There are different kinds of arthritis, widely spread among the population, that make them a clinical problem with social, psychological and economic burden. Different education programs have been developed in order to improve patients¿ disease management, medication compliance and from there patients´ quality of life. Objective: To develop and implement a community pharmacy-based educational program for patients with arthritis. Improvements in pain, medication compliance, decrease in general practitioner´s visits and hospitalizations are expected. Methods: Prospective, randomized, controlled trial. The sample consisted of 43 individuals, with different stages of arthritis (aged 15 - 71), attending pharmacies - intervention group; and 43 individuals - control group. A 4-month education was conducted on the following topics: what causes arthritis and what are the factors that can intensify it; pain management and physical activities; selfmanagement and prevention; pharmacotherapy and possible adverse drug reactions. Patient’s healthrelated quality of life was assessed in the beginning and at the end of the survey. Results: Parameters assessed during the four stages of the program were: frequency of severe pain, frequency of general practitioner’s visits, frequency of urgent medical aid calls, compliance with therapy, satisfaction with pharmacy services. Improvement in patients’ health-related quality of life was observed and also: decrease in the severity of patients´ pain, decrease in the physician’s visits, and increase in satisfaction overall care. Conclusions: Positive results from the educational approach in pharmacy conditions were demonstrated. These consequences have a potential to increase arthritis patient’s quality of life.

Keywords
Community pharmacy services, patient education as topic, Bulgaria.