



FALL NEWSLETTER



PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

President's Update

The ORA remains busy on many fronts. We continue to meet with government and insurance companies around issues relating to patient access to treatment and subsequent entry biologics. Dr Ahluwalia and her Model of Care team have been very active with presentations to funding agencies and stakeholder meetings. The EMR group has developed significant relationships with EMR providers and government that put Ontario rheumatologists in an enviable position compared to all other specialities and Dr. Baer continues to work diligently with the OMA to forward our goals in terms of OMA contract, Models of Care and also

helping the government look for cost savings in Ontario.

The ORA manpower project is about to launch its website and we plan to engage all the rheumatology fellows in the province in this process to maximize chances that areas looking for rheumatologists will be able to demonstrate their community's advantages. We have been asked to speak at various stakeholder meetings and through the executive and our executive director, Denis Morrice, the opinion of the Ontario Rheumatology Association is being widely heard.

Look for the changes to EAP forms, remember to renew your [membership](#) and save the date for the 2014 ORA annual meeting to be held May 23-25, 2014 at JW Marriott in Muskoka. Enjoy the autumn leaves and we will chat again in the Winter Newsletter.

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[ORA membership registration](#) is now open! Register now to get early bird discounts and to be entered in the Tim Horton's Draw



Winning photo from ORA Annual meeting

Submitted by Raj Carmona

EXCEPTIONAL ACCESS PROGRAM: CHANGES TO RA, AS AND ULORIC FORMS.

RA form: Anti CCP antibodies will now be accepted as equivalent to rheumatoid factor to indicate seropositivity.

AS form: Now all diagnostic imaging information will be collected on one sheet via tick boxes. Do not send any extra information, just use the [one page sheet](#).

Uloric form: This has been updated and has been accepted by the government for our use.

Please use the new forms going forwards and they are all available [here](#).

For any concerns, contact president@ontariorheum.ca



OMA UPDATE

Our current contract expires March 31, 2014. Negotiations officially begin Dec. 1, 2013, but the OMA has been engaged in extensive preparations since the summer. Uncertainty remains regarding the government's fiscal position and the possibility of an election at any time, given the minority government situation. Thus the negotiations climate will likely be very difficult.

To date, our Section has submitted proposals regarding System Savings Initiatives targeting:

- Inappropriate lab testing (RF, ANA, complement studies, ...)
- Unnecessary imaging (MRI, CT scans)
- Moving forward with the CHOOSING WISELY campaign (and the Canadian equivalent being developed by the CRA)

We also have submitted our negotiation priorities:

1. A general increase in fees in keeping with inflation.
2. Maintaining relativity of consultation and visit fees amongst Internal Medicine and its subspecialties. If further negative fee allocations occur, maintain prin-

cles of relativity for these allocations.

3. Fees similar to K481 for the annual management of patients with other inflammatory arthritis conditions, such as psoriatic arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis, available only to rheumatologists.
4. Adding laboratory coverage for anti-CCP antibody testing.
5. Introducing a code applying to consultations for patients aged 80 and older, at a fee higher than a regular consultation, recognizing the increased complexity of the assessment of older individuals with comorbidities and mobility difficulties.
6. Introducing a fee for supervising the work of an ACPAC (Advanced clinical practitioner in arthritis care) physiotherapist or occupational therapist, a physician assistant, a rheumatology nurse or nurse practitioner.

RHEUMATOLOGY MANPOWER PROJECT

If you would like your community added to our list of places looking for further rheumatology support (so far the list is Peterborough and London), or to be part of the planning process, please let me know at president@ontariorheum.ca



Second prize photo from
ORA
Annual meeting

Submitted by Fred Doris

EMR COMMITTEE

The EMR ORA Initiative

The EMR sub-committee continues to work with vendors to improve integration and functionality of their new rheumatology tools including seamless data extraction from EMRs to the OBRI at point of care

Ongoing priorities

Discussions with E-health Ontario and Ontario MD to ensure that new applications are funded and that an EMR maturation model for specialists is established for Rheumatology and other Speciality-groups

Phase III of the project is currently underway – this will focus on integrating new rheumatology guidelines into the EMR platform so that patient specific data can be programmed into actionable and real-time recommendations for clinical practice.

ORA EXECUTIVE

Dr. Jane Purvis - President president@ontariorheum.ca

Dr. Arthur Karasik - Vice President vicepresident@ontariorheum.ca

Dr. Nikhil Chopra - Secretary/Treasurer secretarytreasurer@ontariorheum.ca

Dr. Philip Baer - Chair-OMA Section of Rheumatology

Dr. Janet Pope - Annual General Meeting Steering Committee Chair agmscientificdirector@ontariorheum.ca

Dr. Vandana Ahluwalia - Past President pastpresident@ontariorheum.ca

Dr. Felix Leung - Member-at-Large memberatlarge@ontariorheum.ca

Mr. Denis Morrice - executivedirector@ontariorheum.ca

Tina Niro - ORA Administration admin@ontariorheum.ca

All Ontario rheumatologists should strongly consider applying for eHealth EMR funding as soon as possible to take advantage of current funding. [Click on this link to get more information.](#)



Save the Date:
ORA Annual Meeting
May 23-25, 2014
JW Marriott, Muskoka



MOC Update and Request for Member Participation:

What has the ORA Models of Care been working on?

Comprehensive Patient Support

While it is recognized that many of the existing patient programs support patients taking biologics, there are still many patients who struggle with their disease well before medications are started or even while on DMARD therapy. On October 4th 2013 the ORA Models of Care committee hosted an interactive workshop that brought together arthritis stakeholders to discuss current patient support programs, and how to improve their coordination and effectiveness at all points in the disease process

The objectives of this meeting were to:

- Initiate an open dialogue among stakeholder groups currently offering patient support programs for patients with joint disorders
- Review current offerings and identify program gaps
- Explore strategies that will improve the coordination and delivery of patient support programs throughout the entire course disease
- Determine the requirements needed to enhance the comprehensiveness of patient programs, particularly during the immediate post-diagnosis stage of the disease
- Identify the specific role(s) and responsibilities of stakeholders required to advance and support this initiative
 - Obtain consensus on best practice associated with the requirements and coordination of referrals to patient support programs



The following stakeholder groups were invited to attend this working meeting: Patients and Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA), Pharmaceutical Companies, the Ontario Pharmacist Association (OPA), the Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) Program, Rheumatologists, Primary Care LHIN leads, The Arthritis Society (TAS), Patients, The Alliance of Canada (AAC), and designated Allied Health Care Professionals representing nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Stay tuned for more information and updates!

Physiotherapy Support

As we all learnt in June 2013, physiotherapy services were de-listed from the Ontario Health Insurance program. In an effort to re-direct these valuable resources, the MOC committee and the Arthritis Society with support from the AAC have come together as a unified voice to develop a sound proposal that re-aligns and re-integrates physiotherapy services more closely with rheumatology care – The proposal has been presented to the Ministry for review. Several options are being considered including collaboration and sharing of these resources with family health teams, alignment of these resources for OBRI investigators, and possible expansion of these resources to supplement the existing TAS AREP program. Stay tuned for more updates on this!

Pharmacy and expanded scope of practice

In light of the recent expanded scope of practice for pharmacy, the MOC committee is working with the Ontario Pharmacist Association to explore and expand the existing Medscheck program to better support arthritis patients.

Shoppers Drug Mart Arthritis Awareness Campaign

A new health awareness campaign offering Canadians free arthritis prevention, screening and treatment information was announced on September 9, 2013 by Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE), the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada (ARC), and Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix. Pharmacists at more than 1,200 Shoppers stores across Canada will be providing arthritis testing and information to Canadians as part of a three-year partnership between ACE, ARC and Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix. The initiative was announced at a launch event in Toronto, attended by Federal Minister of Health Rona Ambrose, Canadian Institutes of Health Research Chief Scientific Officer and Vice President Dr. Jane Aubin, Shoppers Drug Mart Chief Executive Officer and President Domenic Pilla, as well as ACE and ARC executives.



From left to right: Dr. John Esdaile, Cheryl Koehn, The Honourable Rona Ambrose, Amanda Perry, Domenic Pilla, Dr. Jane Aubin

Consumers can use in-store arthritis tools and participate in a personal consultation with the pharmacist to help detect or manage arthritis. During the consultation, the pharmacist reviews data from the innovative ArthritisID screening exam developed by Arthritis Consumer Experts and the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada, along with other health information, to provide appropriate, personalized recommendations based on the latest classification criteria of the American College of Rheumatology and the Canadian Rheumatology Association. An online version of the ArthritisID screening exam is also available on the shoppersdrugmart.com website to help consumers identify whether they may have arthritis, and prevent or delay its onset.

Speaking at the launch, Arthritis Consumer Experts Founder and President Cheryl Koehn commented: “The arthritis community is excited to be partnering with Shoppers Drug Mart/Pharmaprix. They’re on main streets across Canada, right where the more than 4.6 million Canadians with arthritis live and work. Pharmacists are a key member of an arthritis patient’s healthcare team. Now, Shoppers’ pharmacists will be able to share valuable arthritis information and detect or confirm arthritis with patients through innovative consumer education programs right at the pharmacy counter.”