



March 20, 2007

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq  
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut  
Box 1200,  
Iqaluit, NU,  
X0A 0H0

**Sent via email to:  
atagak@gov.nu.ca  
Original mailed**

Dear Minister Aglukkaq:

In an effort to work collaboratively with government, we, as representatives of Arthritis Consumer Experts and the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance, sent you a letter on December 18, 2006 to bring your attention to two new medications that have received their notice of compliance (NOC) from Health Canada in the treatment of moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis: abatacept (Orencia®) and rituximab (Rituxan®).

To date, we have not had any response from your office, but felt it important to let you know that on February 14, 2007 Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee's (CEDAC) recommendation that rituximab be added (with special criteria) to Provincial formulary drug reimbursement lists. We remind you that this therapy is intended to treat citizens of Nunavut with moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis with an inadequate response to an anti-TNF agent. At present, no effective treatment options are available for these individuals. Delays in making this treatment available will increase the probability of unnecessary negative physical, emotional, and social consequences.

Arthritis Consumer Experts and the Canadian Arthritis Patient make this request on behalf of its community members affected by rheumatoid arthritis.

We thank you in advance for considering our request, and await word from you on the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program drug formulary listing decision for rituximab.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Koehn  
President, Arthritis Consumer Experts  
Person with rheumatoid arthritis



Anne Dooley  
President, Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance  
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

C.c. Non-Insured Health Benefits Directorate, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch

**Note: Please address reply correspondence to Ms. Cheryl Koehn, Arthritis Consumer Experts, 910 B Richards Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 3C1, or to Anne Dooley, 206 Garrison Crescent, Saskatoon, SK, S7H 2Z8. Thank you.**