



September 26, 2007

Hon. George Smitherman
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Suite M1-57, Macdonald Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 1R3

**Sent via email to:
CCU@moh.gov.on.ca
Original mailed**

Dear Minister Smitherman:

In an effort to work collaboratively with government, Arthritis Consumer Experts and the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance are writing to bring your attention to the June 20, 2007 Common Drug Review's **Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee (CEDAC) recommendation that adalimumab (Humira®) be added to provincial drug benefit plans for people with active ankylosing spondylitis, who have had an inadequate response to at least three different nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) and, in patients with peripheral joint involvement who have failed to respond to methotrexate or sulfasalazine (See attached CEDAC recommendation.)**

Currently, Ontarians living with ankylosing spondylitis have been waiting since approximately November 2006 for coverage of adalimumab (Humira®). This is despite the fact, as clearly outlined in the CEDAC recommendation, adalimumab not only "resulted in significantly more patients achieving ASAS 20, 50 and 70 after 12 weeks of treatment" but also improved quality of life, reduced disease activity and was shown to be cost effective. The lack of availability of this medication continues to be unacceptable to the arthritis community and should be to the Government of Ontario, too.

Given this strong CEDAC recommendation and your Ministry's support for the Common Drug Review process, we urge you, as Minister of Health, **to take the immediate necessary steps to have adalimumab listed on the provincial drug benefit plan for people with ankylosing spondylitis.** We remind you that this therapy is intended to treat Ontarians with ankylosing spondylitis. Providing a timely reimbursement listing for this medication will ensure that people in Ontario living with ankylosing spondylitis are able to reduce the pain and disability associated with treatment delay and consequently improve their quality of life.

We thank you in advance for considering our request, and await word from you on Ontario's listing decision for adalimumab for ankylosing spondylitis.

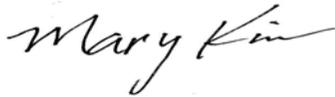
Sincerely,



On file

Cheryl Koehn
President
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

Laurie Proulx
ON Steering Committee Representative
Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance
Person with rheumatoid arthritis



Mary Kim
ON Steering Committee Representative
Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

Encl.

C.c. Susan Paetkau, Director, Drug Programs Branch
Helen Stevenson, Executive Officer, Ontario Public Drug Programs

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