



## CRA September 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](#)

## 2021 CRA ANNUAL MEETING & HONORARY LUNCHEON

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**

We also invite you to join us in celebrating our 2021 Lifetime Achievement Honoree: Dr. Daniel E. Furst! Dr. Furst has contributed so much to rheumatology and we were honored to have him serve as a CRA Board Member! The luncheon is open to all registered member of the meeting. If you are unable to attend in person, we will be live streaming the event via Zoom as well.

For more information on the meeting and how to register for both the meeting and the luncheon, please [click here](#) to visit our website!

## SEPTEMBER WEBINAR

**Wednesday, September 22, 2021**  
**6:00pm PT**

Please save the date for our upcoming September webinar titled, "Review of Upadacitinib in Rheumatoid Arthritis" where highlights will include MOA, efficacy with an emphasis on updated safety. This webinar will be presented by Jillian Yee, Abbvie's Medical Science Liaison.

[REGISTER NOW!](#)

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Legislature has returned from their summer recess and are in the last two weeks of session which ends on September 10<sup>th</sup>. The major focus for CRA is on [AB 347 \(Arambula\)](#) which is being co-sponsored by CRA, Arthritis Foundation, and Crohn's and Colitis Foundation to establish standard exceptions to step therapy and require decisions on prior authorization and step therapy exception requests be done with 72 hours or 24 hours for exigent situations.

Last month we discussed the increasing opposition to the provision requiring the health plans to have a physician with a similar or same specialty as the treating physician review appeals to step therapy exception requests. Unfortunately, as the bill passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee it was amended to make changes to that provision which led CRA to ask the author to remove it from the bill. This is disappointing but we have been collaborating with the California Medical Association to explore possibilities to pursue this requirement next year.

AB 347 is now on the Senate Floor where we expect it to pass next week and then head to the Governor. The advocacy team will be sending out a request for you to submit letters to the Governor expressing support for AB 347.

Other bills CRA is tracking include:

- [AB 1278 \(Nazarian\)](#) was introduced to require physicians to disclose any remuneration received from drug and device companies to patients both verbally and in writing. CRA has been working on the bill which has been amended to require physicians to provide annually a written disclosure to patients about the Open Payments Database as well as updating signage in the front of the physician's office on how to access the Open Payments Database. The bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee, so it is dead for this year. The bill will be eligible for a vote next year. **CRA continues to oppose the bill.**
- [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 was heard in the Assembly Health Committee, but no votes were cast. The Committee felt it needed to be further analyzed to address concerns raised by the Chair of the Committee. The bill will be eligible for a vote next year, **CRA supports 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 was not heard in the Assembly Health Committee due to concerns raised by the Chair of the Committee. This bill is still eligible to be heard next year. **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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