

Wigley R, Manahan L, Muirden KD, Caragay R, Pinfold B, Couchman KG, Valkenburg HA. Rheumatic disease in a Philippine village. II: a WHO-ILAR-APLAR COPCORD study, phases II and III. Rheumatol Int. 1991;11(4-5):157-61.

Many difficulties were encountered in a population survey of rheumatic complaints in a remote village area in the Philippines affecting the reliability of estimates of population prevalence. In phase I, a simple questionnaire identified 269 adults out of 950 who had rheumatic symptoms. In Phase II, 234 or 87% of positive respondents were requestioned using a more detailed pro forma. There were 196 with peripheral joint pain, 67 with neck pain and 137 with back pain. One third attributed their symptoms to work and 127 subjects had to stop work because of their complaints. Disability, including an inability to carry loads, affected nearly 1.8% of the population. Questions designed to detect rheumatoid arthritis and gout were not satisfactorily answered. Of those with complaints, 82% indicated that they still required help for their symptoms. In phase III, 166 subjects were medically examined. Osteoarthritis of the knee was found in 25 and 17 had Heberden's nodes. There were 16 with epicondylitis; 16 had rotator cuff pain and 35 had levator scapulae insertion pain. Three of these and three others had neck or shoulder swellings related to carrying loads on poles. Definite rheumatoid arthritis was diagnosed in two subjects and gout in five. No case of ankylosing spondylitis was identified. Thus, rheumatic complaints were common in this rural community and were frequently severe enough to cause disability and loss of time from work. Health worker education is required on how to handle these problems.