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**Flash Arthritis is published three times a year**, in winter, spring and fall

**You can reach us at all times by phone 438 630-7215 or email at: [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org)**

Do you know that:

*Almost one third of patients aged 45 and over with polyarthritis have symptoms of anxiety or depression. And only half ask for help. You are not alone: ask!*

Source: Murphy and al. 2012

## A Magnificent Year Ends, Another Begins *Against all odds we strive on*

Arthritis South Shore withstood the two major challenges, pandemic and pain. This is a double whammy for people with arthritis. Pain is devastating and complex and leads to many inequalities in health care. Arthritis South Shore is working on universal accessibility and social diversity in empowering people with the necessary resources and exercises for pain management, so every person can have a better quality of life.

It was a great year for the sustainability of Arthritis South Shore, as we got our Charity Status, our recurrent funding from the Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires, the accreditation from de Ville de Longueuil and a partnership with the Brossard Library. Our networking and representation with other community organizations helped to get free space for our activities. The generosity of the Ville de Brossard and donors helped us, volunteers on the board, to offer all our activities both in person and online at no cost. It was wonderful to see the Arthritis Community defying all odds, respecting the government health guidelines and coming together to participate in the various activities.

Are you aware of the impact of arthritis in Quebec? It is essential we work together to combat this rising chronic condition and offer the necessary programs, services, and resources to reduce this impact. The magnitude of this burden will be on the health care resources and our society. By 2040, it is estimated that 28% of Quebecers and 26% of Canadians will be living with osteoarthritis, and another 1.5% of Quebecers and 1.4% Canadians will be living with rheumatoid arthritis. (Source: ACE- Joint Health -The impact of Arthritis in Quebec September 2018.)

We invite each of you to join us and get others involved to become active participants in self management and self empowerment and defy all odds.

Together with the support and help of members, participants, volunteers, supporters, donors, parliamentarians of all levels, our instructor, our mentor and partners, collaborators, our community organizations, and the dedicated members of the board of administration we could offer all our activities at no cost. Your donation will be greatly appreciated to go forward with our mission.

May this NEW YEAR bring New Life and New Hope. Good Health- Happiness and Harmony to each of you and your families. Wishing you a Magnificent Year of Resilience and Strength.

Premela Pearson, Founder and president

### Wellness Workshop and SPOTLIGHT ON ... (Free)

Spotlight on... osteoarthritis. Wednesday 16 February 2022, 7-9.30pm. Online. Please register at <https://biblio.brossard.ca/activites/plein-feu-sur-larthrite-larthrose-16-fevrier/>

The following activities are online. When health measures permit, they will also take place onsite at Répits Aînés Montérégie, 83 boul. Churchill, Greenfield Park. Please register at [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org)

- Introduction à l'arthrite. Thursday, January 20, 2022, 6:30-8:30 pm (in French)
- Introduction to arthritis. Thursday, February 17, 2022, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (in English)
- Alimentation et arthrite. Thursday 14 April 2022, 18h30-20h30 (in French)
- Nutrition and arthritis. Thursday 12 May 2022, 18h30-20h30 (in English)

### Fitness adapted exercises (Free)

Every Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m from January 11 to March 22, 2022, online. When health measures permit, they might also take place onsite at Centre Communautaire Vanier, 3400 Boisclair street, Brossard (limited number). Free registration at [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org)

*Prof : Jean Proulx. Warm-up, aerobic activities, stretching, fitness. Exercises done standing or on a chair with a rubber band, stick, dumbbells, balls, or equivalent home-made. Open to all at all times.*

### Group support: Causons d'arthrite/Share and Shine with Arthritis

From 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m., online. When permitted, also onsite at the Nathalie-Croteau Centre, 2210 André street, Brossard. Register at [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org)

**In English :** January 28, February 25, March 25, April 29, May 27, 2022

**In French :** January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, 2022

*Online informal gathering for those who wish to join a community to share about arthritis, talk of their own story and experience, inspire and be inspired, learn from others. We welcome new ideas and suggestions.*



### I'm taking charge of my arthritis!

**English:** Wednesdays from 19 January to 26 February, 1.30-3pm., online. Limited number of places.  
**French:** Thursdays from 3 March to 7 April, 6.30-8.30pm. Limited number of places. It will take place at Répits Aînés Montérégie, 83 blvd Churchill, Greenfield Park if health measures permitting.

*Personalized 6-week program to help you live better with arthritis. See detailed description at <https://arthriterivesud.org/nos-services/#monarthrite>*

### Social Activities: Sunday Brunch

Date: February 4, March 4, April 8, May 6, June 10, 2022 at 11 a.m.

Location: Restaurant (address to be communicate at time of reservation).

**This activity is conditional on the reopening of the dining rooms.**

*You are cordially invited to come and have dinner with members and friends of Arthritis South Shore - everyone is responsible for the cost of their meal.*

*Book your place by e-mail as soon as possible.*

## News from Arthritis South Shore

Arthritis South Shore was busy this last fall. It is now a Canadian charitable organization and can issue tax receipts to donors. You can send your donations by mail or by the website: <https://arthriterivesud.org/don/> to make your donations by credit card or e-transfer. In addition, we are now an eligible organization for financial support from the Programme de

soutien aux organismes communautaires (PSOC). In November 2021, we obtained recognition and accreditation from the City of Longueuil. We also obtained a grant from the Programme Amis des Aînés du Québec for the hiring of a coordinator to help maintain our onsite and online activities until September 2022.

## Together with our partners and collaborators

Several organizations have offered us space, which will allow us to expand our services in other cities: Seniors Respite Montérégie; La Résurrection Community Centre; La Maison internationale de la Rive-sud; Centre ESPOIR Québec; and the Alpha Family Foundation.

At the request of an organization or a company, we offer workshops to their members and/or employees, considering their needs. We presented "Alimentation et arthrite" at Action Prévention Verdun on October 29 and "Introduction to arthritis" at the Centre

communautaire St-Antoine 50+ on October 15. We will do the same with "La douleur chronique et l'arthrite" at Action Prévention Verdun, and "Introduction à l'arthrite" at the Centre ESPOIR Québec this spring.

See our activities offered to the public on the previous page or on our website. You can also sign up on one of our 3 distribution lists.

Thanks to the generosity of Judy Wong and Catholic Action Montreal, we are lending walkers. Contact: [info@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:info@arthriterivesud.org).

## News from Arthritis South Shore Volunteers

Arthritis South Shore's team of volunteers grew by 11 this fall. Eight volunteers took the first co-facilitation training offered by Ada Pagnotta last December. Most of these volunteers had taken the program: I'm taking charge of my arthritis! They are now even better equipped to share their knowledge and experience.

With the expansion of activities in Brossard and the city of Longueuil, we need even more volunteers to support people with arthritis. All expertise and goodwill are welcome, whether it

be for co-facilitating, editing, fundraising, giving conferences, or others. Volunteers are never left on their own, it is a team effort and training is provided as needed.

If you are interested in joining our volunteer team, please contact us at [benevolat@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:benevolat@arthriterivesud.org) or call 438-630-7215.

See you soon!



## Moving towards biosimilar drugs – by Danielle Jacob

Biological drugs are a class of drugs formed from living organisms or their cells through advanced biotechnological processes. They generally have more ingredients than chemical pharmaceutical drugs and their composition is more complex. In Canada, biological drugs are listed in Schedule D of the Food and Drugs Act.



Health Canada defines a biosimilar as a biological drug that is very similar to a biological drug already approved for sale. There are no clinically significant differences in efficacy or safety expected between the biosimilar and the brand name or reference drug.

Biologics have been approved in Canada for the treatment of certain types of inflammatory arthritis for over twenty years and more recently biosimilars have become an alternative. Only after the patent on the original biologic expires can other manufacturers produce their own biosimilar version.

There is currently a transition from biologics to biosimilars in Quebec, which began in 2021 and must be completed by April 2022.

Please note that patients do not have to take any action since the health professionals who follow the patients concerned by this change will communicate with them to proceed.

Below, you will find a link to an information document prepared by the MSSS explaining this transition process in more detail. [Transition des médicaments biologiques vers les médicaments biosimilaires \(gouv.qc.ca\)](https://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/medicaments/biosimilaires)

It is interesting to know that insurance companies have also made the transition to biosimilar drugs and that insured persons may receive communications on this subject.

For those who would like to learn more about biologics and biosimilars and/or the ongoing transition, you will find below some complementary documents from different sources.

<https://arthritis.ca/treatment/medication/biologics-and-biosimilars>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/patented-medicine-prices-review/services/reports-studies/biologics-in-canada.html>

[https://jointhehealth.org/pdfs/BiosimilarsinCanada\\_September\\_Fr.pdf](https://jointhehealth.org/pdfs/BiosimilarsinCanada_September_Fr.pdf)

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-system-and-services/biosimilar-drugs#recherchePiv>

Source of pictures: Biologics-and-Biosimilars-for-Treatment-of-Arthritis-FR.pdf (arthritis.ca)

## Share and Shine with arthritis – report on the inside out approaches for pain management with Jack Botros

On November 26, Jack Botros, a pain researcher from McGill University, came to speak to us about pain management using the inner strength approach. He reminded us that arthritis is on the rise. Nearly 25% of the population will be affected by 2040. Almost half of patients with polyarthritis (PA) have moderate or severe levels of pain, and only 11% are functional. Almost a third of patients aged 45 and over have symptoms of anxiety or depression and only half have sought help. One study reported that patients with polyarthritis and osteoarthritis had increased pain with anxiety and negative feelings (anger, hostility, fear), and decreased with positive feelings (enthusiasm, pride, inspiration). There are

psychological approaches such as cognitive behavioural therapy, expressive writing, mindfulness, problem solving and non-psychological approaches to pain management such as regular exercise, diet, and even low-level laser therapy.

Jack's messages: Take care of your mental health, it can affect your pain. Don't underestimate the effect of your mind on your pain management. Regular exercise and good eating habits can help. Don't hesitate to ask for help. If you would like to talk more about these issues and your concerns, you are welcome to attend our Arthritis Talk support meetings every last Friday of the month.

### Flash Rest

#### MYSTERY THOUGHTS - Theme: Laughter

Find the mystery thought by placing the letters above each column of the grid in the right place

	A		A				H	E					A	F		D		A	C				
	A	E	A	E			H	H	E		B	H	D	L		R	E	E	E				
F	A	K	L	T	H	G	T	T	E	L	D	I	E	S	E	R	E	M	L	E	N	A	L
H	E	M	L	K	U	S	T	W	E	R	L	O	F	Y	P	S	O	N	S	N	T	O	T


Courtesy of Monique Rondeau

*Response: Fake as well as real laughter helps mental health. The body does not make the difference.*

## Slice of Life – I found happiness again – by Isabelle Martel



I accepted to share with you a slice of my life because I believe that talking about myself can help me and others. My name is Isabelle Martel, I am a native of Ste-Geneviève and after many peregrinations, I now live in Brossard. My life path has taken me from assistant cook to caregiver for the Alzheimer's Association, and finally, to an active retirement.

Almost 30 years ago I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. It happened suddenly. One morning I tried to get up and I couldn't move - this was a few weeks after returning from a holiday in the Dominican Republic. Both my knees were swollen like balloons. I had to ask my partner to help me out of bed, down the stairs and to the hospital. He had to take me in his arms: that's how much pain and incapacity I was in.

I was kept under observation for a month because I couldn't go home in my condition. I was discouraged. Eventually it was discovered that the onset of my arthritis was linked to a salmonella contamination during my trip. I had been eating on the beach in the sun and I love dairy products, especially cheese. For my doctor it was also associated with fatigue and lack of antibodies.

I then took medication for a year which reduced the pain a little. To cope, I started to write and talk about my illness; this helped me to free myself and calm my fears. I came to realise that I was the source, conscious and unconscious, of much of my psychological discomfort. All this did not bring my knees back, I had to stop all my activities and a double replacement was needed. I had surgery on my left knee first and then on my right a year later. I suffered a lot after the first surgery. Sometimes when I had negative thoughts, I felt like I was suffering more than before; but when I had positive thoughts, I felt like the healing was taking place gradually and that made the suffering more tolerable. I noticed that suffering turns us upside down and brings us a lot of confusion. I was dreading the second surgery but in the end it went very well and I recovered much faster.

My doctor at the time had prescribed exercises for me to do right the day after the operation and told me to do whatever he recommended: "pain over pain", which meant accepting pain during exercises such as climbing stairs using the tips of my toes, to increase the strength of my knees. I told myself I was to obey him first and complain later! In fact, I have found hope again, I don't need medication, I lead a normal life and I haven't had any pain for over twenty years. I avoid imprisoning myself in my discomforts: I analyse them, dissect them, test them and this helps me to remain happy.

One day I met a man who had had knee surgery like me and was having a lot of trouble walking. I shared with him my experience and asked him if he was following all the recommendations of his specialist. He said no, he had doubts, no confidence, no faith in his recovery. I have great faith that we are not on earth to live on suffering. We have the means, let's take them.

Good luck and keep faith!

## Psoriatic Arthritis

Psoriatic arthritis (PsA) is a type of inflammatory arthritis and an autoimmune disease. It usually occurs in people with psoriasis, a disease that causes the immune system to go awry and attack the skin, resulting in inflamed red patches. Between 10% and 30% of people with psoriasis will develop PsA, a disease that affects both men and women and usually occurs between the ages of 20 and 50, or one in 400 people in Canada.



The causes of psoriasis are unknown, but it is known that genetics play a very important role. This means that if someone in your family has psoriasis or PsA, you are at increased risk of developing the disease. A trigger such as a viral infection, an injury or an environmental factor is always necessary.

There is no cure for psoriasis, but the disease can be controlled, serious joint damage can be prevented, and an active and productive life can be led.

PsA can cause inflammation of the joints, and back and neck pain. Depending on the person, it can be asymmetrical, affecting a few joints in the body, or resembling rheumatoid arthritis. It can affect the joints near the nails or those in the spine and sacroiliac joints, or, less frequently, lead to joint deformation. Inflammation may be found in tendons and ligaments, the back or underside of the heels, the outside of the shoulders or hips.

If any of the following symptoms persist for more than two weeks, consult your doctor: unusual pain or stiffness in a joint, intense in the morning and lasting at least one hour, and less intense during the day, which may even interfere with sleep.

There is no specific test for PsA. The symptoms of PsA can be like those of other forms of inflammatory arthritis. Your doctor will do a physical examination, blood tests, and X-rays (or other imaging techniques such as ultrasound or MRI). PsA sometimes occurs because of an injury and can be misdiagnosed.

Source: [https://arthritis.ca/about-arthritis/arthritis-types-\(a-z\)/types/psoriatic-arthritis](https://arthritis.ca/about-arthritis/arthritis-types-(a-z)/types/psoriatic-arthritis)

## Arthritis and depression: what science is telling us - by Johanne Boisvert

A survey conducted by The Arthritis Society found that many people had not made the connection between their arthritis and their mental health<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, it is well known that the mental health of people with arthritis can be affected by depression.

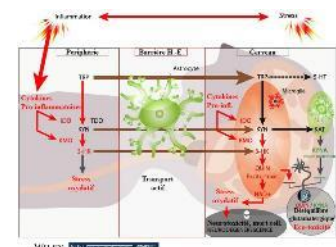
If we look at it scientifically, we can find physiological explanations. Among the scientifically explainable causes are stress and pain. Prolonged stress favours the persistence of an inflammatory state and an inappropriate cortisol synthesis triggering a depressive pathology<sup>2</sup>. As for the chronic neuroplastic pain that affects people with arthritis, it would come from an alteration of the signal activated by the peripheral and central neurons, and that this biochemical and neuronal alteration would also explain the states of depression, anxiety, loss of sleep, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Inflammation also plays a role in depression, according to researchers in immuno-psychiatry<sup>4</sup>. This hypothesis is based on multiple biological and clinical observations, such as the following: patients suffering from chronic inflammatory diseases have a high prevalence of depressive disorders; certain anti-inflammatory drugs reduce the depressive state *per se* or potentiate the clinical effect of antidepressants, etc.

Like pain, inflammation is also thought to alter the biochemical balance of neurotransmitters, substances released between nerve cells, and signal transmission pathways. We know that serotonin is a neurotransmitter involved in the modulation of emotions and that most prescribed antidepressants are targeted at increasing its availability. The link between inflammation and deficient serotonin transmission and the role played by tryptophan is now known. Tryptophan is an amino acid supplied by the diet and is a precursor of serotonin. In the event of inflammation or stress, the biological reactions of tryptophan metabolism are diverted towards another molecule and oxidative and toxic products for the neurons. At this stage, research shows that inflammation combined with chronic stress accentuates the alteration of biochemical processes leading to the depressive state.

This article is only a very brief overview of the research into the biological, biochemical, and neuronal reactions in the human body. By taking inflammation into account, we can already envisage new therapeutic avenues for depression and other pathologies.

Until then, exercise, eat well and have fun!



Note: Thanks to Pascal Barone, lecturer in neuroscience at the University of Tours, who allowed us to use large excerpts from his article (see note 4 below)

<sup>1</sup> <https://arthritis.ca/support-education/online-learning/mental-health-and-well-being>

<sup>2</sup> T. Schaevebeke, [https://rhumatos.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/rh135\\_pdf\\_complet\\_bd\\_flip.pdf](https://rhumatos.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/rh135_pdf_complet_bd_flip.pdf), p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> <http://arthriterivesud.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Bulletin-ARS-Vol-1-No-1-ANG.pdf>, p.4

<sup>4</sup> <https://theconversation.com/depression-et-inflammation-le-role-emergent-du-systeme-immunitaire-en-psychiatrie-171459>



## Heartfelt thanks

Thanks to all who have renewed their membership as well as all our invaluable volunteers.

### Thanks for their precious support:

Maison internationale de la Rive-Sud;  
Assistance and Referral Centre;  
Service de l'organisation communautaire CISSMC;  
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Judy Jarvis, St-Antoine 50+ Community Centre;  
Judy Wong, Catholic Action Montreal.

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The Arthritis Society, Quebec Division;

The Arthritis West-Island Self-Help Association  
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The CISSS Montérégie-Centre (CISSSMC 16).

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COCO – Centre for community organizations;  
Quebec Network of Junior Pain Investigators  
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Novalex;  
Alliance Carrière Travail.

Warm thanks to all community organisations that are regularly promoting Arthritis South Shore activities and services. Especially the support received from:

Monteregie East Partnership for the English-  
Speaking Community MEPEC;  
Assistance and Referral Center ARC;  
Monteregie West Community Network (MWCN);  
Seniors Respite Monteregie;  
The South Shore Black Community  
Association;  
The Yellow Door;  
St. Antoine 50+ Community Centre;  
Catholic Action Montreal;

La Maison Internationale de la Rive-Sud;  
Centre ESPOIR Quebec;  
Le Centre pour femmes Com'femme;  
Joie de vivre;  
Centre sino-Québec de la Rive-Sud;  
Formatio;  
La Vigie Rive-Sud;  
Action prévention Verdun and La Station;  
Le Centre social d'aide aux immigrants.

## To the donors

*Please note that since September, Arthritis Rive-Sud has been issuing tax receipts for all donations of \$5 and more.*

To our private donors: Suzanne Martel, Pauline Chu, Ilse Ferlein-Shubert, Phil Villafranca, Johanne Boisvert


## To our financial collaborators




**Alexandra Mendès**  
Députée fédérale / MP  
Brossard — Saint-Lambert



225-6955 Taschereau, Brossard, QC J4Z 1A7  
450-466-6872  
Alexandra.Mendes@parl.gc.ca  
f AlexandraMendesLiberal2015



**Denis Trudel**  
Député de Longueuil–Saint-Hubert  
Chambre des communes  
Porte-parole Solidarité sociale



192 rue Saint-Jean, bureau 200  
Longueuil (Québec) J4H 2X5  
450-928-4288  
denis.trudel@parl.gc.ca



  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES

**Stéphane Bergeron**  
Député de Montarville

1990, Léonard-de-Vinci, bur. 201  
Sainte-Julie, Québec J3E 1Y8  
Tel.: 450 922-BLOC (2562)  
Stephane.Bergeron@parl.gc.ca  
StephaneBergeron.net

**Sherry Romanado**  
Députée fédérale / Member of Parliament  
Longueuil–Charles-LeMoyne

www.sherryromanado.ca  
sherry.romanado@parl.gc.ca  
450 671-1222



f Sherry Romanado, députée/MP  
t @SherryRomanado



*A Million Thanks !*

## Arthritis South Shore Board of Directors

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- André Faucher, Vice-President
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- Caroline Veilleux, Administrator

Arthritis South Shore has a web site (<https://arthriterivesud.org>) and a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ARS.OSBL>), where you can find the calendar of activities, previous editions of Flash Arthritis as well as various information. You can leave comments and suggestions, they are more than welcome.



Courtesy Anouk Groleau-Lauzon, July 2021

*All our torments about what we lack seem to me to proceed from the lack of gratitude for what we have.*

Daniel Defoe

*Under any circumstances simply do your best and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse and regret.*

Don Miguel Ruiz, The four agreements

*The articles in this newsletter, whether translated or modified, are for informational purposes only. They do not necessarily represent the opinion of Arthritis South Shore.*

*They cannot in any case substitute for a medical opinion or diagnosis. You should consult your doctor if you have questions about a diagnosis or treatment.*

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE: \_\_\_\_\_

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➤ Would you like to receive our newsletter and information about our activities?    yes     no

**MEMBERSHIP:**      Renewal       New member   
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\_\_\_\_\_

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**DONATION**      Amount: \_\_\_\_\_\$      \$20       \$50       \$100

**PAYMENT METHOD:**

- by cheque made payable to *Arthrite Rive-Sud*. Please send your completed form and cheque to this mailing address: Arthrite Rive-Sud, 5811 rue Auteuil, Brossard (Québec) J4Z 1M9; or
- by interact or e-transfer (email: [financement@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:financement@arthriterivesud.org); Question : arthritis?; Answer: support). Please scan and email your completed form to: [financement@arthriterivesud.org](mailto:financement@arthriterivesud.org)
- by credit card using our website : <https://arthriterivesud.org/don/>

**CORRESPONDENCE:** English       French

**VOLUNTEERING:** Arthritis South Shore is looking for volunteers. Please check what you would like to do:

Administration  Facilitator  Fundraising  Stands  Other : \_\_\_\_\_

Type of arthritis you have: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*\* FOR OFFICE USE ONLY \*\*\*\***

MEMBERSHIP

Effective: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
mm      yyyy

\*DONATION

Payment \_\_\_\_\_\$

Cheque  Institution & # \_\_\_\_\_

Cash

\*Receipt and thank-you letter \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
dd      mm      yyyy

Receipt # \_\_\_\_\_

Update of relevant documents