

# Online Education for Latin American Rheumatic Patients

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## Background and aims

Latin America is a continent with great inequalities such as access to health services, and also to educational resources to learn about self-care and better understand a rheumatic patient.

A crucial fact about these inequalities is that in Latin America there is 1 rheumatologist for every 106,838 people, according to "The Current Status of the Rheumatologist Workforce in Latin America: A PANLAR Collaborative Study."

With the COVID19 pandemic, patients faced even more difficulties in accessing a specialist and knowing their RMDs and self-care amid lockdowns and the rise of the new coronavirus.

## Methods

The ASOPAN Directory created a calendar of webinars with the most common topics on the RMDs and the most important world or international days of some RMDs.

In addition, we ask different PANLAR specialists to join and be speakers in our webinars to provide expert information.

Finally, we created a Pan American Congress of Rheumatic Patients, the Pan American Rheumatology Month webinar, and a special event called Latin America Talks About Arthritis.

1. Board Member of ASOPAN the Pan American Network of Rheumatic Patients Associations



## Results

The different webinars and the ASOPAN Panamerican Rheumatic Patient Congress were a success: 338.194 views, 3.697 comments and 8.765 interactions in our social media networks.

## Conclusion

Access to good quality information is of paramount importance for an adequate diagnosis and treatment of rheumatic diseases in our region. Difficulties in accessing a rheumatologist lead patients to seek information on the Internet to help them understand their symptoms, but we know that not all information on the Internet is good.

The webinars carried out by ASOPAN with the support of PANLAR have disseminated information from experts, have benefited the promotion of better self-care of patients already diagnosed, helping those who still do not have a diagnosis and, above all, have supported the health of the patient. navigation in the health system, expanding access and adequate social participation.

