

July 2023

Re: Biosimilar Tiering – ORA Position Statement

The Ontario Rheumatology Association (ORA) has been receiving concerns from its members regarding “tiering” or “preferential positioning” of biosimilars. While biosimilar efficacy and safety has long been established, and switching from originator molecules has been endorsed by the ORA as well as provincial Health Ministries, issues have been caused by the restriction in biosimilar options available to prescribers.

The ORA does not support “tiering” or “preferential positioning” of biosimilars. The choice of an individual biosimilar and its associated Patient Support Program by the prescribing physician, together with the patient must be respected.

There are currently 8 adalimumab biosimilar products on the market in Canada [Abrilada, Amgevita, Hadlima, Hyrimoz, Hulio, Idacio, Simlandi, Yuflyma]. While all are identical in efficacy, certain products have unique features that are important to the prescriber and patient, including the following:

- citrate-free formulations, or high-concentration/low volume formulations that are important considerations in pediatric patients or for patients who may have injection pain issues.
- longer shelf life out of the fridge, making them a more appropriate choice for patients who need to travel and may not have readily accessible or reliable refrigeration
- variability in injection devices, which may also be important considerations
- issues unrelated to product itself but rather to Patient Support Programs [”PSPs”], which may also differentiate between biosimilars aside from the actual formulation.

There have been instances where a prescribed biosimilar has not been available to the patient due to “tiering” or “preferential positioning,” leading to unnecessary, unwanted, and potentially harmful delay in starting or continuing therapy.

This practice ignores the careful shared decision made between the patient and prescriber when choosing a biosimilar.

New therapeutic agents will continuously be introduced and evidence based physician-patient choices must be respected and not be arbitrarily constrained by Private Payer mandates

**Sincerely,
ORA Private Payers Committee
ORA Board of Directors**