The aim of this session is to provide delegates with information about an innovative project by the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS) in collaboration with Manchester University, called Rheumatoid Arthritis: Apne Jung (Our fight against RA), which addresses the specific needs of the Asian population. We will explain what Rheumatoid Arthritis: Apne Jung (Our fight against RA) is and how it is going to engage Asian RA patients and provide key details of the project, including how health professionals can get involved to the benefit of their Asian RA population. We will update the audience on the evidence base around engaging Asian RA patients and their specific needs relating to cultural and language differences. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 defines health literacy as the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process and understand basic health information and services and be able to use or apply that information to their own health care. The average reading age of the UK population is 12 years and therefore even the white British population has difficulty in assimilating and using written health information. A real challenge for health professionals treating patients with RA from minority backgrounds is finding a way to help those who do not speak English as a first language and who may also have low literacy skills in terms of written materials in their own language gain access to high-quality educational materials on their condition. The NRAS and Dr Kanta Kumar have developed a project that could reach out to the UK Asian RA community. The objective of this project is to provide information on the NRAS website that will be in Hindi and Urdu, and to raise awareness of the NRAS and their community networks among Asian communities. The project team and Dr Kumar will encourage suitable patients to become volunteers to support Asian patients with RA. The initial stage will be focused around explaining what RA is and the medications that need to be taken to control the disease. We will add video clips and downloadable podcasts to the website so that those who do not read their mother tongue can either listen to an audio file or watch a DVD clip. The NRAS knows from extensive experience of running peer-to-peer support programmes just how beneficial this kind of peer support can be. Dr Kumar feels that health professionals want to help their patients understand issues relating to their health and to empower them to be able take action relating to their health.
In this session, we would like to showcase our innovative idea to encourage health professionals to talk about the NRAS project in their clinics and direct suitable Asian RA patients to the NRAS website. Disclosure statement: The author has declared no conflicts of interest.