ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES REGARDING FIBROMYALGIA AMONG CANADIAN RHEUMATOLOGISTS: A CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION / AIM

Canadian and American rheumatological regulatory body guidelines have recently proposed that fibromyalgia patient care be centred in the primary care setting with minimal rheumatologist and other specialist involvement, contrasting previous practice patterns where rheumatologists have often been intimately involved in management and treatment. In this cross-sectional study, we aim to explore the current management strategies and attitudes of practicing Canadian rheumatologists towards fibromyalgia, specifically regarding its aetiology (biological versus psychosocial), available management strategies and practices (degree of utilization and perceived efficacy), and degree of rheumatologist involvement in treatment.

METHODS

With the assistance of epidemiologists, content experts and senior rheumatologists, we developed a 14-item English-language survey examining attitudes and management practices towards fibromyalgia. Survey questions addressed: a) fibromyalgia as a condition (objectively defined diagnosis versus diagnosis of exclusion; utility of the diagnosis; biomedical versus psychosocial condition); b) management practices; c) rheumatologist roles; and d) impact of 2012 Canadian Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Fibromyalgia Syndrome on care provision. The preliminary survey was piloted by three rheumatologists, and we have submitted the final survey and our study for ethics approval. Following receipt of ethics approval, we will deliver our survey by fax to all practicing Canadian rheumatologists, with up to two follow-up faxes to non-respondents.

RESULTS

Pending upon study completion, which will occur by May 2016.

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS

Our survey will inform current attitudes and practices of Canadian rheumatologists towards fibromyalgia, and the concordance between practice and guideline recommendations regarding the role of rheumatologists in the care pathway.

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