

# Update From the Optimal Care Committee

By Cheryl Barnabe, MD, FRCPC, MSc

On behalf of the Optimal Care Committee, I'd like to first thank and acknowledge the contributions of Dr. Henry Averbs as Committee Chair over the past four years. Dr. Averbs led this committee in successfully advocating for changes to the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) formulary for access to biologics for Treaty First Nations with rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and overseeing several other activities, such as the finalization and dissemination of the Choosing Wisely campaign led by Dr. Shirley Chow and Dr. Carter Thorne; the CRA's involvement in the Wait Time Alliance led by Dr. Nigil Haroon; and the completion and dissemination of the Stand Up and Be Counted survey by members of the Human Resources Committee (in particular Dr. Claire Barber). We are very appreciative of Dr. Averbs' commitment to remain the liaison to the NIHB going forward. CRA member responses to our NIHB Experience Survey were summarized and discussed with the NIHB in September, and we are now supporting the CRA membership with new resources to ensure that limited-use initial and renewal criteria are clear and accessible, as well as preparing a document so that the NIHB claims process is more understandable.

New activities within the Optimal Care Committee's scope were approved at the CRA Board Meeting in April 2016. In the next year, we will be focused on two specific efforts: (1) increasing the impact of rheumatologists' re-

lationships with Indigenous patients through Indigenous cultural competency training; and (2) collaborating with Dr. Claire Barber and the Arthritis Alliance of Canada to determine a core data set for rheumatology, which will feed the collection of information relevant to the measurement of quality of care in our varied practice settings. The Optimal Care Committee is also participating in activities with the Guidelines Committee and will produce a summary document outlining processes suggested in the renewal of the RA Guidelines. I also represented the CRA at the Canada 2020 meeting in Ottawa in September, which served to discuss possible reforms and funding mechanisms for our health system as we enter another cycle of renewal of the Health Accord between the federal and provincial health ministries.

For more information, please visit [https://rheum.ca/en/members/clinical\\_resources](https://rheum.ca/en/members/clinical_resources). The Optimal Care Committee is happy to receive your suggestions on activities that will fulfill our mandate to improve equitable access to quality care. Please contact myself at [ccbarnab@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ccbarnab@ucalgary.ca) or Claire McGowan-Shaw at [claire@rheum.ca](mailto:claire@rheum.ca).

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## WELCOME TO THE RHEUM & FAREWELL AS YOU LEAVE

### Congratulations to:

Dr. Paul Davis and  
Dr. Brian Hanna as they  
embark upon retirement.  
The CRA and the CRAJ  
editorial board wish you  
both the very best.

### Welcome to the following new members:

Tooba Ali, Hamilton ON  
Amber Cogar, Winnipeg, MB  
Ina Cusnir, Edmonton, AB  
Martha Decker, Edmonton, AB  
Muhammed Dhalia, Vancouver, BC  
Caylib Durand, Calgary, AB  
Shaina Goudie, Saskatoon, SK  
Kun Huang, Richmond, BC

Sara Hussein, Montreal, QC  
Konstantin Jilkine, Saskatoon, SK  
Delphine Keyaert, Laval, QC  
Sonia Lagacé, Quebec, QC  
Dara Mairiang, Vancouver, BC  
Maig Nguyen, Winnipeg, BC  
Marc-Etienne Parent,  
Sherbrooke, QC

Elisabeth Pek, Toronto, ON  
Anthony Perruccio, Toronto, ON  
Saara Rawn, Hamilton, ON  
Alexandra Saltman, Toronto, ON  
Michael Wokowski, Montreal, QC  
Sophie Wojcik, Montreal, QC  
Yan Yeung, London  
Xiabin (Tony) Zhang, Toronto, ON