

November 27, 2007

Honourable Chris d'Entremont
Department of Health
PO Box 488
Halifax, NS
B3J 2R8

Sent via email to:
healmin@gov.ns.ca
Original mailed

Dear Minister d'Entremont:

In an effort to work collaboratively with government we, as representatives of Arthritis Consumer Experts and Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance, wrote to you on August 15, 2007 to bring your attention to the June 20, 2007 Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee's (CEDAC) recommendation that abatacept (Orencia®) be added to provincial drug reimbursement lists for people with severely active rheumatoid arthritis. We note that you have recently listed abatacept (Orencia®) on your provincial drug reimbursement formulary for people rheumatoid arthritis and we applaud this decision.

The addition of this medication to your provincial drug formulary provides an important therapeutic option for people living with moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis who have had an inadequate response to an anti-TNF agent. Ensuring timely access to medications will serve to ensure that New Brunswickers living with rheumatoid arthritis will have critical treatment options that will reduce the pain, deformity and work disability associated with delayed treatment. In addition, access to these medications will improve quality of life, allowing people with rheumatoid arthritis to fully participate in their families, communities and society.

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Arthritis Consumer Experts and the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance once again thank you for this decision on behalf of people in New Brunswick living with rheumatoid arthritis.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Koehn
President, Arthritis Consumer Experts
Person with rheumatoid arthritis



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

Encl.

C.c. Emily Somers, Acting Director of Pharmaceutical Services

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