

Update from the Therapeutics Committee

By Rosie Scuccimarri, MD, FRCPC

The last nine months have been very busy for the Therapeutics Committee with many requests and tight deadlines responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee drafted and approved a number of position statements for the CRA, including one endorsing the ACR statement on COVID-19, another on practical recommendations and finally one on hydroxychloroquine supply. We supported a letter penned to Minister Patty Hajdu with regard to the hydroxychloroquine shortage. The committee endorsed a Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS) practice point on the paediatric inflammatory multisystem syndrome temporally associated with COVID-19. We continue to monitor ongoing issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conjointly with the CRA Pediatric and Stakeholder Committees, the Therapeutics Committee drafted and approved the CRA position statement on access to citrate-free adalimumab, and we continue to actively follow this issue. A cannabidiol addendum was made to the Medical Cannabis position statement, which was approved by the CRA Board. The committee drafted a Medical Cannabis in-

formation sheet for patients and allied health professionals. It is currently being edited to the appropriate reading level for patients by an outside agency. Our committee is still working on a position statement on stem cell therapy for osteoarthritis. We have currently drafted and approved a position statement on the safety of hydroxychloroquine in the treatment of rheumatic diseases, which should be circulated shortly.

I would like to thank the Therapeutics Committee members for their dedication over a particularly challenging year dealing with COVID-19. They have been engaged and responsive to a number of emerging and urgent issues in 2020, and their guidance and advocacy has benefitted not only CRA members but the wider rheumatology community.

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New Resources for Patients

By Trish Barbato, President and CEO, Arthritis Society

Throughout 2020 and the challenges it has brought to all of us in the arthritis community, the Arthritis Society has never wavered in its commitment to support people affected by the disease.

At a time when many health charities have had to scale back their research efforts, we are continuing to meet our funding commitments, and making new ones.

Our Arthritis Talks education webinars, now taking place monthly, are reaching thousands more Canadians than ever before. And, we are steadily adding to our collection of evidence-based online information for people with arthritis.

We invite you to visit our website, arthritis.ca, to check out our comprehensive overview of emerging treatment and research, our guide to drug-free pain management op-



tions, a detailed biologics and biosimilars portal and lifestyle supports such as our “Life Hack” video series.

As Canada's voice for the six million Canadians with arthritis, the Arthritis Society is also continuing our campaigns aimed at shining a light on the disease. This holiday season, we're focusing our messaging on how arthritis takes away the simple joys of life.

Holding hands, playing in the snow and getting dressed shouldn't hurt.

Thank you for being among the Canadians helping to diminish the pain of arthritis. We encourage you to share our new resources with your patients and networks.