

# Arthritis Foundation 2016 Advocacy Report Card

January – December 2016

**We're the Champion of Yes – helping people with arthritis overcome their daily challenges and say Yes to better living! See some of our achievements as we work every day to remove barriers to treatment for those with arthritis and related conditions.**

[arthritis.org](http://arthritis.org)



## Challenge

**Be the authoritative leader on arthritis with state governments.**

### Action

Actively engaged in 126 bills in 31 states, achieving victories on biosimilars, step therapy limits, prior authorization and network adequacy legislation in 2016.

### Impact

- Enacted biosimilar legislation impacting more than 10.1 million patients in nine states (AZ, HI, ID, KY, MO, OH, OR, PA and RI), ensuring access to health care and protecting the patient-provider relationship.
- Enacted step therapy legislation increasing access to care for more than 7.8 million patients in four states (IA, IL, MO and NY), limiting step therapy/fail first protocols and ensuring that patients receive the medications deemed appropriate by their provider.
- Enacted prior authorization legislation affecting the lives of more than 6.7million patients in three states (DE, FL and OH), standardizing prior authorization protocols and streamlining access to vital medications and treatments.
- Enacted network adequacy legislation, increasing access to care for more than 2.7 million patients in two states (GA and MD).

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### Action

Held State Capitol Days in 10 states, providing Arthritis Foundation Advocates with an opportunity to meet with elected officials.

### Impact

Touched more than 1,500 state legislators and influenced legislative outcomes through Advocate visits and testimony in 20 states.

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### Action

To advance arthritis-related legislation, the Arthritis Foundation chaired the State Access to Innovative Medicines (SAIM) Coalition. We also chair the Medication Stability Coalition and belong to the Cap the Copay Coalition.

### Impact

Passed legislation increasing access to medications, positively impacting more than 77.5 million patients represented by these coalitions.

Enacted legislation includes:

- Biosimilars
- Accurate Network Directories
- Formulary Transparency
- Prior Authorization Limits
- Network Adequacy
- Step Therapy Override

**Challenge**

**Be the authoritative leader on arthritis with the federal government.**

**Action**

Directly engaged in legislation that affects access to care for people with arthritis.

**Impact**

- Increased the number of co-sponsors of HR 1859, the Ensuring Children’s Access to Specialty Care Act, to 73, including at least 19 from the Advocacy Summit.
- Ensured that the Children’s Access to Specialty Care Act was introduced in the U.S. Senate as S. 2782; a husband and wife Ambassador team from RI secured Sen. Jack Reed (RI) as the Democratic lead and yielded the support of seven co-sponsors.
- Secured a letter from Congress to the Government Accountability Office, asking for a study of the health and economic impact of osteoarthritis in the U.S.
- Engaged with the Institute of Clinical and Economic Review (ICER) to ensure the patient perspective is included in review of rheumatoid arthritis drugs.
- Developed a website about ICER that serves as a tool for patient and provider education.
- Provided leadership for the patient community in opposing and stopping the demonstration of the Medicare Part B proposal.
- The 21st Century Cures Act was signed into law by President Obama after more than two years of advocacy from the Arthritis Foundation and other patient advocacy groups.

**Action**

Engaged with Congress to raise awareness about arthritis in the U.S. military.

**Impact**

- Educated more than 50 Congressional offices and veterans organizations about arthritis in the U.S. military at a Capitol Hill briefing.
- 45 members of Congress signed a letter supporting a dedicated arthritis research program at the Department of Defense, many as a direct result of the Advocacy Summit.
- Published “A Silent Enemy: How Arthritis Is Threatening Veterans and the U.S. Military,” to raise awareness of the threat of arthritis to our armed forces.

**Challenge**

**Increase grassroots engagement.**

**Action**

Created a grassroots legislative strategy to increase membership in the Congressional Arthritis Caucus.

**Impact**

- Added 14 new members to the Congressional Arthritis Caucus (CAC) for a total of 150 members.
- Hosted a CAC reception with more than 40 Congressional offices in attendance.

**Action**

Increased Advocate engagement in federal and state policies.

**Impact**

- Published Advocacy in Action newsletter biweekly, distributed to more than 135,000 Advocates.
- Enhanced our Ambassador program with special speakers on bimonthly webinars and easy-to-complete assignments.
- Hosted five Advocate Webinar Series briefings on clinical trials, advocating from anywhere, tools for better living and insurance appeals.
- Honored 28 Platinum Ambassadors at the 2016 Advocacy Summit.
- Trained hundreds of parents and children on how to get involved in advocacy and tell their story at the annual JA Conference and in local trainings in over a dozen states.
- Increased the number of Ambassadors by 25 percent to 1,187.
- Engaged Advocates who mailed more than 4,500 letters to Capitol Hill in the first five months of 2016, supporting the Arthritis Foundation’s legislative agenda.
- Coordinated more than 50 meetings between Advocates and their members of Congress during August recess, resulting in four new co-sponsors to H.R. 1859 and S.2782.

**Action**

Increased visibility for the advocacy program at nationwide events.

**Impact**

- Presented at the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organization’s annual meeting on how the Arthritis Foundation and arthritis patients can help health care providers in their advocacy efforts.
- Presented at the National Organization of Rheumatology Managers conference to teach office managers how to advocate for patients.
- Presented at Arthritis Introspective’s National Gathering Conference on how attendees can expand their advocacy work.

**Action**

Created opportunities for Advocates to engage with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

**Impact**

- Nominated an Arthritis Foundation Ambassador to serve on the FDA Arthritis Advisory Committee; she began her term in December.
- Secured a spot for an Arthritis Foundation Ambassador to testify before the FDA Arthritis Advisory Committee on the need for patient safety to be the highest priority as the FDA considers approval of biosimilars.