



March 20, 2007

Honourable Floyd K. Roland
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife NT
X1A 2L9, Canada

Sent via email to:
hsa@gov.nt.ca
Original mailed

Dear Minister Roland:

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/territorial formulary drug reimbursement lists. We remind you that this therapy is intended to treat citizens of the Northwest Territories 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 Northwest Territories 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. Greta Sittichinli, Manager, Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Social Services, Government of the Northwest Territories

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.