

2.21 The combined Rheumatology-Respiratory Clinic Cork University Hospital – an Audit

Dr Peter Leahy¹, Dr Elizabeth Mulcahy², Prof Sinead Harney², Dr Michael Henry²

¹Cork University Hospital, Cork, Ireland. ²CUH, Cork, Ireland

Background: The combined rheumatology-respiratory clinic (CRRC) in Cork University Hospital (CUH) has been in operation for many years. Patients with the rarer connective tissue diseases (CTD) who have lung involvement are seen in this clinic. Combined clinics have been shown to have substantial diagnostic and therapeutic impacts on the management of patients with interstitial lung disease (ILD). The aim of this audit was to clarify the clinic population demographics, diagnoses and treatments of those patients.

Methods: We reviewed the lists of patients attending the combined rheumatology-respiratory clinic in Cork University Hospital from the previous year (June 2023- June 2024). From clinic letters (to which the authors have regular access to), a compilation of demographic data, clinical diagnoses (both rheumatological and respiratory) and anti-fibrotic medication use amongst the patients with a diagnosis of ILD was made. Basic statistics were performed to analyse the data **Results:** Seventy-one (71) patients (42 female, 29 male) with an average age of 64.2 years (range 26-89) attended the CRRC in the year June 2023-2024. Eighteen (18) patients have a diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis (RA), 11 with systemic sclerosis/scleroderma, 10 with Sjogren's, 4 with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), 5 with Raynaud's/Anti-synthetase syndrome, 6 with CREST syndrome and 5 with dermatomyositis associated ILD. There were 9 patients with an undifferentiated CTD. ILD was the most common respiratory diagnosis with 41 patients documented. Of these ILD patients, 6 were currently on anti-fibrotic therapy with another 2 patients previously trialled on same. Eight (8) patients did not have a definite unifying diagnosis. There were 2 patients with a documented diagnosis of pulmonary hypertension. **Conclusion:** A multidisciplinary environment is recommended by international ILD guidelines. In CUH, this combined service results in achieving diagnosis and treatment for challenging disease processes. Future audit and investigation is required to determine if more patients are eligible for anti-fibrotic therapy. **Keywords:** Rheumatology, interstitial lung disease, combined clinic, connective tissue disease **Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest