

## Early Arthritis

The Dudley rheumatology department has a weekly early arthritis clinic, which is based at Russell's Hall Hospital and runs on a Tuesday morning. If on your first rheumatology visit you are diagnosed with an inflammatory arthritis, it is likely you will be referred to this service.

The service is led by Dr Sandhu and Clinical Nurse Specialists Steph Mole and Rene Koumi. The aim of the service is to enable rapid control of the inflammatory arthritis and therefore prevent joint damage and improve physical functioning. This can be achieved by:

1. Starting and adjusting your medical treatment in order to get control of your inflammatory arthritis. This is usually with drugs known as Disease Modifying Anti-Rheumatic Drug or DMARDs.
2. Monitoring your arthritis and your treatment to ensure it is safe to continue.
3. Providing education and support about the disease, it's treatment and its impact on you.
4. Coordinate your care with our multidisciplinary team colleagues, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, podiatrists, orthotics and health psychology as well as your GP.

National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS): [www.nras.org.uk](http://www.nras.org.uk);

Versus Arthritis: [www.versusarthritis.org](http://www.versusarthritis.org)