

Participants in the Health with Vision Care Plan (age 65 and older)

Good news: No change in rates for 2015!

Each benefit year, the cost of coverage is determined based on past use of the plan. Generally, the more people claim, the higher the rates the following year.

The Concordia Employee Benefits Committee (CEBC) has approved maintaining the current rates for 2015. This reflects a better than anticipated usage of the plan.

Please note that although the overall rate for coverage under the Health Plan remains the same, there will be a change in the cost-sharing calculation used to determine the employee/employer split to account for the increase in the RAMQ premium. As a result, you will notice that your Concordia premium has decreased slightly.

For those receiving a monthly pension, this change will be reflected on the pension payment due February 2015. For members who continue to remit their contribution through payroll reductions, this change was reflected on the pay of January 9, 2015.

For more information, please visit the Concordia University benefits site at <https://cspace.concordia.ca/services/hr/benefits.html> or <http://www.concordia.ca/hr/benefits/pensioners-corner.html>.

How premiums are determined

The insurance company sets premiums in consultation with Concordia University according to the expected cost of the plan for the coming year as well as the anticipated use of the various plan benefits, based on “plan experience”. Plan experience indicates how much participants and their families actually used the plan. The number of claims made in a year will influence the cost the following year.

Annual premiums are also based on other factors, such as:

- Rising inflation in the health sector, due, in large part, to the increasing cost of drugs and the arrival of new, more expensive drugs;
- New medical technology and an aging workforce, leading to a growing utilization of the Concordia Health Plan; and
- The ongoing shift of health care expenses from government plans to private plans.

A relatively conservative approach is used in establishing the rates for a given benefit year so as to avoid substantial rate fluctuations from one year to the next.

Smart choices can mean lower plan costs

You also play an important role in managing plan costs. By using your health care benefits wisely, you make a real difference by helping to keep the plan affordable and competitive. As a reminder, here are a few simple things you can do that have a direct impact on our costs and your bottom line.

- **Monitor your health.** While the Health Plan is there for you to use whenever you need it, taking a few steps to monitor your health, such as making annual visits to your doctor for check-ups, help promote good health and save costs.
- **Ask for generic drugs.** A generic drug is a reproduction of a brand-name drug and can cost up to 50 per cent less than a brand-name drug. Health Canada imposes the same standards and tests on generic drugs as it does on brand-name drugs. This means that generic drugs are just as effective and safe. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if a generic drug would be suitable in your case.
- **Ask for a larger drug supply.** When you have a prescription filled, the pharmacist charges a dispensing fee for his or her professional services. For recurring prescriptions, ask your pharmacist to fill it for a longer period, such as a 60-day supply (or 100-day supply for maintenance drugs). That way you pay the dispensing fee less frequently.
- **Ask questions.** It's your health. You have a right to know what treatments will be provided and if alternatives are available. The Health Canada website (www.hc-sc.gc.ca) provides useful information on health matters.

For more information, contact Human resources at 514-848-2424, extension 3666 or email benefits@concordia.ca.

For information about your claims contact Desjardins Financial Security at 1-866-526-7566.