

## MARRTC Project Summaries – 2003-08

### Project 1:

#### An Online Self-management Program for Older Adults with Rheumatoid Arthritis

**Principal Investigator:**

[Karen L. Smarr, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

This project will examine whether a home-based self-management program delivered via the Internet will help older adults deal with pain and disability caused by rheumatoid arthritis. Volunteers throughout the United States will participate in an online community that includes the self-management tips, educational venues, chat rooms, bulletin boards and links to other important arthritis Web sites.

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### Project 2:

#### Exercise and Physical Fitness for Persons with Knee Osteoarthritis: Does One Size Fit All?

**Principal Investigator:**

[Marian Minor, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

This project will evaluate the effects of different types of exercise on improving strength, cardiovascular fitness and function for people with osteoarthritis of the knee. The project also will look at types of exercise that are particularly beneficial for different people in order to make the best individually tailored exercise recommendations.

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### Project 3:

#### Worksite Vocational Rehabilitation Intervention to Improve Employment Outcomes for Persons With Arthritis?

**Principal Investigator:**

[George "Brick" Johnstone, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

This program evaluates the effectiveness of worksite intervention by occupational therapists for persons with osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) who report difficulties on the workplace.

This project is being conducted in collaboration with the Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and seeks to help people with arthritis remain employed longer. Outcomes will be measured in terms of long-term job retention, job satisfaction, hours worked per week, personal income, public assistance received and health status.

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## Project 4: Arthritis Prevention and Self-Management For Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

**Principal Investigator:**

[H. Willard Downs, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

This collaborative program between Biological Engineering Extension from the University of Missouri-Columbia and the National Center for Farm-worker Health focuses on the unique needs of underserved, minority groups working in the agricultural industry. This interdisciplinary and interagency effort represents a significant step forward for the nation in providing arthritis educational assistance and information dissemination to an important but frequently overlooked part of the farming community.

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## Project 5: Capacity Building for Consumers of Disability Research

**Principal Investigator:**

[John Hewett, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

This project will develop and deliver two online courses on research methods and biostatistical concepts. The first course will be designed specifically for those individuals with arthritis or their caregivers who wish to improve their decision making abilities related to potential treatments. The second course will be designed for those individuals interested in disability research. The second course will be particularly helpful to health care providers whose training often has failed to include research methodology. Special strategies will be used to reach consumers from minority groups.

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## Project 6: Civic Journalism for Arthritis and Disability: A National Strategic Communication Campaign

**Principal Investigator:**

[Margaret Duffy, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

The goal of this project is to raise awareness about arthritis and arthritis disability by increasing coverage of the disease in local, regional and national media. Reporters and editors will be offered training workshops and access to a wealth of sources, such as databases and a list of public health and medical experts who specialize in rheumatology. This project is a collaboration between the Missouri School of Journalism and two groups located within the School - the National Newspaper Association and the Investigative Reporters and Editors.

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## **Project 7: Coordination of Care for Children With Juvenile Arthritis**

**Principal Investigator:**

[Michael Grinfeld, J.D.](#)

**Summary**

For children with juvenile arthritis, access to resources often depends on the ability to navigate the complex rules and regulations that govern various state, federal and private programs. This project will provide parents and caregivers with the information needed to identify potential sources of assistance and apply for those resources in an efficient manner. It will equip parents and caregivers with negotiation and conflict-resolution skills.

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## **Project 8: State-of-the-Science Conference: Reducing Disability for Persons With Arthritis in Rural America**

**Principal Investigator:**

[Laura Schopp, Ph.D.](#)

**Summary**

This program is designed to convene a national state-of-the-science conference to address the needs of persons with arthritis who live in rural communities. The conference will be broadcast over the Internet to a national audience, including people in rural Missouri.