

# Report from the ORA

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Ontario  
Rheumatology  
Association

We are six-plus-months into the pandemic in Ontario, with all the challenges that has entailed. ORA members pivoted immediately to virtual care in mid-March 2020. We ran five ORA Town Halls throughout April and May 2020 to update members on the evolving situation. All of these are archived on the ORA website [www.ontariorheum.ca](http://www.ontariorheum.ca) (via the members-only portion), where we also house links to multiple COVID-19 resources, including financial and infection control information.

Unfortunately, our ORA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) scheduled for mid-April 2020 fell victim to the pandemic and had to be cancelled. We will definitely be holding our 2021 ORA ASM from May 28-30, 2021, either virtually or in a hybrid format. Our entire star-studded roster of speakers confirmed for the 2020 event has agreed to participate. They include Drs. Joseph Smolen, Maya Buch, Michelle Petri, Jeffrey Curtis, Christopher Ritchlin, Robert Inman, Shahin Jamal, Robert Bell and Jason Lee. Full details can be found on our website.

In the background, all ORA committees continue to function and deal with their mandates. Drug shortages, biosimilars, virtual medicine and transitions in and out of practice are key areas we continue to focus on. The Informatics Committee has officially launched phase 1 of the ORDER project, aiming to create a dashboard for a rheumatology electronic medical record (EMR), which will allow participants to view their own practice outcomes, and compare themselves to the aggregate of participating rheumatologists within the province. The ultimate goal is to develop an enhanced EMR experience, while improving patient outcomes in a measurable fashion. Also, a new Northern Ontario committee has been created from our RheumOpportunities Committee, chaired by Sahil Koppikar.

Our new ORA Board and Executive took over their roles as of May 25, 2020. Special thanks to our three departing board members for their hard work on behalf of our members: Drs. Vandana Ahluwalia, Rick Adachi and Vinod Chandran. We welcomed to the ORA Board Drs. Shelly Dunne, Raman Rai and Faiza Khokhar. All of us are working hard advocating on behalf of the ORA membership and our pa-



The ORA board at a past meeting:

From left to right; **Back row:** Dr. Carter Thorne, Dr. Tom Appleton, Dr. Henry Averbs, Dr. Rick Adachi, and Dr. Imtiaz Khan; **Middle row:** Mr. Denis Morrice, Dr. Vinod Chandran, Dr. Art Karasik, Dr. Felix Leung, Dr. Philip Baer, Ms. Sandy Kennedy, Dr. Nikhil Chopra, and Dr. Deborah Levy; **Front Row:** Dr. Thanu Ruban, Dr. Janet Pope, Dr. Jane Purvis, Dr. Vandana Ahluwalia, and Dr. Julie Kovacs

tients during these challenging times. Other transitions include the retirement of our long-time Executive Director, Denis Morrice, who was instrumental in leading the ORA to its current strong position, well-known to all stakeholders in the arthritis space. Sandy Kennedy, previously our ORA Project Manager, has taken over Denis' position.

There are always opportunities for ORA members to participate in ORA activities and committees. Check out our website for more information.

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