



22. Joint Action on Arthritis: A Framework to Improve Arthritis Prevention and Care in Canada.

Gillian Hawker, Michel Zimmer (Montréal, QC), Dianne Mosher (Calgary, AB), Claire Bombardier (Toronto, ON) and the Arthritis Alliance of Canada.

Objective: The Arthritis Alliance of Canada (AAC), a nationwide coalition of thirty five organizations demand that improved arthritis prevention and care be recognized and treated as an urgent national priority. In 2011, The AAC released the Impact Report, which revealed that arthritis costs the Canadian economy \$33.2 billion a year in health care costs and lost productivity. To build on the Impact report, the AAC recently released, Joint Action on Arthritis: A Framework to Improve Arthritis Prevention and Care in Canada, which prioritizes areas of focus that will have the greatest impact on those living with arthritis.

Approach: Joint Action on Arthritis was developed by the Alliance between January and September 2012 in consultation with over 100 stakeholders from 60 different organizations across Canada. Joint Action on Arthritis advocates a three-pillar approach to deliver better outcomes for those living with arthritis and reduce the burden of the disease on Canada's healthcare system and the economy:

1. Advancing knowledge and awareness – to improve understanding of the disease, and to enhance and focus research funding on improving prevention and the delivery of arthritis care to Canadians
2. Improving prevention and care – to create the conditions for earlier detection, diagnosis and intervention, to improve access and delivery of care.
3. Supporting ongoing stakeholder collaboration – to bring together and better focus the efforts and activities of the arthritis community.

Results: Since the launch of Joint Action on Arthritis, there has been an increase in awareness and interest from influential government groups, both federally and provincially. The Alliance continues to broaden the range of stakeholders and contributors.

The Alliance has established an expert Models of Care Working Group that has developed evidence-based criteria that can enhance efficient and effective diagnosis and care of arthritis in different care environments.

Conclusion: Joint Action on Arthritis and its stakeholders will:

- Communicate the arthritis community's vision of the actions and interventions required to improve the lives of people living with arthritis.
- Galvanize action around long-term strategies to improve arthritis prevention, and quality and efficiency of care.
- Facilitate and focus collaboration among governments and arthritis stakeholders in awareness, models of care and research.

The AAC will work to deliver on a wide range of strategies initiatives to achieve the goal of improving the lives of those living with arthritis.