

**ICF Core Sets  
International Multicentric Validation Study**

**Use of the Case Record Form  
for Health Professionals**

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# **Case Example**

**Mrs. Baker**

**Patient with Rheumatoid Arthritis**

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Mrs. Baker,  
Age: 42 years,  
Diagnosis: Rheumatoid Arthritis,  
Duration of disease: 10 years.

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*Doctor: Good morning, Mrs. Baker. Welcome to our centre for physical medicine and rehabilitation. How can I help you?*

Patient: Good morning, Professor Stucki. Well, I'm suffering from rheumatoid arthritis for about 10 years. Since four weeks I notice functioning of my hands is getting worse and worse. Both hands are affected by the disease, fingers as well as wrist joints. I have problems with my feet, too, and also with the right shoulder and right knee, but the problems with the hands do extremely interfere with my whole life.

*Doctor: Could you please tell me more about your complaints and how they affect your life?*

Patient: Presently several of the finger joints as well as the wrist joints and the knee are quite swollen and every movement is rather painful, especially in the morning.

Thus, it's already difficult for me to dress myself, you know especially: buttons, zippers, shoe laces, all these things suddenly become obstacles.

Furthermore, brushing the teeth, combing the hair or putting on make up becomes complicated. Another challenge for me is preparing breakfast for the family, because sometimes I'm not able to lay the table, carry the dishes, or cut bread.

But besides those stupid daily hassles, what affected me most, is that I even had to give up my job. Due to the restricted movement and the deformation of my fingers I was not longer able to work as a secretary, for example increasingly I had difficulties in typing.

*Doctor: Have you noticed any circumstances that are positively or negatively related to the intensity of your complaints and pain?*

Patient: Yes, of course. In winter the symptoms are definitely far worse than in summer. It's easier to move when temperature is higher.

*Doctor: Your sensation of pain, is it restricted to the affected joints?*

Patient: Yes, the pain that derives from rheumatoid arthritis is localised in the joints. But I'm also suffering from migraine attacks since many years and this is associated with almost unbearable headaches.

*Doctor: Mrs. Baker, you have stressed you problems concerning hand use. What about your affected shoulder, knee and feet?*

Patient: Well, the shoulder just makes it difficult to lift things to the very top shelf of a cupboard for example. Cleaning the windows is also very complicated for me. And – I should mention this – our apartment increasingly proves to be a hindrance for me. It's located in the 4<sup>th</sup> floor without an elevator and climbing those huge numbers of stairs becomes rather difficult for me.

*Doctor: Besides those restrictions of daily routine work and employment, has your illness affected your leisure activities?*

Patient: Yes, indeed! I was a talented flute player and had several concerts as a member of a classical orchestra. It was very hard for me to give up this passion. Additionally, in former times my husband and I spent many weekends in the mountains for hill walking. That's no longer possible because of my feet and my knee. At the moment I'm just able to take a short walk around

the block without having pain. As you see, there are various restrictions of leisure activities.

*Doctor: Chronic diseases like rheumatoid arthritis often affect relationships and contacts with other people in a positive or negative way. Could you please tell me something about your experiences to that effect?*

Patient: That's true. Those restrictions concerning my hobbies ave also reduced the number of my friends and acquaintances. But meanwhile I'm no longer sad about that, because I have got to know several very nice persons in a self-help group for patients with rheumatoid arthritis. They all share the same experiences with the disease. This group has helped me to cope with my situation and meanwhile it's easier for me to ask people for assistance. For instance, there's a nice young student who is helping me with some household things and my husband is very supportive, too.

*Doctor: What kind of assistance did you receive from health professionals up to now?*

Patient. My rheumatologist tried hard to find the right combination of medicine for me. I take MTX and Enbrel as disease modifying drugs and this is working quite well. Additionally, I visit the physiotherapist once a week. She teaches me how to mobilize my joints in a positive manner. And some time during a stay in hospital an occupational therapist offered me useful devices for daily life, for example an electric opener for bottles and a knife with a special grip. He also provided me with a wrist splint I wore to protect the joint and to quiet inflammation. This was an enormous support and now I wonder whether there might be more devices to help me improving my hand function and managing my daily life.

*Doctor: Mrs. Baker, if you do something strenuous, do you become easily breathless?*

Patient: No.

*Doctor: How is your sexual life in the last weeks?*

Patient: Since 4 weeks, I don't have a sexual life... with so much pain, I don't even think about it and have no sexual interest.

*Doctor: You mentioned that the joints are swollen, are they also stiff?*

Patient: Yes, a bit.

*Doctor: Regarding your illness, do you worry about your social security?*

Patient: Fortunately, I think I am in good hands in Germany.

*Mrs. Baker also explains that she has no problems in writing, using telephones with buttons or by driving her car. She also tells her community social life is not affected by her illness and her family and friends are very supportive.*

*Doctor: I'm sure, Mrs. Baker, we can do something to improve your situation. We'll make a bodily examination now and then our rehabilitation team will meet and develop an individual therapy program based on the information you gave me.*

## Clinical findings

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### Personal Information

Born: 01.02.62, in Germany

Years of formal education (school + professional): 15 years

Diagnosis: 10 years ago in August.

10 months ago: Hospitalisation due to RA.

### X-ray of both hands

Subluxation MCP joints 2 and 3 right, commencing ulnar drift of right hand; degenerative changes of proximal and distal interphalangeal joints right hand, dig. 2 and 3.

### Laboratory parameters

- Rheumatoid factor seropositive
- Erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) 25 mm/h (norm)
- C-reactive protein (CRP) 3 mg/dl (norm)
- Reduced haemoglobin 10g/dl

### Pharmacotherapy

- Methotrexate: 1x /week 10 mg
- Enbrel: 25 mg 2x /week s.c.

### Activities of daily life

Household:

- Clean-up: Complete limitations of making beds, cleaning the windows, carrying full buckets.
- Laundry: Complete limitations of wringing out, hanging up.
- Kitchen: Complete limitations of opening cans, bottles, screw caps, using a pair of scissors.

### Clinical examination

Rheumatoid nodule, right elbow.

## 6-minute-walking

220 meters; while walking latent pain in the knee and severe increasing pain in both feet and feeling of instability of the knee.

## Gait-pattern

Moderate Duchenne sign to the left side.

## Transfer

Seat – stand

Dorsal position – face-down position

Dorsal position – seat

} no pathological findings

## Physical inspection

Hands: Right hand:  
ulnar drift  
swan-neck deformity of little finger  
Boutonnière deformity of index finger

Feet: both ankle joints moderately swollen  
bunion in Hallux valgus position, right>left

Knees: right knee moderately swollen

Trunk: no pathological findings

## Assessment of muscle power

Dynamometer for grip strength

right 21.4 pounds

left 47.3 pounds

Elbow

flexion right 5/5 left 5/5

extension right 5/5 left 5/5

Knee

flexion right 3-4/5 left 5/5

extension right 4/5 left 5/5

## Range of motion

Shoulders:	flexion/extension
	right 140°/0/30°
	left 135°/0/30°
Elbows:	both normal range of motion
Hand joints:	volar flexion/dorsiflexion
	right 30°/0/0°
	left 35°/0/10°
	radial flexion/ulnar flexion
	right 0°/5/20°
	left 0°/0/20°
Fists:	Fingertip-palmar
	right 5 cm
	left 3,5 cm
Hips:	both normal range of motion
Knees:	flexion/extension
	right 95°/10/0°
	left 120°/0/0°
Ankles:	dorsiflexion/plantar flexion
	right 5°/0/35°
	left 10°/0/30°

## Body weight

68 kg

## Body height

170 cm