Report of the 2nd EULAR Course on Health Economics in Rheumatology  
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The 2nd EULAR course on Health Economics in Rheumatology that took place in the amazing city of Prague was a unique opportunity to explore the essentials of a truly appealing discipline. This two-day course is designated for fellows with diverse backgrounds and different degree of experience in health economics applied to rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs). The study of economics related to health is a discipline with growing interest, which was evidenced by the variety of people who gathered from all over the world. Given that Rheumatology is a speciality where decisions which imply high expenses and costs have to be made, I found it essential to understand some of the main concepts of health economics that were reviewed and studied during the course. The recommended basal level was properly advertised and the course aimed for students with beginner or intermediate experience. This fact encouraged me to apply, since I didn't know much about health economics before the course. During the course, the professors perfectly adapted to the different levels of the assistants.

Several major topics on health economics were addressed during eight comprehensive lectures. We gained an important insight into the issues facing our health system when we evaluated how the scarcity of resources affects our decision making for value-based healthcare. Also, the different types of economic evaluations were introduced in a theoretical way to proceed to discuss the material afterwards. Furthermore, we developed critical appraisal of studies and performed a cost effectiveness analysis during the workshop sessions, where the students were divided into smaller groups and discussed about the topics with faculty members.

Four world-leading experts of the field of epidemiology, rheumatology and health economics delivered the course and were really approachable and helpful. They provided students with an incredibly gratifying and enjoyable learning experience. The programme covered a great deal of what clinical doctors need to know for their practice, and sets a stepping stone for those who want to specialize in health economics. I would highly recommend this course for any professional with an interest in health economics applied to RMDs. Take advantage of the amazing opportunity as several EMEUNET members have already done!
I am a rheumatologist who trained in Mexico and I am currently an MD-PhD candidate of the University of Geneva in Switzerland. I work on clinical research projects in rheumatoid arthritis (RA). My projects are mainly about risk factors to developing autoimmunity associated with RA in a cohort of first degree relatives of patients with RA (SCREEN-RA). I am particularly interested in female hormonal factors. I have also worked with analysing the role of different factors on the progression of the disease in a cohort of patients (SCQM-RA). As my clinical training was in a third world country and my research training in a first world country, I am aware of the importance of health economics studies that could support policy maker decisions related with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs). However, I had just a little or rather no experience about health economics before taking this course.

When I saw information about the EULAR Course on Health Economics offered to young rheumatologists and researchers new to the field and even for patient research partners, I was very interested about it to learn the ‘basics’. In addition, EULAR offered grants to cover course fees and accommodation, and I was awarded with one. And on top, the course was in Prague, in a hotel with a very good location, close to the city centre and to the airport.

The course accomplished its aim of explaining the basic and key principles of health economic analysis. It was delivered as a lecture format, but in a very interactive way and with very useful workshops to understand and discuss cost of illness, cost-effectiveness and cost-utility in different settings. I must add that the faculty explained very clearly each topic presented. The participants were from various backgrounds, including economists, mathematicians, patients, epidemiologists and physicians from different countries; however, most of them were very active and contributed with comments and questions in every session. At the end, I was very satisfied with the course and now I would like to continue learning more about health economics.
Șalaru Virginia
I’m currently working as an Assistant Professor at the Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Republic of Moldova. I have a PhD in Rheumatology, with specific interest in health economics.

In my opinion, the materials of the course were diverse and was comprised of elements for beginner and intermediate levels. The faculty staff dedicated their time to interactive teaching and coaching activities, which made the lessons attractive. The course met entirely my learning objectives, as the program was well scheduled and the objectives of the course were appropriate for my experience and my future needs.

During the course, I acquired knowledge about methods of calculating the cost of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs) and of assessing the cost-effectiveness and the cost utility, which was my primary goal.

The format of the course included theoretical lessons, as well as workshops, which made the course more practical. Concerning the facilities, I would like to mention that I was a recipient of the EULAR travel bursary, and I had to pay only the travel fees. However, I think I would have still paid the course registration fee to participate, since it was worth attending.