

## RESEARCH STUDY BACKGROUND

Arthritis is the most common health condition that results in the need for Canadians to stop working. This can have tremendous consequences for people with arthritis and their families, financially, and in terms of personal well-being. Yet, few health services exist to address employment issues for those with arthritis.

The Institute of Health Economics and the University of Calgary are working jointly on a project to better understand the needs of employees who are experiencing inflammatory arthritis and how to better assist them in the workplace, as well as employers who are working to support and accommodate employees with this condition within a workplace setting.

There are two key research projects within the study:

1. **Employee-focused intervention:** This part of the study will evaluate the impact of an online program, Making It Work, developed by the Arthritis Research Centre of Canada. This program was designed to help people with inflammatory arthritis remain employed by providing relevant information and opportunities to develop skills and techniques to manage problems encountered at work due to arthritis.
2. **Employer-focused needs assessment:** This part of the study will involve focus groups or interviews to gather information about the kinds of resources and supports that would be helpful for assisting employees with inflammatory arthritis remain in a workplace setting. Three groups will be invited to participate on a voluntary basis:
  - a. School jurisdiction Human Resources (HR) staff
  - b. ASEBP employees who are responsible for disability case management and health services
  - c. ASEBP covered members who have inflammatory arthritis or support a colleague who does

## ASEBP'S INVOLVEMENT

ASEBP is assisting in volunteer recruitment for this study. This will entail providing information about the opportunity to participate in the evaluation of the online program (Making it Work) by mailing out a package of information to all of our covered members on behalf of the research group. Later this year, ASEBP will also distribute information about the opportunity to participate in a focus group or interview in coordination with school jurisdiction HR staff.

ASEBP will not be conducting any part of the study, nor will we have access to any information on individual study participants. We will receive a research report at the end of the study with aggregate findings.

ASEBP is not responsible for the actions of the Institute of Health Economics, the University of Calgary or its researchers, the content of the program used by the researchers and ASEBP's covered members, nor the results of the program.

ASEBP is not providing any funding in support of this research study, nor incurring any costs related to the mailing of information to our covered members for this project; all expenses are being met and/or paid for by the research group.



## WHY WOULD I WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary; however, if you choose to participate, you will be assisting both the research team and ASEBP to better understand the needs of employees with inflammatory arthritis and how they can be best supported in the workplace. You could also gain access to a program designed to help people with inflammatory arthritis at work that is not otherwise available outside of the study.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the research team members:

### For Employee-focused intervention (Making It Work), please contact:

#### **Pam Rogers**

Research Coordinator

Arthritis Research Canada

Phone: 1-877-878-4558

Email: [makingitwork@arthritisresearch.ca](mailto:makingitwork@arthritisresearch.ca)

### For Employer-focused needs assessment, please contact:

#### **Stephanie Hastings**

Senior Research & Evaluation Consultant

Workforce Research and Evaluation

Alberta Health Services

Phone: 403-943-0579

Email: [Stephanie.Hastings@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:Stephanie.Hastings@albertahealthservices.ca)

