Important information for switching Actemra IV patients to subcutaneous.

The COVID 19 pandemic continues to worsen, and the number of patients in ICUs continues to grow. Actemra (Tocilizumab) is now being used to treat critically ill patients and ICUs across the country. In an effort to help address increased demand for intravenous Actemra during this pandemic, the CRA recommends that, where appropriate, rheumatologists consider switching to or starting patients on the subcutaneous Actemra SC formulation. This will help protect the supply for rheumatology patients as well as provide for those with severe COVID-19-related pneumonia. Further estimates provided to us indicate that if 100 out of approximately 1,700 rheumatology patients currently on ACTEMRA IV switched to ACTEMRA SC this month, ICUs in Canada would be able to treat at least an additional 65 COVID-19 patients per month (over 780 per year).

You can request a list of all of your Actemra IV patients from your Joint Effort patient support program representative (Toll-free: 1-888-748-8926, Fax: 1-888-532-1198), and they can work with you to expedite transfer of patients from intravenous to subcutaneous, to assist patients in determining if they want prefilled syringes or automated devices, and arranging for and assistance with any financial issues. Roche Canada has also indicated that they will work with us to facilitate the transfers of patients, and will help to work through any challenges that anyone encounters.

Asking your patients to switch to Actemra SC during this crisis, even temporarily, could potentially save lives.

The Ontario Rheumatology Association strongly endorses this transition during this unprecedented time.