

Ontario Rheumatology Association Update Spring 2011



Message from the President

We always knew that this organization had great potential! The momentum started to build a few years ago and this year, we have made exceptional progress. Our accomplishments have brought together community and academic rheumatologists, adult and pediatric rheumatologists, and allied health practitioners.

Informing our members has become easier through the development of a contact list. We have been able to send Email blasts, faxing when needed and then posting updates on our new website to complete the loop.

We continue to work with

the OPDP through a mutually respectful dialogue for improved access to medications for our patients.

We are collaborating with our colleagues locally and nationally for improving access to care through New Models of Care in Rheumatology. Our work with the OMA has resulted in rheumatology specific billing codes and revisions to existing codes. We listened to your suggestions and created a new committee to advocate for Rheumatologists interested in switching to Electronic Medical Records.

We continue to engage in initiatives, such as the OBRI and Metrix, that offer our

members opportunities for best practices and generation of outcome data.

I am looking forward to working with our committed board of directors, executive and administrative staff who tirelessly indulge me as I propose yet another project that must be done! Don't worry, I think I will take the month of June off. As this year closes, I hope to see you all at the Annual conference in May, at the J.W. Marriott, for our 10th Anniversary celebrations! And don't forget to "Walk for Arthritis".

**Vandana Ahluwalia
MD FRCPC**

ORA Annual General Meeting

Our 10th ORA AGM is being held this year at a new venue, the J. Marriott Hotel and Conference Centre in Muskoka from May 13 to 15, 2011. We are looking forwards to an excellent meeting with a varied and interesting subject matter. The Educational committee

headed by Dr. Janet Pope has put together what we feel will be an excellent two days of interactive discussions, case presentations and lectures.

There will be an Electronic Medical Record Expo on Friday May 13, 2011 in the evening, where EMR vendors

will have their products available for review and to answer your questions concerning implementation of an EMR in a rheumatology environment.

And don't forget our annual gala dinner on Saturday night. There will be dancing!!!

Highlights

- ORA AGM MAY 13-15TH, 2011 AT J. MARRIOTT RESORT, MUSKOKA
- EMR EXPO MAY 13, 2011
- NEW BILLING CODES FOR RHEUMATOLOGISTS ONLY!!



**J W Marriott Resort
Muskoka
ORA AGM site**

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New OHIP Codes for Rheumatologists only!!

There were several changes in the OMA fee schedule that pertain to the Section of Rheumatology. A480 and C480 are new codes that only those billing as rheumatologists can bill for patients with PMR, vasculitis and myositis. It can be billed up to 6 times per year per patient and is not eligible for E078 billing.

There is now a tray fee for out of hospital joint injections and aspirations E542 which

finally recognizes the supplies used in these procedures. As well, the limit on the number of injections billable after the first injection (G371) in one day on one patient has been increased to 5.

We still have the aspiration of bursa or complex joint code G328 and 2 additional aspirations G329.

The OMA is also moving forwards exploring new models

of care and rheumatology has been very involved in this initiative.

We are lobbying for new codes for our members again this year and we will keep you posted.

Your OMA representatives were re-elected this year and are Dr. Philip Baer, chair, with Dr. Jane Purvis, vice chair, and Dr. Vandana Ahluwalia, alternate.

Sign up for the "Walk for Arthritis" fundraiser being held on Saturday afternoon May 14th at the AGM. Find the link on the ORA website at <http://www.ora.memberledge.org>

Models of Care

Drs. Ahluwalia, Thorne, Bombardier, Benson and Pavlova, along with Sandra Couto and Denis Morrice have been meeting on a regular basis working on New Models of Care for Rheumatology. This endeavour has involved consulting various researchers and others across many disease areas, both in Ontario and beyond. The specific

goal of this committee has been focused on understanding key elements that define successful models of care. We want to identify and deliver care through regionalized efforts that ultimately lead to improved clinical and administrative outcomes. This can be achieved through an inter-professional, and patient-centric disease treat-

ment model. In this setting, the Ontario Biologics Research Initiative (OBRI) may be used as a research platform to capture treatment and disease outcomes, examine cohort and individual practice patterns, measure quality of care and facilitate practice enhancement.

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Electronic Medical Record Expo

A ORA survey was sent out recently on the subject of EMR. Much interest was found in the idea of having a rheumatology specific platform for EMR and we have hired an external consultant to discuss and negotiate our needs directly with EMR vendors. We will be hosting an EMR expo on Friday evening May

13 at the ORA AGM. Vendors will have the opportunity to showcase some of the tools they have been working on specifically to address rheumatology needs. There is ministry funding for specialists interested in implementing EMR in their practices. On behalf of those members who have already been ap-

proved for funding, the ORA requested and has been granted an extension to the deadline for vendor selection until the end of May.

Come to the Expo to speak with an OntarioMD rep for further information, see some EMRs in action and enter to win prizes!!

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Exceptional Access Program Update

We are continuing to have a meaningful dialogue with the Ministry. We were the only organization that was invited by the Ministry to the CED (Committee to Evaluate Drugs) meeting last July to discuss the CADTH (Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies) report. As well, we were recently invited by the Ontario Citizen's Council to present our perspective on managing the Ontario formu-

lary.

Criteria for the approval of biologics for RA, PsA, AS, JIA and Vasculitis have been updated and were submitted to the Ministry for review in early April 2011. We enjoyed some apparent success last May as the approval timelines for Biologics were down to 30 days. However, for more than 6 months now, the timelines have increased

to 2 months due to various process issues. More government staff have been hired to deal with the backlog. This is noted to be significantly higher than the averages in other provinces which vary between 7-10 business days. Our members' utilization of the ORA biologics forms has significantly increased and encourages the Ministry to be more efficient. We remain optimistic!

THE ORA WOULD
LIKE TO THANK ALL
OUR CORPORATE
SPONSORS FOR
THE ORA AGM.
REMEMBER TO VISIT
THE BOOTHS
DURING BREAKS AT
THE AGM.

Ontario Rheumatology Association Website

The ORA website at www.ora.memberlodge.org is up and running, with links to registration for the Annual General Meeting, contact information to reach ORA executive and importantly, links to the EAP forms which can be downloaded in either Word or PDF format. These forms are being updated on a regular basis in consultation

with the provincial government to try and make EAP request uniform and straightforward for all.

We are planning a major facelift of the website over the summer so check back to see what's new and useful for ORA members. There will be "members only" areas so ensure you have fully registered to take full advantage

of upcoming OHIP fee code updates, EMR information and other useful tidbits.

ORA EXECUTIVE
CONTINUES TO
WORK WITH EAP
ON ACCESS TO
BIOLOGICS

Ontario Rheumatology Executive

President:	Dr Vandana Ahluwalia
Vice-President:	Dr. Philip Baer
Secretary/Treasurer:	Dr. Jane Purvis
AGM Scientific Director	Dr. Janet Pope
Past President:	Dr Carter Thorne
Executive Director:	Mr. Denis Morrice

Administration:	Mrs. Phyllis Pardetti
	Mrs. Wendy Daechsel