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## **DEVELOPMENT OF PATIENT-REPORTED QUALITY INDICATORS FOR HAND OSTEOARTHRITIS CARE USING THE RAND/UCLA METHOD – A EUROPEAN CONSENSUS STUDY**

Daniel Huseby Bordvik<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Yeliz Prior<sup>4</sup>, Anne Therese Tveter<sup>5</sup>, Ida K. Haugen<sup>6</sup>, Barbara Christensen<sup>7</sup>, Francis Berenbaum<sup>8</sup>, Hellen Laheij<sup>9</sup>, John Edwards<sup>10</sup>, Krysia Dziedzic<sup>10</sup>, Marco Ritt<sup>11</sup>, Margreet Kloppenburg<sup>12</sup>, Mathilda Bjork<sup>13</sup>, Nina Osteras<sup>14</sup>, Rachel Bamford<sup>15</sup>, Tanja Stamm<sup>16</sup>, Thalita Blanck<sup>14</sup>, Tove Borgen<sup>14</sup>, Carol Graham<sup>10</sup>, Nazemin Gilanliogullari<sup>4,17</sup>, Ingvild Kjeklen<sup>14</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Diakonhjemmet Hospital, Health Services Research and Innovation Unit, Oslo, Norway, <sup>2</sup>Oslo Metropolitan University OsloMET, Health Sciences, Oslo, Norway, <sup>3</sup>Rehabilitation West, Haugesund Hospital of Rheumatological Diseases, Haugesund, Norway, <sup>4</sup>Centre for Human Movement and Rehabilitation, School of Health and Society, University of Salford, Salford, United Kingdom, <sup>5</sup>Diakonhjemmet hospital, Oslo, <sup>6</sup>Diakonhjemmet hospital, Oslo, Norway, <sup>7</sup>Diakonhjemmet hospital, Oslo, Norway, <sup>8</sup>Sorbonne University, Paris, France, <sup>9</sup>Leiden University, Leiden, Netherlands, <sup>10</sup>Keele University, Newcastle, United Kingdom, <sup>11</sup>Dept. of plastic, reconstructive and hand surgery, Amsterdam, Netherlands, <sup>12</sup>Leiden University, dept. of rheumatology, Leiden, Netherlands, <sup>13</sup>Linköping University, Linköping, Sweden, <sup>14</sup>Diakonhjemmet Hospital, Oslo, Norway, <sup>15</sup>Nottingham CityCare, Nottingham, United Kingdom, <sup>16</sup>University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria, <sup>17</sup>Faculty of Health Sciences, Dept. of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus, TR-10, Mersin, Turkey

### **Background:**

Hand osteoarthritis (OA) is a prevalent rheumatic disease, yet access to recommended treatments is often poor for those affected. To enhance care quality, sets of quality indicators (QIs) grounded in current treatment guidelines are crucial. They serve as tools to guide clinical practice and evaluate care quality. While validated QI sets exist for OA, i.e., OA-QI v.2., none specifically tailor hand OA. This gap underlines the need for developing hand OA-specific QIs.

### **Objectives:**

We aimed to adapt the OsteoArthritis Quality Indicator (OA-QI) v.2 questionnaire, making it suitable for assessing the patient-reported quality of hand OA care.

### **Methods:**

The adaptation began with the existing OA-QI set, augmented by a literature review to identify potential QIs for hand OA, following the Rand/UCLA Appropriateness Method. A European multidisciplinary expert panel, including researchers, clinicians, and patient research partners, engaged in meetings and anonymous ratings to reach a consensus. They evaluated each QI on importance, validity, usefulness, and feasibility using a 9-point Likert scale. Cognitive debriefing interviews with hand OA patients are ongoing to ensure clarity of the questionnaire items. This study was funded by a EULAR health professional research grant

### **Results:**

An initial search yielded 1670 articles, with none relevant for our QI set, necessitating 4 voting rounds to finalise 16 QI items (table 1). These items align with international hand OA care standards and are presented in English and Norwegian, targeting users in the UK and Norway. Preliminary feedback from cognitive interviews suggests minor amendments for clarity

**Table 1:** The 16 items reaching consensus to represent the new quality indicators for the clinical care of hand OA. Respondents tick off “yes”, “no”, or “don’t remember”/“no such problems”/“not relevant” (not shown).

Number	Questions
1	Have you been offered information about hand osteoarthritis?
2	Have you been made aware that it is important to continue to use your hands in

	daily activities?
3	Have you been made aware that there are different treatment options for hand osteoarthritis?
4	Have you been offered support to self-manage your hand osteoarthritis?
5	Have you been offered guidance on how to exercise your hands?
6	If you have problems using your hands in daily activities, have these problems been assessed by a health professional?
7	If you have problems using your hands in daily activities, have you been offered guidance on use of assistive devices and alternative working methods?
8	If you have osteoarthritis in your thumb base joint, have you been offered a thumb splint for long term use to relieve pain?
9	If you have trouble working due to your hand osteoarthritis, have you been offered advice about how to remain in or return to work?
10	If you have pain in your hand joints, has it been assessed by a health professional?
11	If you have pain in your hand joints, was topical non-steroidal anti-inflammatory gel the first medication that was offered?
12	If you have pain that was not sufficiently relieved by topical gel, have you been offered oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication?
13	If you use oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication, have you been offered information about the effects and possible side-effects of this medication?
14	If you have pain in your hand joints that was not sufficiently relieved by topical gel or oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication, have you been offered a steroid injection for short term pain relief?
15	If you are severely troubled by your hand osteoarthritis and non-surgical treatment is ineffective or unsuitable, have you been offered a referral for a surgical opinion?
16	Have you been offered a planned follow up tailored to your needs and preferences concerning your hand osteoarthritis?

**Conclusion:**

We successfully adapted the OA-QI v.2 into a 16-item QI set, reflecting the international care standards for hand OA. This tool can quantify the care quality for hand OA. Future studies will evaluate the psychometric properties of the new QI set.

**References:**

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