

My Name is Barbara Hopkins, I live in Salem Oregon.

I have an autoimmune disease – Rheumatoid Arthritis, I've treated with a Rheumatologist Dr. Callis since January 2012. I started out with chemo pills and NSAIDS (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs). With each drug added blood work is done to determine the effect on my liver and inflammation levels. I worked my way through the non-biologic treatments. Some drugs did nothing to relieve the pain or inflammation; others were toxic to my liver or my eyes. I was started on a Biologic drug – Humaira after insurance approval it cost about \$1500.00 a treatment. I am lucky I have a great insurance policy and coverage. Providence has its own specialty mail order pharmacy. All the specialty tier drugs are delivered from Portland Providence Specialty Pharmacy. It unfortunately had side effects and was toxic to my eyes. So I can't take that drug any more. My next biologic was an infusion chemo drug Rituxan \$14,000 per treatment. Now it's not working for me so I will try Orencia this month it's been approved by my insurance carrier the cost is about \$3000.00 per treatment. I'm glad the Biosimilars will be approved shortly. It may give me some other treatment options.

I take over 21 prescriptions and over the counter medications. I carry a list and must update it constantly. Some of the drugs are to help the side effects of the other drugs I take. The Specialty pharmacy doesn't know what drugs I'm taking. They don't know what my allergies are, or that if I start a new drug that I need to see the eye doctor or may need to have extra lab work. I also don't want them substituting a pen injector for a syringe. I'm not willing & may not be able to give my self a treatment with a needle especially if my fingers are hurting. If I have an allergic reaction or an adverse side effect my doctors and I need to know what it is so that I can avoid that treatment in the future.

Biosimilars offer great hope for those that their insurance won't cover the biologics and for those of us that our body doesn't tolerate the current treatments. But we need to be notified and the pharmacy needs to keep records of what they dispensed and who was the manufacture.