

# GLA:D®

## Annual Report 2015



### Highlights

#### 10 000 Danes with osteoarthritis

- Reduced pain, better function and increased physical activity level
- Fewer were on sick leave and fewer were taking pain killers

## **English Summary of GLA:D® Annual Report 2015**

National and international clinical guidelines for osteoarthritis suggest a combined approach consisting of patient education, exercise and weight management, if needed. However, this approach is insufficiently implemented in clinical care. Good Life with Arthritis in Denmark (GLA:D®) is an initiative from the Research Unit for Musculoskeletal Function and Physiotherapy at the University of Southern Denmark with the overarching aim of implementing current clinical guidelines for osteoarthritis into clinical care.

### **GLA:D® consists of three mandatory parts**

- Education of physical therapists in delivering care in accordance with clinical guidelines
- Patient education and neuromuscular exercise for patients with OA-like symptoms primarily from the hip or knee
- The national GLA:D® registry for data collection and evaluation of results

### **GLA:D® facts 2015**

- More than 550 physiotherapists have been GLA:D® certified
- GLA:D® is delivered by 227 units in all five health care regions in Denmark, mostly private physiotherapy practices but also in some municipalities
- 9 827 participants have contributed with baseline data from January 31, 2013 until December 31, 2015

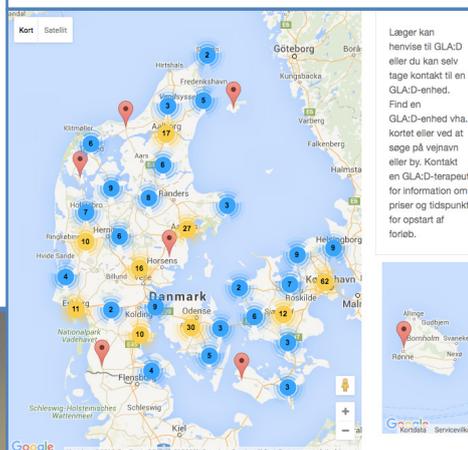
### **GLA:D® aims**

- Pain reduction
- Reduced intake of painkillers
- Improved physical function and physical activity
- Improved quality of life
- Decrease in health care visits and costs for the individual patient and society
- Access to care according to clinical guidelines across health care sectors and geographic regions

## GLA:D® Results 2015

- 5 846 patients have been evaluated at 3 months
- 2 149 patients have been evaluated at 12 months
- Pain levels had decreased at 3 months for knee and hip patients, and, at a minimum, the reductions were maintained at 12 months. The reductions varied between 10.6 and 13.5 mm on a 0-100 mm scale, equivalent to 23 to 28%.
- While 58% of the hip patients and 56% of the knee patients used pharmacological pain relievers (paracetamol, NSAIDs or opioids) at baseline, these numbers were reduced to 45% and 37% at 3 months.
- At 3 months, walking speed and the ability to sit and rise from a chair had increased. One out of three reported an increased physical activity level at 3 and 12 months.
- Joint-related quality of life had improved by 10 and 13% at 3 months and 19 and 20% at 12 months.
- Excluding retirees and people on early retirement pension, 24.3% were on sick leave during the year prior to GLA:D® due to their hip/knee, while only 14.9% were on sick leave during the year following GLA:D® due to their hip/knee.
- GLA:D® is available in urban and rural areas in all five health care regions in Denmark, mostly in private practice but also in some municipalities. See map of Denmark.

The results are restricted to patients with both baseline and follow-up data. Please note that since data come from a registry without a control group, and the intervention was delivered in clinical practice and not in a rigorous research setting, it cannot be ruled out that factors other than the GLA:D® intervention are responsible for the changes seen.



## **Who participates in GLA:D®?**

The average GLA:D® participant is an overweight 64-year-old cohabiting woman with knee pain. However, participant ages range from 15-94, 26% are men, 30% are normal weight, 26% live alone and 25% define hip pain as their primary problem. Most participants report problems from more than one knee or hip, and 1 out of 3 also from the hands.

Medical comorbidities are common. One out of three have high blood pressure. Heart disease, lung disease and diabetes are reported by 6-8%. 57% reported having used either paracetamol, NSAIDs or opioids for pain relief during the last 3 months. 32% of GLA:D® participants are working or studying, 51% are retired and 15% have retired early or are on sick leave.

## **What was the compliance with GLA:D®, and how satisfied are patients with GLA:D®?**

- Nearly 90% took part in the two educational sessions
- 83% participated in at least 10 supervised neuromuscular exercise sessions
- 93% and 88% are satisfied or very satisfied with the GLA:D® program at 3 and 12 months
- 94% and 80% report using their new skills at least at a weekly basis at 3 and 12 months.

## **More information**

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**You can download the full GLA:D® Annual Report 2015  
in English and Danish from [www.glaid.dk](http://www.glaid.dk)**