



California  
**Rheumatology**  
Alliance

## CRA June 2021 Newsletter

Greetings!

The California Rheumatology Alliance remains dedicated to providing updated news and resources to our membership. We appreciate and encourage any feedback to assist in our service to our members.

If there are any topics you are interested in and would like for us to cover via webinar, please email [info@calrheum.org](mailto:info@calrheum.org).

Visit our Website

## SAVE THE DATE: 2021 CRA ANNUAL MEETING

We're happy to announce that we're back + looking forward to our upcoming meeting this year! Please save the date for the 17th Annual Medical & Scientific Meeting that will be held in conjunction with the UCLA Carl Pearson Symposium

**October 8 - 12, 2021**  
**Marina del Rey Marriott**  
**Marina del Rey, CA**

More information coming soon!

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

May brings so many opportunities to celebrate Mother's Day, graduations, and Memorial Day. To take advantage of savings on gifts, make sure to register to become a member or renew your CRA Membership, please visit our website to pay your 2021 dues:

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

As a reminder, when you become a CRA Member, you also have access to various benefits including membership to Tickets At Work. From healthy workout subscriptions to grocery services, there are amazing options to ensure our safety as California continues its stay-at-home mandate. To sign up, follow the instructions below:

1. Click the link below
2. Fill out the form to become a Tickets at Work member (please use the same email address as you do for CRA communications)
3. Enter Company Code "ALLIANCE17"
4. Enjoy the savings!

TICKETS AT WORK

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Senate and Assembly are finishing up voting on bills this week ahead of the June 4th deadline for all bills to pass out of the "House of Origin". As a reminder we are in the first year of the two-year session so any bills that do not pass by June 4th become "two-year" bills and will not move forward this year.

As we have discussed, [AB 347 \(Arambula\)](#) is being co-sponsored by the CRA, Arthritis Foundation, and Crohn's and Colitis Foundation to establish standard exceptions to step therapy, require decisions on prior authorization and step therapy exception requests be done with 72 hours or 24 hours for exigent situations, and require the payers' use a physician who is of the same or similar specialty as the treating physician when reviewing an appeal to a step therapy exception request.

Since our last newsletter, AB 347 passed out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee. As a condition of passing the language requiring the payers to provide data on the number of step therapy exception requests and other related information was deleted from the bill. We were disappointed the reporting language was taken out but were thankful to have the bill continue to move. The bill then passed off the Assembly Floor on a 52-0 vote and is in the Senate. The bill will next be heard in the Senate Health Committee sometime in June or early July. We will keep you posted  
Other bills CRA is tracking include:

- The California Chronic Care Coalition, which CRA is a member, is sponsoring [AB 752 \(Nazarian\)](#) to require payers to provide patients and physicians, upon consent from the patient, access to a "real time benefit tool" that will assist the patient in understanding the cost to acquire the needed medication. This would improve a patient's ability to begin therapy without delay due to unexpected costs discovered when filling the prescription at the pharmacy. CRA was a lead witness in the Assembly Health hearing where the bill passed out on a 13-0 vote. The bill was found to have state costs of more than \$150,000 and was placed on the Suspense File. Unfortunately, this bill did not pass out of the Assembly Appropriations Committee due to its costs to the State.

- [SB 568 \(Pan\)](#) would lower out-of-pocket costs for consumers by requiring certain medicines and benefits used to treat chronic disease be covered without subjecting patients to a deductible. This bill has passed the Senate and is now in the Assembly. **CRA supports this bill.**

- You may recall over the past few years' legislation requiring physicians to disclose in writing to patients any payment or transfer of value received from pharmaceutical or medical Device companies. [AB 1278 \(Nazarian\)](#) has been introduced this year doing the same thing and promises to be another battle. CRA has had multiple meetings with the author's office and are discussing possible alternative approaches. CRA continues to Oppose the bill. The bill has passed the Assembly and is now in the Senate. **CRA opposes this bill.**

- [SB 250 \(Pan\)](#) would provide a process for physicians who have a record of appropriate authorizations for medical treatment and prescribing to avoid going through burdensome prior authorization processes. This bill has passed the Senate and is now in the Assembly. **CRA supports this bill.**

If you have any questions or would like additional information on any of these bills, please contact Tim Madden at [madden@mqadvocacy.com](mailto:madden@mqadvocacy.com).

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