



Ontario  
Rheumatology  
Association

September 22, 2016

The ORA EAP committee meets regularly with representatives from the Exceptional Access Program. The unsatisfactory state of affairs with respect to long wait times was discussed at our meeting last Friday, and we requested immediate meaningful action. We are pleased to report that we have been promised change until the situation has been rectified, as below:

**For first time and renewal requests for biologics for Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA), Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS), Psoriatic Arthritis (PsA), and Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis which have been submitted on an ORA form (which was developed by EAP and the ORA), if the ORA form is used and is complete, typed and fully legible then the request will be automatically approved with no further evaluation.**

- **If you choose not to complete the ORA EAP forms, you will not benefit from this change.**
- **If the forms are incomplete or are illegible they will not be expedited – there remain a surprising number of incomplete forms.**

### **Renewals**

All approved renewals for rheumatology biologics for RA, AS, PsA will be granted a 5 year approval duration.

Exception: Rituximab (Rituxan) as this product is not funded in the maintenance setting.

The above mentioned process changes should eliminate the inappropriate requests for additional information if submitted on the form, but should you receive these please let us know so that we can address any EAP training issues inherent (if relevant).

**The EAP will begin to apply these changes to existing ORA requests effective September 20<sup>th</sup> to clear the existing backlog in the queue and continue to do so until target turnaround times are met.**

The 5 year renewal duration granted to approvals of first renewals (formerly it was applied to second renewals) of RA, AS, PsA requests will be ongoing.

We believe these changes are going to make a difference, and we acknowledge the efforts of the EAP program to improve the problem.

EAP Committee

Dr Henry Averbs, Dr Derek Haaland, Dr Angela Montgomery, Dr Carter Thorne, Dr Deb Levy, Dr Arthur Lau, Dr Jane Purvis