

VA Rheumatology Consults

Goals & Objectives

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Description of Rotation & Educational Experience

The rheumatology consult rotation is an elective experience for the internal medicine residency. Residents on this rotation will learn to diagnose, treat and manage various rheumatologic conditions in hospitalized and ambulatory patients. Residents will obtain experiential learning from direct, hands on patient care in addition to a variety of didactic experiences. The curriculum will focus on understanding the approach to patient care on an inpatient consult service and subspecialty clinics with residents learning efficient, prioritized and patient-centered care based on evidence-based medicine and guidelines. Residents will learn the approach to common rheumatologic conditions. Residents will be supervised by the faculty attending(s) and fellow(s) assigned to their service for the duration of the rotation.

Schedule

- Two or three-week rotation, Monday- Friday with minimum of one day off per week
- Inpatient consults and ambulatory sub-specialty clinic as determined by the rotation supervisor

Rotation Curricular Goals

- Learn to assess and manage common conditions requiring rheumatology consultation
- Learn to competently conduct a targeted exam to evaluate for common rheumatologic disorders with specific focus on the musculoskeletal and skin exam
- Understand the indications, limitations and interpretation of diagnostic testing for common rheumatologic conditions
- To learn to provide care that is cost-effective and evidence-based
- To develop an understanding in transitions of care with patients including discharge planning related to common rheumatologic conditions
- Learn to function effectively as part of an inter-disciplinary team
- Learn to effectively provide consultative care
- Learn to maintain accurate, timely and appropriate medical records

Competency by PGY level

PGY1

Core Competency: Patient Care

Residents will be able to:

- Acquire accurate and relevant history from patients related to core rheumatologic conditions
- Perform accurate and appropriate physical exam related to common rheumatologic conditions
- Develop an appropriate care plan for basic and common rheumatologic conditions
- Recognize situations requiring urgent or emergent care including, but not limited to: vasculitis, catastrophic antiphospholipid syndrome, septic arthritis
- Provide consultative services for patients with clinical problems requiring rheumatology evaluation
- Provide appropriate care for common rheumatologic diagnosis in the inpatient and outpatient setting

Core Competency: Medical Knowledge

Residents will:

- Learn the scientific knowledge required to provide care for common rheumatologic conditions
- Be able to interpret basic diagnostic tests accurately related to diagnosing and managing rheumatologic conditions
- Understand the rationale and risks associated with common rheumatologic procedures which may include: arthrocentesis, synovial fluid analysis, joint ultrasound

Core Competency: Practice Based Learning & Improvement

Residents will:

- Learn to self-reflect upon one's practice
- Solicit feedback and be open to unsolicited feedback
- Be able to utilize information technology effectively
- Begin to utilize clinical trials, guidelines and studies in decision making

Core Competency: Systems Based Practice

Residents will:

- Be able to work effectively within an inter-professional team
- Learn the roles and responsibilities of the health care team
- Learn key concepts of high value care and minimize unnecessary diagnostic and therapeutic tests

Core Competency: Interpersonal & Communication Skills

Residents will:

- Learn to engage patients in shared decision making
- Be able to develop therapeutic relations
- Engage in collaborative communication with appropriate members of the team
- Learn key documentation skills and ensure health records are organized, accurate and complete for consultative notes

Core Competency: Professionalism

Residents will:

- Demonstrate respect and be responsive to needs and concerns of patients, caregivers and members of the inter-professional team
- Complete tasks in a timely manner
- Demonstrate sensitivity to each patient's unique characteristics and needs
- Show accountability for the care of patients and be honest in all clinical interactions

PGY 2 & PGY3

Core Competency: Patient Care

Residents will be able to:

- Take a history that is efficient, prioritized and hypothesis driven based on the consult question
- Perform accurate physical exams targeted to the patient's complaints and consult evaluation
- Synthesize all sources of data to generate a prioritized differential diagnosis
- Effectively use history and physical exam skills to minimize the need for further diagnostic testing
- Modify the care plan based on patient's clinical course and additional data throughout the patient's hospitalization
- Manage common oncologic conditions in the inpatient and ambulatory setting
- Provide recommendations as a consultative service to the primary team or provider

Core Competency: Medical Knowledge

Residents will:

- Possess the scientific knowledge required to provide care for medical conditions and comprehensive care related to the rheumatologic diagnosis
- Be able to interpret common diagnostic tests accurately related to the consult setting
- Understand the concept of pre-test probability and test performance characteristics
- Understand the rational and risks associated with common consult procedures

Core Competency: Practice Based Learning & Improvement

Residents will:

- Identify opportunities for learning and consistently acts upon those reflections
- Solicit feedback from all members of the team and patients
- Consistently incorporate feedback and change behavior to improve their practice
- Learn to utilize guidelines, best practices and critically appraise clinical research studies and reports

Core Competency: Systems Based Practice

Residents will be able to:

- Work effectively within an inter-professional team
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of the team and seeks input from all members
- Advocate for safe patient care
- Reflect upon and learn from their own incidents that may lead to medical error
- Work to address patient specific barriers to cost-effective care
- Utilize resources to ensure safe care coordination with transition in patient care across inpatient settings and discharge
- Incorporate cost-awareness principles into decision making for patients in the hospitalized setting

Core Competency: Interpersonal & Communication Skills

Residents will be able to:

- Identify and incorporates patient preference in shared decision making
- Establish a therapeutic relationship with patients and caregivers including persons of different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds
- Actively and consistently engage in collaborative communication with all members of the inpatient care team
- Document succinct, relevant and patient specific information that effectively communicate clinical reasoning in their documentation

Core Competency: Professionalism

Residents will be able to:

- Demonstrate empathy, compassion and respect to patients and caregivers in all situations
- Incorporate input of members from the inter-professional team into the plan of care as appropriate
- Prioritize multiple competing demands and complete these tasks in a timely and effective manner
- Appropriately modify the care plan to account for a patient's unique characteristics and needs
- Demonstrate integrity, honesty and accountability to patients and the profession

Assessment Methods

PGY1:

Direct observation and feedback

Written evaluations- faculty supervisor

Verbal feedback- fellows and faculty

PGY2 and 3:

Direct observation and feedback

Written evaluations- faculty supervisor

Verbal feedback- fellows and faculty

Core procedures: residents must know indications, complications, contraindications, alternatives and interpretation for the following:

- Arthrocentesis
- Joint injection (steroids)
- Synovial fluid analysis and light microscopy

Key Topics

Osteoarthritis

Rheumatoid Arthritis

Spondyloarthropathies

Septic Arthritis

Crystal Arthropathy- Gout, CPPD

Sjogren's syndrome

Vasculitis

Polymyalgia Rheumatica

SLE

Antiphospholipid Syndrome

Inflammatory Myositis and Myopathies

Fibromyalgia

Musculoskeletal Pain