

Public Abstract

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Title:The Perceived Role of Personal Social Identity in the Promotion of Arthritis Self-Management Programs

This research attempts to understand how a person with arthritis perceives his or her own social role identity and how that might relate to the underutilization of arthritis self-management programs. The ultimate goal of this research is to learn how people with arthritis think about themselves and their disease within a particular social role (i.e. parent, spouse, employee, or friend) and how those perceptions shape health-related beliefs and behaviors.

Arthritis self-management programs are designed for many purposes, including reducing pain and increasing mobility. However, only 1 in 10 people with arthritis already practice certain self-management strategies, just not formally.

In-depth interviews and field observations were used in conjunction to understand how people perceive arthritis self-management programs and how that influences their motivation to participate in such programs. The message of arthritis self-management programs should be individually designed for various stages of the disease and specific to fulfilling social roles. This message would resonate with the target demographic.