

Resource

## Senedd election 2021

On 6 May people in Wales elect a new Senedd.

On this page you can find and download resources to help you engage with local candidates and tell them about your experience of living with inflammatory arthritis.

[Print](#)

Our Policy & Communications Manager, Samuel Lawes has put together three big questions to ask local candidates.

### Three questions for candidates

#### 1. Waiting times

Before the pandemic, NRAS Ambassadors in Wales were concerned by widely varying waiting times for diagnosis of RA and for treatment. To achieve good outcomes and avoid long-term physical damage, it is important to diagnose RA and start treatment within 12 weeks of symptoms appearing.

What will candidates do to support bringing waiting times down across the board, especially for new diagnosis?

#### 2. Rheumatology for children

Wales has its first paediatric rheumatology unit, in Cardiff, following years of campaigning by NRAS, BSR and Versus Arthritis.

Will candidates support continued funding for resources for this vital new service? This will support an expansion of paediatric rheumatology services, so children with JIA across Wales can access quality care close to home.

#### 3. Telemedicine and new technologies

Rural services users in particular benefit from digital resources to help manage their condition and, when appropriate, to speak to their healthcare practitioners without needing to make long journeys.

Where access to broadband is poor, will candidates campaign for improvements, so that all Welsh citizens have equity of access to online health care and wellbeing services?

Election candidates spend their time taking in and giving out facts and figures, statistics and policies. Your personal story can cut through the noise.

### Sample social media messages

Tips for engaging your local candidates on social media:

- You can find your constituency details [here](#)
- You can find an estimate of the number of people living with RA in your constituency in the PDF table [here](#).
- Tag one or more candidates in a message
- Include a selfie or record your message as a video
- Tag @NRAS\_UK on Twitter or Facebook –so we can share your message
- Please remember to:
  - Be respectful & polite
  - Avoid being party-political
  - Share a personal angle

Example tweets:

- Hi @CandidateName –will you support @NRAS\_UK’s call to address the disparity in waiting times across Wales?
- @CandidateName I am a constituent living with rheumatoid arthritis. Online healthcare resources can make a big difference in rural areas. Will you support calls from @NRAS\_UK to ensure rural health service users have decent access to the internet?
- @CandidateName there are over 700 people living with rheumatoid arthritis in Clwyd South. Many of us have spent most of 2020 shielding. If elected, will you visit your local rheumatology team and support their recovery from the pandemic so they can continue to support us?

We have also put together a template letter to make it easy to email your local candidates, who you can find details for [here](#).

[Download template letter](#)

[Download table of ‘Living with RA’ figures](#)