PHYSICIANS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS FIBROMYALGIA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDIES

Arnav Agarwal, B.H.Sc.

Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Pain Research and Care, McMaster University

Student/Trainee

INTRODUCTION / AIM

Fibromyalgia is a syndrome characterized by chronic widespread pain and excessive tenderness at 11 of 18 specific muscle-tendon sites, for which no clear cause can be found. The lack of defined pathology, or consensus regarding definitive treatment, presents challenges for clinicians. In this systematic review, we aim to synthesize attitudes of physicians and physicians-in-training towards fibromyalgia.

METHODS

We searched EMBASE and MEDLINE for studies published through to July 20, 2015. We included all cross-sectional surveys or systematic reviews of such studies targeting physician and/or physician-in-training perspectives on fibromyalgia – specifically, the aetiology of the diagnosis, primary management focus, and health care professional roles and confidence in competencies. Assessment for study inclusion, data abstraction and risk-of-bias assessment were performed in duplicate by trained reviewers using standardized forms.

RESULTS

Twenty-nine eligible cross-sectional studies were identified for our review. The results of our systematic review are pending upon completion of data abstraction and analysis, which will be completed by May 2016.

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS

Our findings will identify physician attitudes towards fibromyalgia, including management approaches, perceived roles, and areas in which beliefs or practices are highly divergent, or inconsistent with current best evidence. These results will prove invaluable for guiding educational efforts to promote optimal management of patients with fibromyalgia.

OTHER AUTHORS

Lucas Gallo
Sae H. Shin
Matthew D. Cooper
Gordon H. Guyatt