The effects of arthritis are devastating – impacting one in five Americans. The hallmarks of this disease are excruciating pain and limited mobility, stopping people from walking, working and reaching their fullest potential. At the Arthritis Foundation, we believe that is not your fate. We are pursuing a cure and fighting every day to provide real time solutions to live your best life. Making a difference in the lives of 50 million people and their families is our destiny.

Below are outlined the facts and techniques for sharing the needs and how the Arthritis Foundation is uniquely qualified to answer all of the challenges and needs for people with arthritis, organized by the largest areas of opportunities:

- Increasing Access to Care
- Creating Connections
- Fueling the Mission
- Pursuing a Cure
- Offering Personalized Guidance

### Increasing Access to Care

We are breaking down barriers by speaking up and raising awareness of the everyday challenges for people living with arthritis. With an army of more than 134,000 Advocates, we are supporting bills related to increasing access to care, including capping copays and limiting step therapy.

**Challenge:** There is a severe shortage of pediatric rheumatologists in the United States. Eleven states do not have a single board-certified, practicing pediatric rheumatologist and seven states have only one.

**Solution:** The Ensuring Children’s Access to Specialty Care Act – a proposal to include pediatric rheumatologists as eligible for the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) – provides scholarship and loan repayment in exchange for service in rural and underserved areas.

**Ask:** [To representatives] Cosponsor H.R.1859 and S.2782 to help increase access to pediatric rheumatologists.

**Challenge:** Biosimilars are complex treatments requiring careful therapeutic monitoring. Pathways for substitution require communication and transparency with patients and physicians.

**Solution:** Our advocates actively support state-level bills that allow physicians to choose the right medication for their patients and require additional communication between patients and physicians if a substitution is made.

**Ask:** [To constituents] Sign up to be an Advocate online to receive alerts when there is a bill in your state.
Challenge: Arthritis is our nation’s leading cause of disability and is misunderstood by legislators. More visibility and education about arthritis is needed on Capitol Hill, so lawmakers can make informed decisions to support people with arthritis.

Solution: The Congressional Arthritis Caucus consists of 150 members of Congress and serves as a place to raise awareness and educate legislators of the challenges Americans with arthritis face by hosting briefings and meetings.

Ask: [To constituents] Ask your members of Congress to join the Congressional Arthritis Caucus.

Challenge: One in three veterans have arthritis and it is the second-leading cause of medical discharge from the U.S. Army. Military training and service can be extremely strenuous, dangerous and is a prominent contributing factor in osteoarthritis development.

Solution: A dedicated arthritis research program at the Department of Defense can help find better treatments and ultimately a cure for arthritis.

Ask: [To constituents] Contact your Senator’s office and ask them to support the creation of a dedicated arthritis research program through the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) at the Department of Defense in the FY17 funding bill.

Challenge: Legislators have many different populations that they are serving. Even though arthritis is the number one cause of disability, legislators may overlook those with arthritis if their unique issues are not top of mind.

Solution: In order to keep arthritis front and center, on the ground support is needed to testify at state capitals, meet with legislators and advocate on social media to help raise awareness and pass important arthritis-related legislation.

Ask: [To constituents] Become an arthritis ambassador and start forming relationships with state and federal legislators.

Creating Connections
We are instilling a sense of community for people with arthritis. Whether a child, young adult, adult or family member is affected by arthritis, we’re providing opportunities to connect with and learn from one another.

Challenge: A diagnosis of JA impacts the entire family. Often parents don’t have access to resources to help them manage their child’s disease and siblings feel helpless and lost.

Solution: The Arthritis Foundation’s National Juvenile Arthritis Conference offers families the opportunity to meet and connect with similar families, learn about the latest treatments and research as well as create strategies for managing daily activities and issues impacting their child’s development and social well-being. In addition, separate programs are offered for parents and caregivers, kids and teens with arthritis and siblings.
Ask: [To constituents] Know a family that could benefit from attending and/or receiving a scholarship to the JA conference? Direct them to arthritis.org/JAconference for more information.

Challenge: Arthritis is isolating and sometimes family members and friends don’t understand the pain and limitations associated with the disease.

Solution: Connecting with others who face the same challenges instills hope and empowerment. The Arthritis Support Network of adult, peer-led networking and support groups provides connection and education for those looking to meet others who share their interests and face similar challenges.

Ask: [To constituents] If you would like to start or co-lead an Arthritis Support Network in your area, please complete the SNL Application Form, located on arthritis.org/living-with-arthritis/tools-resources/ to start the process.

Challenge: Children living with a diagnosis of JA and other childhood rheumatic diseases can feel isolated – often, not knowing another child who has arthritis too.

Solution: The Arthritis Foundation offers 49 summer camp experiences nationwide for children between the ages of 7 to 17. The camp experience helps kids develop independence, meet new friends and build self-confidence.

Ask: [To constituents] If you know a child or teen that may benefit from attending a weeklong summer camp for kids and teens with JA and other childhood rheumatic diseases, direct them to ResourceFinder.arthritis.org to find a camp near them.

Challenge: Once a family receives their JA Power Pack, they often are unsure what step to take next.

Solution: The Arthritis Foundation hosts more than 100 family day events and 14 family camp programs across the country. These events encourage families to meet other families faced with JA or other childhood rheumatic diseases, network as well as to learn more about their child’s disease.

Ask: [To constituents] If you know a family that could benefit from attending a family day or family camp program, direct them to ResourceFinder.arthritis.org to find an event near them.

Challenge: A family attended one of our JA events or programs and now wants to get involved and give back.

Solution: There’s a place for everyone – the Arthritis Foundation offers local volunteer opportunities, from events for families to JA committees.

Ask: [To constituents] If you know a parent that could be a big asset to their local JA committee, direct them to KidsGetArthritisToo.org/resources to find a local office.
Challenge: The transition from childhood to adulthood with a chronic disease comes with obstacles and questions.
Solution: The Arthritis Foundation offers resources for teens and young adults including an online transitions toolkit for high schoolers as well as sessions focused on preparing for young adulthood at our JA conferences.
Ask: [To rheumatologists] If you know a teen or young adult with JA who may benefit from additional resources, encourage them to visit KidsGetArthritisToo.org/resources.

Fueling the Mission
We are pursuing a cure, changing lives and supporting the more than 50 million Americans with arthritis. Generous financial support from our donors and partners allows us to deliver life-changing resources that make an impact on people with arthritis.

Challenge: Until we find a cure, people living with arthritis will face daily challenges. Pursuing a cure is a labor- and fund-intensive pursuit.
Solution: Throughout our 70-year history, we’ve helped discover the first biologics, introduced NSAIDs and worked to make joint surgery safer. The Arthritis Foundation has invested more than $500M in this science, but we are still searching for a cure.
Ask: You are in a unique position to change the course of the disease by joining an elite group of major donors who are dedicated to conquering arthritis.

Challenge: People with arthritis not only suffer from pain, they also worry about the challenges they will face in the future.
Solution: Donors across the country who remember the Arthritis Foundation in their estate plans are helping ease the pain and challenges for people with arthritis.
Ask: To receive more information, please contact your local office and ask to speak with your local planned giving professional.

Challenge: Even though arthritis is the #1 cause of disability in America, there is a lack of understanding of the disease and awareness of its effects.
Solution: For more than 30 years, Jingle Bell Run has engaged communities nationwide to raise awareness and funds to find better treatments and a cure for the nation’s #1 cause of disability.
Ask: [To community members] Visit JBR.org to sign up and fundraise today.

Challenge: The more than 50 million people with arthritis need life-changing information and resources, access to optimal care, advances in science and community connections.
Solution: The Arthritis Foundation events, such as Walk to Cure Arthritis, Jingle Bell Run, dinners and galas, raise the necessary funds to search for a cure and support the arthritis community.
Ask: [To current volunteers] Help recruit new volunteer leadership contacts in your market who can help champion the fight to find a cure for arthritis through fundraising.

Challenge: A diagnosis of JA impacts the entire family. Often parents don’t have access to resources to help them manage their child’s disease or feelings as well as siblings feel helpless and lost.
Solution: Arthritis Foundation galas, dinners and social events provide a unique opportunity for attendees to fund our mission and enable us to provide more life-changing resources to the 300,000-plus children with JA as well as their families.
Ask: [To current volunteers] Consider meeting with me to talk more about the challenges kids with JA face and how you can help our mission to connect and support these families in their fight to conquer arthritis.

Pursuing a Cure
We are convening the brightest minds worldwide to bring new treatments and improved outcomes to market faster.

Challenge: More than 27 million Americans have osteoarthritis (OA), and there are currently no treatments that address the underlying disease.
Solution: The Arthritis Foundation is accelerating clinical trials through new research and close work with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This year, the FDA and the Arthritis Foundation co-sponsored the Accelerating OA Clinical Trials Workshop. This watershed moment defined the state of knowledge in the field and paves the way to clinical testing for funding future Arthritis Foundation projects, like alternatives to hip replacements and other new therapies.
Ask: Help pursue funding a cure with us and donate.

Challenge: For the more than 300,000 children with JA and their families, diagnosing and identifying the optimal treatment plans can take years.
Solution: The Arthritis Foundation continues to support major projects in pediatric arthritis through grants and strong partnerships. The partnership with the CARRA network is answering the questions that matter to patients and families – like which treatment will work best for me?
Ask: Everyone with a connection to JIA is encouraged to join PARTNERS – arthritis.org/partners/join.

Challenge: The viewpoints of the clinician and patient on quality health care often differ significantly. In fact, research shows arthritis patients believe the quality of care between health care centers varies greatly due to many factors.
Solution: We want to narrow this gap by creating tailored treatment plans to meet patients’ preferences, needs and satisfaction. By establishing a “learning health system” through dialogue and collaboration among patients, clinicians and others, we can narrow this gap. We will also explore the viability of linking current arthritis registries to a quality improvement initiative.
Ask: Help us drastically improve quality of care and support this initiative today.

Offering Personalized Guidance
We are providing personalized guidance whenever and wherever people with arthritis need us.

Challenge: Finding local resources can be challenging, from which rheumatologist is in your area to what fitness center offers specific classes and workouts.
Solution: The Arthritis Resource Finder makes it easy to find the exercise program that is right for you, the doctor that’s close by and more with just the press of a button.
Ask: [To constituents] Go to ArthritisResourceFinder.org and get the local resources you need today.

Challenge: Throughout their journey, people with arthritis have questions that are unique to their situation or need to talk with someone about a particular issue or question.
Solution: Managed by licensed clinical social workers and available 24/7, the new Arthritis Foundation Helpline provides assistance on a variety of topics including financial assistance, access to care, communicating with your health care provider and more.
Ask: [To a person with arthritis] I know that you are experiencing new challenges. You can call the Arthritis Foundation’s new toll-free helpline at 1-844-571-HELP.

Challenge: Effective communication between the arthritis patient and the health care provider (HCP) can positively impact disease management – but a real and effective dialogue is often not happening.
Solution: The Better Living Toolkit helps patients record their goals, changes in symptoms, level of pain and key questions to prepare for their next doctor’s visit.
Ask: [To health care providers] “Prescribe” the Better Living Toolkit (BetterLivingToolkit.org) to newly diagnosed patients.

Challenge: Exercise is proven to reduce arthritis pain. However, many people avoid exercise – less than 33 percent of people with arthritis exercise – due to uncertainty of safe exercises and the fear of causing pain.
Solution: The groundbreaking Your Exercise Solution℠ tool helps you find the physical activity that is right for you based on your fitness level and which joints are impacted most. Developed in conjunction with the top experts from around the world, you’ll also learn how to modify activities in a way that’s safe and right for you.
Ask: [To constituents] Go to www.arthritis.org/YEStool and start moving today.
**Challenge** A diagnosis of juvenile arthritis and other childhood rheumatic diseases can turn life upside down and make parents feel powerless.

**Solution:** The Arthritis Foundation JA Power Pack is a toolkit with useful information and tools to assist newly-diagnosed children and teens as well as their parents. The pack includes materials and resources for parents and a bear or wrap that offers comfort by providing a hot or cold treatment to soothe achy joints.

**Ask:** [To rheumatologists] “Prescribe” the JA Power Pack ([www.JAPowerPack.org](http://www.JAPowerPack.org)) to newly diagnosed patients and their families.