

## **CRA Position Statement on Quebec’s Bill 2: Protecting Rheumatology Care and Physician Well-being**

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The Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRA) strongly opposes Bill 2, recently enacted by the Government of Quebec. This legislation introduces coercive measures that undermine physicians’ rights, destabilize the health care system, and threaten the quality of care for patients living with complex chronic conditions such as arthritis and autoimmune diseases.

### **Why This Matters for Rheumatology**

Rheumatology care is highly specialized and time-intensive. Patients often present with complex, multi-system diseases requiring careful assessment, longitudinal follow-up, and coordination with other specialists. Bill 2’s approach—tying remuneration to patient volume and imposing punitive restrictions on physicians—prioritizes quantity over quality. This model is incompatible with the realities of rheumatology practice and risks compromising patient outcomes.

### **Impact on Physicians and Patients**

- **Physician Burnout and Exodus:** Rheumatologists already face overwhelming administrative burdens and high burnout rates. Bill 2 adds financial penalties and removes collective bargaining rights, creating an environment of fear and coercion. These conditions will accelerate physician attrition and migration to other provinces, leaving Quebec patients without access to essential rheumatology expertise.
- **Quality of Care at Risk:** Chronic rheumatic diseases require continuity and individualized care. A system that pressures physicians to increase throughput undermines the therapeutic relationship and jeopardizes timely diagnosis and treatment, leading to avoidable disability and reduced quality of life for patients.

### **Violation of Fundamental Rights**

Bill 2 infringes on freedoms guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including freedom of association and expression. By banning legitimate advocacy and imposing disproportionate fines, the legislation erodes democratic principles and silences the medical community.

### **Lack of Independent Arbitration**

Unlike other provinces, Quebec offers no independent arbitration mechanism to resolve disputes between government and physicians. This absence forces unilateral decisions and deepens mistrust, rather than fostering collaboration and sustainable solutions.

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### **Canadian Rheumatology Association’s Call to Action**

The CRA stands in solidarity with Quebec physicians—especially rheumatologists—who are committed to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care. We urge the Government of Quebec to:

1. Repeal Bill 2 immediately.
2. Engage in meaningful dialogue with medical associations to co-create solutions that respect physicians’ rights and prioritize patient care.
3. Establish an independent arbitration process to ensure fair and transparent negotiations.

Rheumatology patients deserve care that is thoughtful, comprehensive, and accessible. Physicians deserve a system that values their expertise and well-being. Collaboration—not coercion—is the path forward.