

Arthritis in Saskatchewan – A letter to (name)

Email sent out date: September 17, 2024

Letter from Arthritis Consumer Experts

Dear Electoral Candidate,

The arthritis community is a significant constituency in Saskatchewan.

Arthritis affects more than 200,000 Saskatchewan voters. There are over 100 types of arthritis, and despite the misconception that it is only a disease of older adults, two-thirds of Saskatchewan residents with arthritis are younger than 65. It is the leading cause of disability in Saskatchewan 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 October 28, 2024, Arthritis Consumer Experts (ACE) is asking Saskatchewan political parties and the candidates running for office to share their perspectives on how to meet the needs of the one in five Saskatchewan residents living with arthritis ([see attached survey](#)).

Health care delivery is one of the most important issues for Saskatchewan voters. The way people living with arthritis access and receive health care varies significantly across the province. Where you live can be more important in determining arthritis treatment than how sick or disabled you are. A major barrier is access to care, including the wait times for people with inflammatory arthritis for a first rheumatologist visit, particularly in rural areas of Saskatchewan. This particularly affects 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 needed disease-modifying medications.

To effectively treat and manage arthritis, the next elected Saskatchewan government must improve the timely access to suitable arthritis treatment and care.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Cheryl Koehn, President, Arthritis Consumer Experts

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