

Patient Expert Programme Implementation

Background:

ORS finished 2020 EULAR KTP with Swedish SRA. As part of that program, six of our activists were trained to be patient experts. We have gained the knowledge to educate others about RA, hand anatomy, how to examine hand joints, and hand deformities caused by RA. This is important because educating others can help shorten the time it takes to diagnose and start timely RA treatment. Potentially, medical students become more interested in rheumatology earlier during their education.

Key Audiences:

Medical students at faculties, general practitioners, interested RA patients, potentially also secondary medical students.

Key Activities:

First, presenting Patient Expert Programme to decision makers at the **Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade** and asking for their consent for implementation.

Secondly, presenting the Patient Expert Programme to rheumatologists at the **Institute of Rheumatology in Belgrade**, because students come there for practical exercises in rheumatology.

Thirdly, the implementation of the program to all those listed as the audience.



Outcomes/Results:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation was not possible until June 2021, and then we held practical workshops for students who really liked it because they had more time to determine the material as well as to hear the different experiences from our patient experts. Unfortunately, the implementation was suspended again due to a new wave of the pandemic, but we renewed it in 2023. It is ongoing during the May at the Institute of Rheumatology in Belgrade.

This year, we started training our activists in the cities of Niš, Novi Sad and Kragujevac with the aim of implementing the program in those university cities as well. We have made an agreement with the **International Federation of Medical Students Associations - Serbia** to start program workshops regardless of class times.

Next Steps:

Continue what has been started and lobby the decision-makers that our future patients implement the program in Niš, Novi Sad and Kragujevac at the medical faculties. To start workshops with student members of IFMSA - Serbia and to collect feedback from participants together. In addition, we will introduce them RA Dashboard so that they early understand the importance of collecting RA statistical data. Presentation to decision makers in Serbian healthcare.