Rheumatic diseases (RD) cause physical disability that may lead to early retirement, generating high indirect costs to society.

We aim to examine the association between self-reported RD and early retirement by using large real-world observational data in Portugal.

**RESULTS**

- 29.9% of the Portuguese population with ages between 50 and 64 years old were officially retired.
- Among these, 43.2% were retired due to ill-health, which in turn about a third (30.4%) was specifically due to RD.
- Thus, 13.1% of all retirees self-reported RD as the main reason for early retirement.
- More than a third (34.2%; females: 46.3%) of all study population self-reported RD, being also more likely to self-report other main chronic disease (OR: 3.4; CI: 30.4%).
- About a third (35.2% of RD respondents were retired versus 27.2% of those non-RD (p=0.025).
- Prevalence of self-reported RD seems to be associated with early retirement (unadjusted OR: 1.45; CI: 1.05-2.01; p=0.025).
- Some other characteristics are also associated with early retirement, in particular older age, male gender and presence of other chronic diseases.
- RD association tends to be independently associated with early retirement (adjusted OR: 1.37; CI: 1.01-1.84; p=0.042).

A self-reported RD is significantly associated with early retirement (OR: 1.37; CI: 1.01-1.84; p=0.042). The association of self-reported RD and early retirement was tested using logistic regression. All estimates were computed as weighted proportions, in order to take into account the sampling design of the IEpiReumaPt study (N = 1,706,749).

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**CONCLUSIONS**

- These results are similar with previous data from the National Health Survey conducted in Portugal nearly a decade ago.
- This confirms the impact that self-reported RD still have on early retirement.