



By Ailsa Bosworth, MBE

National Patient Champion
for NRAS



Meet our

Supporting our work on behalf of Global Majority communities

In 2016, we launched a new area on our website called 'Apni Jung' which means 'our fight' in Hindi, against RA. We did this in collaboration with Dr. Kanta Kumar, a lecturer at the University of Birmingham and Honorary Visiting Professor at PGI Hospital, Chandigarh, India. Dr. Kumar has a profile of work in ethnicity; her research interests are behavioural medicine and impact of ethnicity on rheumatology practice. With Dr. Kumar's enthusiastic support, and input from our Advisory Board, we are developing our Apni Jung web area in Hindi and other common Asian languages to support the South Asian communities in the UK. Over time, we wish to extend our work to support other global majority communities in the UK who, for reasons of culture and/or language, are less likely to seek support from organisations like NRAS and may also be disadvantaged in accessing healthcare as a consequence.

NRAS is committed to equality of access to treatment and healthcare, as well as support and information, for everyone living with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) or juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA) and their families and carers irrespective of race, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender, religion or belief. We are delighted to welcome the following health professionals and our lay expert to the NRAS family and thank them for giving their time, expertise, and commitment to our Advisory Board.



Dr. Kanta Kumar is a lecturer at the University of Birmingham and Honorary Visiting Professor at PGI Hospital, Chandigarh, India. She was the founder of the Apni Jung project with NRAS. Dr. Kumar has been awarded five national awards for her work in ethnicity in rheumatology. She is a member of a number of national bodies: BSR, South Asian Health Foundation.



Prof. Ade Adebajo is a Consultant Rheumatologist at Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and a Professor of Rheumatology and Health Services Research at the University of Sheffield. He is a member of the NIHR Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group and a Board member of the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination.

Dr. Monica Gupta is a Consultant Rheumatologist and physician at Gartnavel General and the Queen Elizabeth University Hospitals in Glasgow. Her MD was on the clinical and laboratory features of septic arthritis and she has co-authored The Textbook of Rheumatology chapter. She runs early RA clinics and a tertiary Sjogren's Clinic and sits on the British Sjogren's Syndrome Association's medical council.



Mrs. Joti Rehal is an NRAS patient Volunteer who has lived with RA for 21 years and worked with NRAS on a number of projects including appearing in a video with Dr. Dubey and Dr. Kumar about transitioning from DMARDs to Biologics on the Apni Jung web area. Since moving onto Biologics, her RA is under control and she is living now with fewer flares and less pain than used to be the case. Her RA started after the birth of her first son when she had a really difficult time. It subsequently caused her to leave her full-time job. She says it affected her not only physically, but in every way; emotionally, mentally, and financially. She didn't give up hope though and went on to have another baby nine and a half years later and is successfully running two businesses.



Advisory Board



Dr. Afshan Salim works as a GP at the Bellevue Medical Centre, Birmingham. She has a special interest in diabetes and is very keen on community education about chronic medical conditions and improving care. Dr. Salim said, "I am delighted to be joining this NRAS Advisory Board."



Dr. Arumugam Moorthy is a Consultant Rheumatologist at The University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust and Honorary Senior Lecturer at The University of Leicester. Dr. Moorthy is also a visiting professor of rheumatology at one of the prestigious medical universities in Chennai, India. Dr. Moorthy is actively involved in clinical research in rheumatology and medical education. He has presented his work in national and international conferences including the British Society for Rheumatology congress, EULAR and Indian Rheumatology Association meetings, and published in peer reviewed journals.



Dr. Vibhu Paudyal is a Senior Lecturer in Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Birmingham. His areas of research interests are community pharmacy service development, social and behavioural aspects of medicines' use and health inequality.



Dr. Shirish Dubey has been a Consultant Rheumatologist for 13 years, initially in West Midlands and now in Oxford (Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust). His interests include vasculitis and connective tissue disorders, alongside ethnicity. He has previously helped improve resources for patients through videos which helped launch the Apni Jung website and has been contributing to research into influences of ethnicity on outcomes. He has presented a number of oral presentations at international meetings and continues to actively publish papers.

n.b The term 'People of the Global Majority' has been adopted by many people to describe the majority of the world who consider themselves non-white.

Interstitial lung disease not associated with methotrexate use

It had long been thought that methotrexate (MTX) increased the risks of RA patients developing interstitial lung disease (ILD). ILD is more common in patients with RA, so the question of whether or not methotrexate (which is the most commonly prescribed RA medication) definitely increased this risk has been disputed.

A recent study in the European Respiratory Journal looked at 410 patients with chronic ILD associated with RA and 673 patients with RA who did not have ILD.

What they discovered was that in fact the opposite appeared to be true. Patients who had ever been on MTX were found to have RA related ILD (RA-ILD) less frequently than those who had never been on MTX. Detection of RA-ILD was also delayed in the patients who had been on or were taking MTX.

