The worldwide prevalence of lupus is 140 out of 100,000. Lupus disproportionately impacts African American, Hispanic, and Native American women. Healthcare providers outside of rheumatology may only get 45-minutes of training on lupus in medical school. Average lupus diagnosis can take 2-6 years and multiple providers. Delay in diagnosis and treatment can lead to a 5x increased risk of death. During their training, many medical students only spend approximately 90-minutes discussing lupus. Accordingly, the American College of Rheumatology created the Lupus Initiative to train physicians on how to better recognize the signs and symptoms especially in persons of color and how to know when it is appropriate to refer patients to a Rheumatologist. Through this project, we analyzed and enhanced the didactic training tools for participating physicians. The revised PowerPoint presentations were approved by the American College of Rheumatology’s CME board for 1 CME credit. We then disseminated this program model throughout various regions of the United States. Our model is now significantly improving physicians’ efficacy in diagnosing and treating lupus and a host of other rheumatic disorders.

ABSTRACT

Lupus impacts 1 in 250 young, African American women in the United States. This condition also disproportionately impacts Hispanic / Latino, Asian, and Native American women. Not every woman who presents to a physician with fatigue and joint pain will have lupus, but women of color who are of childbearing age with signs and symptoms of lupus should be worked up for the condition and subsequently referred to a Rheumatologist. Healthcare providers outside of rheumatology receive very little training in lupus and other rheumatologic disorders. The American College of Rheumatology enlisted rheumatology fellows to deliver an educational seminar about lupus that aims to help healthcare providers:
- Better recognize the signs and symptoms of lupus
- Improve timely and accurate referral to a rheumatologist for diagnosis and treatment

BACKGROUND

- The worldwide prevalence of lupus is 140 out of 100,000. Lupus disproportionately impacts African American, Hispanic, and Native American women.
- Females from these ethnic groups are three times more likely than their white counterparts to die from lupus because of limited socioeconomic status and limited access to primary care physicians and specialists.
- Not every woman who presents to a physician with fatigue and joint pain will have lupus, but women of color who are of childbearing age with signs and symptoms of lupus should be worked up for the condition and subsequently referred to a Rheumatologist.
- Healthcare providers outside of rheumatology receive very little training in lupus and other rheumatologic disorders.
- The American College of Rheumatology enlisted rheumatology fellows to deliver an educational seminar about lupus that aims to help healthcare providers:
  - Better recognize the signs and symptoms of lupus
  - Improve timely and accurate referral to a rheumatologist for diagnosis and treatment

OBJECTIVES

We aimed for physicians to have the capacity to meet each of the following objectives by the end of the training:
- Identify the presenting signs and symptoms of lupus
- Refer a suspected case of lupus to a rheumatologist
- Initiate a work-up for lupus
- Understand lupus epidemiology, health disparities, disease characteristics and genetics

METHODS

- Didactic tool for this training: 65-slide comprehensive PowerPoint presentation
  - Patient testimonial videos
  - Clinical screening tools
  - Education on symptomatology
  - Physicians participated in pre- and post- seminar assessments
  - There was a significant decrease in knowledge on questions 7 and 9 of the pre- and post-test
  - Scanned the presentation and made recommendations for improvement

RESULTS

- Key Areas for Improvement:
  - Provide more clarity concerning lupus-specific vs. broader rheumatic disease symptomatology
  - Further delineate when physicians should initiate a lupus work-up
- Accreditation:
  - Revised PowerPoint approved by the American College of Rheumatology’s CME board for 1 CME credit
- Dissemination:
  - Shared the revised presentation with Rheumatology fellowship programs at:
    - Drew University
    - University of Minnesota
    - Columbia University
    - University of Kentucky at Lexington
    - Dartmouth Hitchcock
  - I was afforded a scholarship to attend the American College of Rheumatology Annual Meeting (Atlanta, GA) in November

CONCLUSIONS

- Lupus is a rheumatologic disorder that presents quite differently in people of color
- Discoid rash—one of the paradigm presentations—looks extremely varied when compared to white counterparts
- It is imperative that physicians be trained to recognize the nuances in signs and symptoms of lupus especially as they pertain to women of African and Latin descent