duration) as well as work conditions may also contribute to this outcome. Patients retired previously to RA diagnosis, never-employed (including unpaid work and students) or without available information about actual work status will be excluded. Disease and work-related factors will be collected based on patient medical records and self-reporting therefore limitations such as underreporting and missing data are expected. In order to minimize this type of bias, actions designed to improve the quality and quantity of data included will be conducted. Therefore, this work will contribute not only to this project in particular but also to increase the quality of the Reuma.pt/RA database.