



September 26, 2007

Honourable Michael Murphy
Carleton Place
P. O. Box 5100
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5G8

**Sent via email to:
hw_sme@gnb.ca
Original mailed**

Dear Minister Murphy:

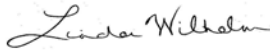
In an effort to work collaboratively with government, Arthritis Consumer Experts and the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance are writing to bring your attention to the June 20, 2007 Common Drug Review's **Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee (CEDAC) recommendation that adalimumab (Humira®) be added 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, people in New Brunswick living with ankylosing spondylitis have access to two biologic medications through special authority on the provincial drug reimbursement formulary. While this represents important treatment options, it is also critical that all safe and effective options are included on the provincial formulary. As with other diseases, people living with ankylosing spondylitis respond differently to medications and therefore it is important to have a broad range of treatment options available. As outline 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 people with ankylosing spondylitis. Providing a timely reimbursement listing for this medication will ensure that people in New Brunswick 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 New Brunswick's listing decision for adalimumab for ankylosing spondylitis.

Sincerely,



Linda Wilhelm
NB Steering Committee Representative
Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance
Person with rheumatoid arthritis



Cheryl Koehn
President, Arthritis Consumer Experts
Person with rheumatoid arthritis

Encl.

C.c. Leanne Jardine, Acting Director, New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program

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