

# Benefits Bulletin: 2017 Update

## What is new with our benefits program this year?

Benefit	Plan Design Updates effective April 1, 2017	
Paramedical Practitioners <small>UPDATED</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% reimbursement up to Medavie Blue Cross usual &amp; customary amount for each paramedical benefit</li> <li>Expanded list of paramedical services to include additional standard practitioners</li> <li>Maximum payable of \$500 per practitioner per 12 consecutive months with a combined max of \$1,500 per 12 consecutive months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paramedical Services include the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chiropractor</li> <li>Naturopath <small>NEW</small></li> <li>Acupuncturist <small>NEW</small></li> <li>Homeopath <small>NEW</small></li> <li>Dietician <small>NEW</small></li> <li>Osteopath</li> <li>Chiropodist/Podiatrist</li> <li>Audiologist <small>NEW</small></li> <li>Speech Therapist</li> <li>Occupational Therapist <small>NEW</small></li> <li>Massage Therapist (requires physician's referral)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Physiotherapy <small>UPDATED</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% reimbursement up to Medavie Blue Cross' usual &amp; customary amount</li> <li>Maximum payable of \$1,000 per 12 consecutive months</li> </ul>	
Psychology and Social Worker <small>NEW</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of psychology/social worker coverage</li> <li>100% reimbursement up to Medavie Blue Cross' usual and customary amount; maximum payable of \$1,000 per 12 consecutive months</li> <li>EFAP continues to be available for short term counselling options</li> </ul>	
Preventative Health <small>NEW</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of Wellness Modules which includes coverage for the following services:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smoking cessation: \$800/60 consecutive months</li> <li>Weight loss treatments (requires insurer prior authorization): \$1,600/12 consecutive months</li> <li>Vaccines: \$700/60 consecutive months</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Chronic Disease Management <small>NEW</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of Chronic Disease consultation: \$500/12 consecutive months</li> <li>Offers access to a network of experts – including nurses, pharmacists, and other health care professionals – specialized in chronic diseases</li> <li>Currently offering services for Asthma and COPD</li> </ul>	
Medical Expenses <small>UPDATED</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% reimbursement for the following subject to plan maximums:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orthopedic Shoes with \$200/calendar year <small>UPDATED</small></li> <li>Molded Arch Supports \$300/calendar year <small>UPDATED</small></li> <li>Hearing Aids \$700/3 calendar years <small>UPDATED</small></li> <li>TENS machine &amp; repairs at \$200/5 calendar years <small>NEW</small></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Benefit	Plan Design Updates effective April 1, 2017
Diabetic Supplies <sup>UPDATED</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coverage will now be reimbursed directly at the pharmacy with your drug card</li> </ul>
Orthodontic coverage <sup>NEW</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of orthodontic coverage for dependents 18 years of age and under</li> <li>50% coinsurance, lifetime max of \$2,000</li> </ul>
Dental Implants <sup>NEW</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of coverage for dental implants (subject to major dental plan maximum)</li> </ul>
Basic and Major Reimbursement <sup>UPDATED</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reimbursement for basic services to remain at 80%</li> <li>Reimbursement for major services to remain at 70%</li> <li>Combined maximum for basic and major of \$2,500/calendar year</li> </ul>
Vision <sup>UPDATED</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% reimbursement</li> <li>Glasses/Frames/Contacts: \$200 maximum per 24 consecutive month period (12 months for dependents 18 year of age and under)</li> <li>Eye Exam has a separate reimbursement of 100% up to Medavie Blue Cross' usual &amp; customary amount <sup>NEW</sup></li> </ul>

**Drug Coverage:**

Effective April 1, our drug benefit will be adopting Medavie Blue Cross' Rx Choices tiered formulary. Medications are separated in two tiers, and the co-pay varies between the tiers (see enclosed brochure).

The medications in the **first tier** are recognized as first line therapy, used to care for more serious conditions and are generally more cost effective. This tier includes many generic and brand name products. Medications on this tier follow widely accepted treatment guidelines for many acute and chronic conditions.

The drugs selected for the **second tier** may not be the first step in therapy, are generally for less serious medical conditions and/or have lower cost therapeutic alternatives on the first tier.

Copay (the amount you pay) for first tier drugs will be 10%, and for second tier drugs 40%. For further protection for high claimants, there is also a \$2,500 annual out-of-pocket maximum for Tier 1 and Tier 2 drugs combined. In the coming days, plan members with drugs on Tier 2 will receive a confidential letter from Medavie Blue Cross, providing more information on the RX Choices program, and options to consider.

***Employees will also be receiving new drugs cards that will be mailed to their home address on file by March 31, 2017.***

**Long-Term Disability (LTD):**

The LTD benefit provides monthly income protection for employees that are not able to work as a result of a disabling sickness or injury. The benefit is equal to 70% of monthly earnings, plus 10% of monthly earnings to be contributed to the pension plan. Effective April 1, 2017, the maximum monthly LTD benefit amount will be a combined \$8,000. At Saint Mary's University, the premium for LTD is cost shared 50/50, and as a result the benefit that is payable while on disability is taxable income to the employee.

**Basic Life Insurance:**

The plan review identified that the current basic life insurance of 3X annual salary is above average in comparison to other universities, as well as national benchmarks. In an effort to allow enhancements for other valuable employee benefits, effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, the basic life insurance amount will be updated to 2X annual salary to a maximum of \$300,000.

Employees have the option of transferring 1X salary to optional life insurance with no requirement to submit medical evidence to the insurer; provided you submit your application to **Human Resources by April 30, 2017**. **In order to do this, please take the following steps:**

1. Complete the enclosed Group Benefits Application for Optional Life Insurance for Plan Member and Spouse only. Optional Life insurance rates can be found on the Human Resources website at: <http://www.smu.ca/about/optional-life-insurance.html>
2. Complete the enclosed Group Benefits Non-Smoking Declaration form if applicable (rates are lower for non-smokers)
3. Retain copies and return the original completed forms **to Human Resources no later than April 30, 2017**.

**All plan members must complete the enclosed Group Benefits Beneficiary Designation form, and return the original copy to Human Resources by April 30, 2017.**

Please note that Optional Life benefits are 100% employee-paid. The combined maximum for basic and optional life insurance will remain at \$415,000.

**Best Doctors**

Addition of Best Doctors services will be added for all employees. Best Doctors provides access to world-renowned medical experts for a second-opinion when dealing with a chronic condition, questioning surgery or facing a life-threatening illness. For more information, visit the [Best Doctors website](#).

**Renewal rates for April 1, 2017:**

The rates in the chart below reflect **the bi-monthly premium** and also incorporate the plan design changes mentioned above. At Saint Mary’s University, the benefit premiums are cost shared 50% Employee and 50% Employer. If you have optional life, dependent life or critical illness benefits, rates will remain the same for this year; however, age band changes may apply. For more details on those benefits, please visit <http://www.smu.ca/about/benefits.html>

Benefit	Current Rate		New Rate April 1st		Change %
	Single	Family	Single	Family	
Health/Dental	\$34.74	\$86.16	\$38.61	\$96.46	+11.7%
Travel	\$0.83	\$1.66	\$0.96	\$1.91	+15.0%
EFAP	\$0.78		\$0.81		+3.5%
LTD	\$2.760/\$100		\$2.415 per \$100		-12.5%
Life Insurance	\$0.163/\$1,000		\$0.159 per \$1,000		-2.5%
Best Doctors	\$0.35		\$0.35		n/a

Salary	Coverage	Difference per pay
\$35,000	Single	\$1.13
	Family	\$7.69
\$45,000	Single	\$0.21
	Family	\$6.76
\$60,000	Single	(\$1.19)
	Family	\$5.37