

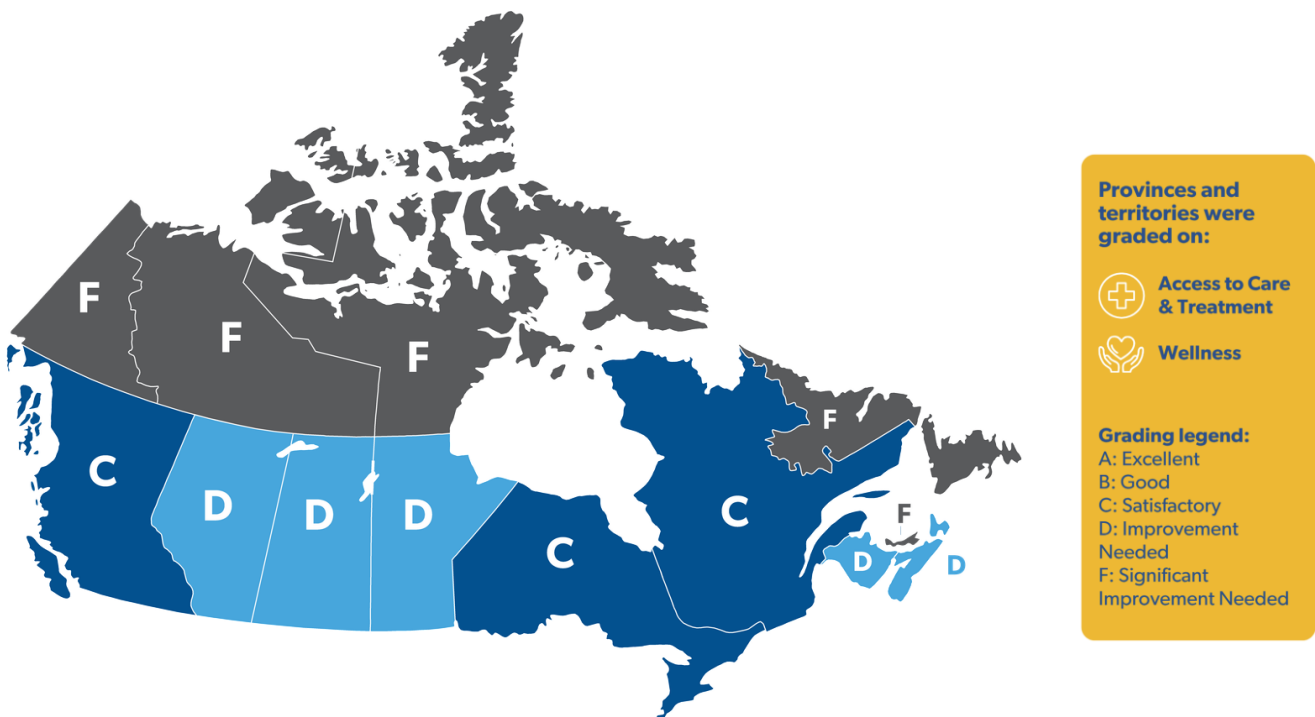
# ARTHRITIS ACTION NOW ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

## THE PROBLEM

More than six million people in Canada live with arthritis – one in five people. It costs the economy \$45.9 billion annually in healthcare spending and lost productivity. Yet arthritis research is underfunded, awarded less than two percent of funding from Canada’s largest federal funder of health research.

In 2023, the first *State of Arthritis Report Card* looked at how provinces and territories were addressing arthritis. The Report Card identified serious gaps in access to care, treatments, and research. The second [State of Arthritis Report Card 2026](#) shows many of the same challenges persist.

While British Columbia, Ontario, and Québec scored highest among jurisdictions, not a single province or territory achieved a grade above a “C”. Atlantic provinces – which have some of the highest rates of arthritis in the country – continue to face significant challenges. The Territories are grappling with the most significant data gaps.



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## THE SOLUTION

### *Arthritis Action Now: The Plan to End Arthritis in Canada*

For the first time, 21 leading organizations across Canada's arthritis ecosystem have united with input from more than 100,000 patients, researchers, clinicians, and advocates behind one bold commitment. The plan provides a comprehensive roadmap to prevent, better treat, and ultimately cure arthritis, focused on three key priorities for government action:

#### **Timely, appropriate and inclusive arthritis prevention and care**

- Build arthritis care pathways for prevention, diagnosis and treatment
- Accelerate access to new therapies and ensure people get the right treatment at the right time
- Co-develop culturally safe arthritis prevention and care with Indigenous communities

#### **Reduction of arthritis-related disability**

- Provide access to community-based self-management and support programs
- Reduce wait times for joint replacement surgeries
- Implement targeted arthritis prevention programs and public awareness campaigns

#### **Canada as a leader in arthritis research and innovation**

- Increase investments in arthritis research and innovation including Indigenous-led research
- Implement a pan-Canadian health data strategy that includes arthritis data and equity metrics

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

### 1. **Email federal and provincial government representatives**

The arthritis community has developed an [online advocacy campaign](#) that allows you to take action by sending a letter to your local provincial and federal government representative and federal Health Minister urging them to implement Arthritis Action Now solutions. Don't forget to add your own personal arthritis journey or story to the letter. Please share the campaign page or your action with your friends, families and colleagues, and encourage them to take action too.

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## 2. Post and share on social media

Ads for the online campaign are currently running. When you see them, please share and add your own story.

Here are some suggested messages and hashtags for you to post, retweet or make your own:

*More than 6 million people in Canada are living with arthritis – and they need us to act now. <https://bit.ly/TakeActionEN> #ArthritisActionNow*

*Arthritis Action Now is a bold strategy co-created by 21 arthritis-related organizations and with input from more than 100,000 patients, researchers, clinicians and advocates. <https://bit.ly/ArthritisActionNowEN> #ArthritisActionNow*

*This is not another report, it's a comprehensive roadmap to prevent, better treat and ultimately cure arthritis. <https://bit.ly/ArthritisActionNowEN> #ArthritisActionNow*

*Together, we're taking action to transform arthritis care in Canada. Join us in calling for government action to end arthritis in Canada. <https://bit.ly/TakeActionEN> #ArthritisActionNow*

Remember to mention or tag your government officials when posting on social media.

## KEY MESSAGES

### Arthritis is a Crisis That Demands Action

#### Hidden crisis

- Arthritis is the #1 cause of disability
- More people live with arthritis than diabetes, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and dementia combined
- Half of those with arthritis are under the age of 65

#### Our system is failing 6 million Canadians

- The 2026 State of Arthritis Report Card shows provinces and territories are failing Canadians in access to care, treatments, and research
- Arthritis research is underfunded, awarded less than 2% of investment from Canada's largest federal funder of health research.

# ARTHRITIS ACTION NOW ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

## **Arthritis is costing our economy**

- It costs our economy \$45.9 billion annually in healthcare spending and lost productivity
- Until we confront the scale of the crisis people will continue to suffer

## **THE SOLUTION IS READY**

Unprecedented collaboration among 21 organizations, with input from more than 100,000 patients and advocates, researchers, and health professionals.

Arthritis Action Now is not another report, it's a comprehensive roadmap to prevent, better treat and ultimately cure arthritis.

### **This plan will:**

- Deliver faster and better arthritis prevention and care
- Reduce arthritis disability
- Position Canada as a leader in research and innovation

### **Through policy actions like:**

- Reduce wait times for joint replacements
- Connect patients to experts faster
- Timely access to critical medications, especially for children
- Reduce arthritis due to injuries through prevention and awareness programs

### **And research and innovation breakthroughs like:**

- Deliver the world's first disease-modifying treatment for osteoarthritis
- Achieve long-lasting remission for inflammatory arthritis in adults and children
- Use a person's genetic profile to personalize their treatment
- Create integrated data and clinical research platforms
- Address health inequities to support underserved communities