

Innovative software improves chronic rheumatic disease care

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was a 3 percent relative increase in patients with low disease activity.

"Post implementation, significant improvements in quality of care, efficiency of care, and productivity were demonstrated," the authors write.

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(HealthDay)—For patients with chronic rheumatic disease, innovative software that aggregates, stores, and displays information can improve quality of care, according to research published online Nov. 24 in *Arthritis Care & Research*.

Eric D. Newman, M.D., from the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pa., and colleagues developed electronic data capture, aggregation, display, and documentation software to improve the quality of care for [patients](#) with [rheumatic disease](#). The software integrated and reassembled information from a patient-completed touchscreen questionnaire and from nurse, physician, and electronic health records into a series of actionable views. The software was assessed and implemented in three rheumatology departments and was incorporated into routine care.

Over two years, 19,786 touchscreen questionnaires were completed by 6,725 patients. The researchers found that 86 percent of patients and rheumatologists adopted the software for use. There was a downward trend in chart review and documentation time, and a 26 percent increase in productivity. Although preimplementation values were high, there was no change in patient satisfaction, activation, or adherence. There was a strong correlation between software use and disease control ($P = 0.0095$); per quarter, there

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