

# THE ACCEPTABILITY OF ePRO IN FUNCTIONALLY IMPAIRED AND OLDER POPULATIONS

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## BACKGROUND

- Electronic formats of patient reported outcome (PRO) measures are becoming commonplace, offering many advantages over paper administration such as avoiding missing data, receiving real-time data, and implementing complex skip patterns.<sup>1</sup>
- Despite these advantages, there is concern that people with little computer experience, older people and those from certain patient populations will have difficulty completing computerised measures<sup>2</sup>.
- Previous studies have shown patients with conditions such as cancer and chronic pain have successfully completed electronic PRO (ePRO) measures.<sup>3,4</sup> Patients who are older and not used a computer before have been reported to find ePRO measures easy to complete.<sup>3,5</sup> Preferences have been shown for ePRO measures over paper versions.<sup>6</sup>
- This study was aimed at exploring whether people from functionally impaired and older populations have any problems using ePRO devices.

## METHOD

- Usability testing interviews were conducted with patients with multiple sclerosis (MS), rheumatoid arthritis (RA), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and opioid induced constipation (OIC).
- Ten patients from each condition were recruited to complete an ePRO using a tablet or hand-held device. All patients were given a demonstration of how the device is used.
- Upon completing the questionnaires, patients were asked about ease of navigation using the device, ease of using touch screen using stylus or finger, and about the clarity of the text and images.

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows the mean age of patients and the number of patients that had used a touch screen device before completing the study.

Table 1

Disease area	Mean age	# used touch screen device before
MS	42.4	8 / 10
RA	62.0	0 / 10
COPD	67.7	2 / 10
OIC	61.4	3 / 10

When asked about usability of the device, participants commented:

*"It's more easier (on the tablet) to look and answer a question. It's very straight forward"* (RA)

*"The fact that it's all touchscreen. I'd much rather be doing that than... having to be filling in on paper"* (OIC)

*"It was pretty self-explanatory. It was virtually telling you what the next process is to do so it was pretty easy to go through"* (MS)

*"What you had to read was standing out proud, no problem, and that the pointer was very handy"* (COPD)

*"I've got a dodgy eye at the moment so I'm a bit blurry but yes I could still read it fine"* (MS)

*"I think that it was just simple 'cause it's just a case of touching and then... you move down, so it was, like, sort of, self-explanatory"* (COPD)

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the findings from these studies show that patients with these conditions are successfully able to complete ePRO measures. This finding is in line with previous research with patients with cancer<sup>3,5</sup>, and rheumatology studies<sup>6</sup>.

The median age of the disease areas in this study was 63 years, and most of these patients had not used such devices before, confirming that older patients and those less familiar are comfortable switching to electronic formats. Participants had a preference for using electronic formats, which is also consistent with previous research<sup>2</sup>.

## References

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