

January 12, 2009

Healthcare Plan Change Announcement

The Healthcare Employees' Benefits Plan (HEBP) is pleased to announce changes to the current Healthcare Benefits Plan that will result in increased benefits to members at competitive rates. Since the inception of HEPP/HEBP, the HEBP Board's mandate has been to provide competitive benefits at the lowest possible cost to all covered healthcare employees and their families throughout Manitoba. The upcoming changes, which will enhance the healthcare benefits HEBP provides, are as a result of recent collective bargaining between employers and unions. These changes reflect a commitment to competitive healthcare benefits that meet the needs of members.

Effective April 1, 2009, HEBP will offer only one Healthcare Plan to all membership, modeled after the current Enhanced Healthcare Plan with some provision changes. Manitoba Blue Cross will continue to serve as the plan carrier in administering the new Healthcare Plan.

The Basic Healthcare Plan will be closed to new enrollments effective immediately. HEBP will provide new enrollment packages to all employers who will participate in the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan. These packages will be available at the end of January or early February 2009 for enrollment of new employees into the new Plan, with the standard three month waiting period, during the interim period of January 2009 to March 31, 2009.

Employers who currently have a Participation Agreement with HEBP but no collective bargaining agreement, and choose to no longer participate will need to make other arrangements for their employees.

Employees currently covered under the Enhanced Healthcare Plan will be transferred directly into the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan, provided their employer will be participating in the new Plan. Although coverage will automatically be transferred, these employees may update their Healthcare Benefits information by completing the change form that will be mailed to them in February 2009.

Employees currently covered under the Basic Plan will have the option to join the new Enhanced Plan,

provided their employer will be participating in the new Plan, and will receive additional information on eligibility and enrollment requirements in early February 2009. Current members of the Basic Plan joining the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan will have access to increased maximums for prescription drugs and paramedical practitioners, as well as additional benefits such as Vision Care, Hearing Aids and Orthotics as provided under the current Enhanced Healthcare Plan. For complete details on the benefits provided under the current Enhanced Healthcare Plan please see the information provided under the Enhanced Coverage heading within the Healthcare section of our website at www.hepp.mb.ca.

HEBP will provide all employers with additional information that pertains to union and non-union employers in January 2009, and enrollment will be implemented for those that will continue to participate in the HEBP Healthcare Plan in the following phases, with premiums commencing as individuals enroll effective April 1, 2009.

Phase I: January 1, 2009 - April 1, 2009

- Preliminary communications to all stakeholders.
- HEBP Basic and Enhanced Healthcare Plan members who are covered under a collective agreement requiring participation in the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan will be provided with information for enrollment and/or update of their file starting in early February.
- These members will become eligible for coverage under the new Healthcare Plan effective April 1, 2009, with premiums commencing in March 2009 for April coverage.

Phase II: April 1, 2009 - June 30, 2009

- HEBP Basic and Enhanced Healthcare Plan members who are not covered under a collective agreement requiring participation in the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan, but who are employed by an employer that agrees to participate in the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan by means of a continued Participation Agreement, will be provided with information for employee

enrollment and/or options for continuing a previous employee's waiver of coverage or opting out of coverage.

Phase III: April 1, 2009 - September 30, 2009

- Employees who have previously waived or opted out of coverage under the HEBP Healthcare Plan and would like to consider joining the new HEBP Healthcare Plan will be provided with enrollment information based on whether they are employed within a union-covered position or at a non-union-covered employer that continues participation.

HEBP will contact participating employers who have employees who are not covered under a related collective agreement in January 2009 to determine if they will participate in the new Healthcare Plan. HEBP is committed to providing a process for a smooth transition whether these employers continue to participate in the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan or choose to seek coverage under a different plan.

The new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan design offers substantially lower premiums for eligible employees currently on the Enhanced Plan, and increased benefits to all eligible employees in the form of a Healthcare Spending Account (HSA). Following is a summary of the Plan changes:

50% Employer-paid Premiums

Effective April 1, 2009, premiums under the new Healthcare Plan will be shared equally between employers and members. Based on preliminary calculations, the full premium for the Healthcare Plan effective April 1, 2009, will be as follows:

	Employee Premium	Employer Premium	Total Premium
Single Coverage	\$16.73	\$16.73	\$33.46
Family Coverage	\$41.73	\$41.73	\$83.46

Healthcare Spending Account (HSA)*

Effective April 1, 2010, employers will provide an HSA for all covered employees. The HSA will provide annual benefit amounts of \$250 for full-time employees and \$125 for part-time employees. The HSA annual benefit amount will increase to \$500 for

full-time employees and \$250 for part-time employees effective April 1, 2011.

* Please note, in order to access the new Healthcare Spending Account in 2010, employees must be enrolled as members of the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan.

Mandatory Enrollment

Effective April 1, 2009, new employees who do not have coverage under another group healthcare plan (for example, a spouse/partner's plan) must enroll in the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan upon employment with a participating employer.

HEBP will provide more information and procedures pertaining to the Healthcare Plan changes in the coming months to ensure the smoothest possible transition for all members. Communication to all employees eligible for coverage under the new Enhanced Group Healthcare Plan will include enrollment packages, an updated booklet, and information in the Spring 2009 PlanTalk newsletter.

HEBP would like to thank participating employers and unions for their support throughout this transition. Your continued assistance will allow us to successfully implement positive changes for Healthcare Plan members.

For additional information on the Healthcare Plan changes, please visit the HEPP/HEBP website at www.hepp.mb.ca.

If you have questions or comments, please e-mail us at info@hepp.mb.ca or through the e-mail link in the Contact Us section of our website at www.hepp.mb.ca. You can also contact us at:

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The information provided is intended to be general in nature. The Plan provisions are the final authority concerning the administration of the Plan and the benefits provided thereunder.