Arthritis Consumer Experts™
joint action for Canadians with arthritis

CAPA Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance
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October 2, 2007

Hon. Theresa Oswald
302 Legislative Building
450 Broadway,
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3C 0V8

Sent via email to:
minhlt@leg.gov.mb.ca
Original mailed

Dear Minister Oswald:

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, Manitobans living with ankylosing spondylitis have no biologic medications available to them on the provincial drug reimbursement formulary. Adalimumab (Humira®) has been under review since approximately November 2006 yet has still not been approved. The situation is the same for the other two biologic response modifiers on the market that have all been under review for significant periods of time. This continues to be unacceptable to the arthritis community and should be to the Government of Manitoba, too.

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.

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 Manitobans with ankylosing spondylitis. Providing a timely reimbursement listing for this medication will ensure that people in Manitoba living with ankylosing spondylitis are able to reduce the pain and disability associated with delaying treatment and improve their quality of life.

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

Sincerely,

Cheryl Koehn
President, Arthritis Consumer Experts
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

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

Corrie Billedeau
MN Steering Committee Representative
Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

C.c. Arlene Wilgosh, Assistant Deputy Minister
C.c. Gail Keeley, Executive Director, Provincial Drug Programs

Note: Please address reply correspondence to Ms. Cheryl Koehn, Arthritis Consumer Experts, 910 B Richards Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 3C1; or, Anne Dooley, 206 Garrison Crescent, Saskatoon, SK. S7H 2Z8