



August 15, 2007

Honourable Brad Cathers
Yukon Legislative Assembly
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

Sent via email to:
brad.cathers@gov.yk.ca
Original mailed

Dear Minister Cathers:

Thank you for your April 18, 2007 letter responding to our request on March 20, 2007, for the Yukon Formulary Working Group to expedite its review and listing of rituximab (Rituxan®) for the treatment of moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis.

We were pleased to see that you have accepted the recommendation of the Common Drug Review (CDR) and have listed rituximab on the publicly-funded territorial drug benefit plan. Rituximab is an important medication to include on the drug benefit plan as it is intended to treat people in the Yukon with moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis who have had an inadequate response to an anti-TNF agent, the current "state-of-the-art" class of treatments. Just like in HIV/AIDS, it is a cocktail of medication treatments that help as much as possible to restore the normal immune function of the person living with rheumatoid arthritis. No one person living with rheumatoid arthritis responds to the same cocktail of medications as the next.

For these reasons, Arthritis Consumer Experts, the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance and The Arthritis Society BC/Yukon Division, thank you on behalf of its community members affected by rheumatoid arthritis for accepting the CDR recommendation and including this medication on the territorial benefit plan. This will ensure that citizens in the Yukon living with rheumatoid arthritis will have timely access to the best medications and a greater choice in treatment options to help them effectively manage their disease.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Koehn
President
Arthritis Consumer Experts
Person with rheumatoid arthritis



Ron Woznow, PhD
Executive Director
The Arthritis Society,
BC and Yukon Division



Anne Dooley
President
Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

C.c. Dianne Tait, Manager, Extended Benefits and Pharmaceutical Programs

Note: Please address reply correspondence to Ms. Cheryl Koehn, Arthritis Consumer Experts, 910 B Richards Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 3C1.