

Arthritis in Ontario – A letter to (name)
Email sent out date: February 4, 2025

Letter from Arthritis Consumer Experts

Dear Party/Electoral Candidate,

The arthritis community is a significant constituency in Ontario.

Arthritis affects more than 2.3 million Ontario voters. There are more than 100 types of arthritis, and despite the misconception that it is only a disease of older adults, half of Ontario residents with arthritis are younger than 65. It is the leading cause of work disability in Ontario and a significant economic burden related to direct health care costs and indirect costs to the economy related to lost employment, sick leave, and absenteeism.

In the lead up to the provincial election on February 27, 2025, Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) is asking Ontario political parties and the candidates running for office to share their perspectives on how to meet the needs of the one in six Ontario residents living with arthritis ([see attached survey](#)).

Health care is one of the most important issues for Ontario voters leading up to the February 27, 2025 provincial election. The way people living with arthritis access and receive health care varies significantly across the province, particularly in rural and remote communities. Another barrier is timely access to advanced therapies. Currently, Ontario Drug Benefit reimbursement criteria require patients to first fail on older, less effective treatments, causing unnecessary delays in accessing the most appropriate therapies for the right patient at the right time. These barriers particularly affect people living with inflammatory arthritis – like rheumatoid arthritis, axial spondyloarthritis, psoriatic arthritis or lupus – who depend on getting a timely and accurate diagnosis, fast access to rheumatologists, and appropriate public reimbursement for essential medications.

To effectively treat and manage arthritis, the next elected Ontario government must improve the access to the right arthritis treatment for the right patient at the right time.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Cheryl Koehn, President, Arthritis Consumer Experts
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