



**Canadian Rheumatology Association
Position Statement on Opioid Therapy for Patients with Rheumatic Diseases
(in response to the Guideline for Opioid Therapy and Chronic Non-Cancer Pain as
published in CMAJ 2017 May 8)**

Pain is a prevalent and often severe symptom that impacts global health status for almost every patient with a rheumatic disease. In response to the Guideline for opioid therapy and chronic non-cancer pain published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal in May 2017, the Canadian Rheumatology Association states the following:

1. The CRA agrees in principal with the guideline for opioid therapy in persons with chronic noncancer pain.
2. While rheumatologists may be best suited to manage persons with rheumatic diseases, competent clinical care requires attention to all aspects of a patient's health status, which will include collaboration with other treating physicians when opioids are prescribed for the management of pain.
3. When opioids are a treatment choice for a patient with a rheumatic disease, one physician, ideally the primary care physician, should be the designated prescriber, and the rheumatologist may provide written support for opioid treatment in the spirit of collaborative clinical care.