



# ARAD NEWSLETTER

## Australian Rheumatology Association Database

January 2007

### Your contribution to ARAD

The ARAD project team greatly appreciates your contribution to this important health registry. The continued support from individuals with arthritis (rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, juvenile arthritis and psoriatic arthritis) by completing questionnaires is essential in being able to determine the long term benefits and safety of new biologic drugs for Australian patients. Ultimately, Australian data will be added to data from other nations to evaluate these drugs on an international level.

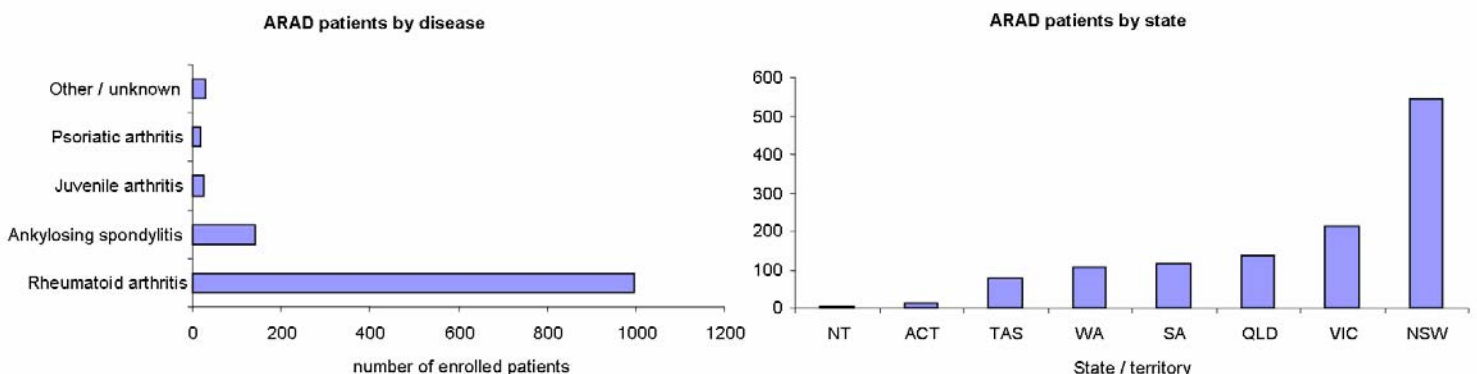
If you have decided to stop contributing to ARAD, we thank you for your participation so far. However, should you wish to recommence, please contact your state coordinator (details overleaf) so we can send you another questionnaire and update your details.

### New developments in ARAD

#### 1. **Recruitment**

ARAD grew markedly during 2006. Currently, there are over 1,200 people participating in ARAD, under the care of 143 rheumatologists across Australia (see the figures below). Females (average age 54.2 years) account for 65% of ARAD participants, while males (average age 55.9 years) account for 35% of participants.

#### ARAD Participant Characteristics



#### 2. **Staffing**

Due to the increasing size and scope of ARAD, more staff have been employed. A project coordinator, Dr Andrew Briggs, has been appointed to oversee the day-to-day running of ARAD. In addition, the ARAD data management centre based at the Alfred Hospital (Melbourne) has taken over the responsibility of distributing and receiving questionnaires. ARAD employs 2 staff at the data management centre – Molly Bond and Nino Hay – to manage all questionnaires, maintain the database and assist state coordinators with contacting participants when needed. Those participants who have been contributing to ARAD for some time should now expect to receive correspondence from the data centre rather than state co-ordinators. The photo board on page 2 shows the current ARAD staff.



**Dr Andrew Briggs**  
Project Coordinator



**Bridie Murphy**  
State Coordinator:  
VIC, SA



**Rosemarie van den Haak**  
State Coordinator:  
NSW, ACT



**Lyndall Henderson**  
State Coordinator:  
WA, QLD, TAS, NT



**Molly Bond**  
Research Officer,  
ARAD data centre



**Nino Hay**  
Research Officer,  
ARAD data centre

**3. New data**

During 2007, ARAD will collect information from Medicare Australia and the National Cancer and Death Registries. This information will inform us on health care utilisation and any adverse events.

**4. Funding**

The ability to expand ARAD has been helped by funding from the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), Monash University, and educational grants from Abbott, Amgen and Wyeth pharmaceutical companies. Generous educational grants have also been provided by Aventis and Schering Plough previously.

**New questionnaires**

By now, many participants would have received a new-look questionnaire that shows your previous answers to certain questions. This initiative is designed to help you answer the question by reminding you of your previous answer. However, it is still essential that you provide an answer to **EVERY** question using a blue or black biro – that is, every question should have a response except questions 14 and 15. If you are uncertain how to answer a question, please contact your state co-ordinator for assistance.

**ARAD is unique**

ARAD is unique for a number of reasons:

1. There is no other health registry in Australia which collects comprehensive information on the biological drugs including Enbrel, Humira, Remicade, Kineret and MabThera
2. ARAD relies on data from patients, not rheumatologists
3. ARAD collects information from children with juvenile arthritis who take biologic drugs  
..... so please keep up the great effort in completing questionnaires!

**If you need any assistance please contact your relevant state coordinator:**  
**QLD, WA, NT, TAS:** Lyndall Henderson (02) 9926 8579 [lyndallh@med.usyd.edu.au](mailto:lyndallh@med.usyd.edu.au)  
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