UBCM Group Benefits Plan Newsletter

December 2020

Just a reminder that you are able to make changes to your group benefits plan at any time. Please feel free to contact me if you want a review of your plan design. Being part of a bigger pool, the UBCM Group Benefits Plan allows you to offer better customized plans at a lower cost. Email me today!

The year 2020 has been a year like no other and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has upended many of our plans, made a mess of our budgets, and has transformed our priorities. I am sure I don't have to tell you that we know our holiday get-togethers will look very different this season. In previous years, all of the planning, cooking, hosting, and shopping often took over our lives. There is a bit of a silver lining, we now have smaller to-do lists and fewer calendar invites, so take advantage of the new downtime for yourself by binge-watching your favorite shows, get outside, turn your screen off or just take a nap! I hope you can create new traditions and find ways to connect with friends and family while still keeping the risk low for everyone.

Indeed, abundance is not measured in material things, but in the stories that define and guide us. At the center of these stories, we find our loved ones, friends, colleagues, and others who have touched and changed our lives. Two of the most powerful words anyone can say are, "Thank you." So easy to say, but so often overlooked. In this year like no other, we have a lot to be grateful for-starting with each other. While looking forward to a fresh start in 2021, I wish to take a moment to express my gratitude for this year and thank you --- to our wonderful clients, service providers, business partners and colleagues who navigated this most challenging of years with compassion, empathy and grace. We are grateful for your trust, guidance and good humour which lifted our spirits throughout this difficult year.

I wish you an abundance of joy, love, and renewal for 2021!



Quote for the month:

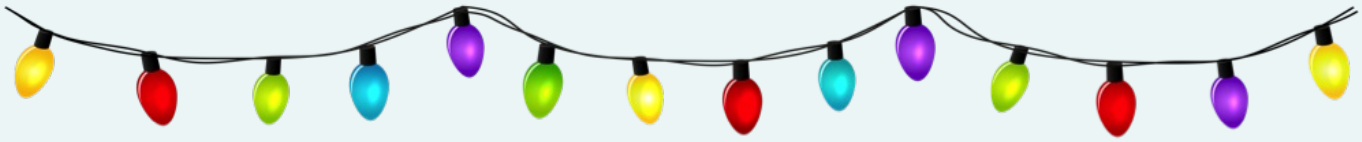
Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard said,
"Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards."

Pause for a moment and think of the people that matter most to you and the experiences you hold dear. In those still moments as you reflect on the world around you this holiday season, breathe in the wonder of it and be filled with the gratitude for your place in it.

If you have any comments or concerns, do not hesitate to**email me**.

Cheers,

Anna



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NEW! Digital Wellness Tool

PBC has a new and improved digital wellness tool Health Connected is available starting December 11th. Through Health Connected, Pacific Blue Cross Members will have access to:

- **Health Assessments** that shed light on health risks and health skills to show you where you stand and where to focus
- **Challenges** to make it easy to increase health skills and reduce health risks in a fun and competitive way
- **Coaching** that helps turn small changes into healthy habits through personalized health coaching plans
- **Rewards** that allow you to earn badges, medals and points throughout your wellness journey

Log into your Member Profile and click the "Digital Wellness Tools" button to get started on your wellness journey today.

New Survey Cites British Columbians Lack Awareness Of And Access To Mental Health Services

As our mental health deteriorates during COVID-19, a new survey commissioned by Pacific Blue Cross shows that the majority of British Columbians don't engage professional help for three key reasons:

- They don't know where to get help-even in their own communities
- They find it difficult to access mental health services
- They don't feel safe in acknowledging they have a mental health condition

Pacific Blue Cross offers many mental health supports through our benefits plans, having recently added coverage for virtual care through partner EQ Care, three online cognitive behavioural therapy programs, and Employee and Family Assistance Plans.

New Virtual Care Benefit Offers Access To Health Care All Day, Every Day

PBC has partnered with EQ Care. Virtual care through EQ Care is an excellent solution for plan members who live in communities that are remote or don't have robust medical services (including access to specialists), don't have access to a family physician, live in neighborhoods that consistently experience long waits at walk-in clinics or whose clinics close early due to patient quotas, or need to see a doctor outside regular business hours, relying on hospital emergency rooms for non-emergent care.

UBCM has a preferred rate of $2.80 single/$4.10 family per employee/month.**Feel free to contact us for more information.**

Here2Talk Offers Students Free 24-7 Mental Health Help During The Holidays

This holiday season is challenging for everyone, and post-secondary students have a free, 24-7 counselling and referral service available to them through Here2Talk.

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Your Voice: Patient Input Needed For Drug Decisions

The knowledge and experience of patients, caregivers and patient groups are integral toB.C.'s drug review process.

Phenelzine Sulfate Shortage

There continues to be an ongoing global shortage of phenelzine sulfate (Nardil®), a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) indicated for the treatment of certain types of depression. Health Canada, in collaboration with manufacturers, is working to minimize the impact of this shortage on Canadians.

Health Canada has communicated important information on how to consider switching patients to alternative treatments here.

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Special Authority Transformation Project Underway

Work for this project is well underway. More updates, including the roll-out schedule, will be provided in the PharmaCare Newsletter in early 2021. See Special Authority Transformation Project for more information.

Fair Pharmacare Deductibles For 2021

On January 1, 2021, PharmaNet will be updated to reflect 2021 annual deductibles and family maximums. Deductible accumulations will be reset to zero. Fair PharmaCare coverage levels for 2021 are based on family net income for 2019.

Changes To BC Workers Compensation Act And Impact On Mental Health Claims

Bill 23, the Workers Compensation Amendment Act, 2020 received royal assent on August 14, 2020.

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ParticipACTION's 12 Days of Fitmas!

As the weather gets colder and the busy holiday season approaches, it can be tough to maintain healthy routines. 12 Days of Fitmas can help give you that nudge to keep going. Watch for the 12 Days of Fitmas activities on the ParticipACTION app.



Buddy Up Suicide Prevention Website Is Live

The Buddy Up men's suicide prevention campaign now has its very own website. The website is focused on men's suicide prevention and how to become a champion for the cause. In addition to learning about men's suicide and how it can be prevented, you can find information about how the campaign was created and how to be involved. See more here.

Generation S: The Sandwich Generation

Caring for multiple generations at once can impact several aspects of your life: work performance, physical health, sleep, social life, downtime and stress. Here are 5 tips to assist you.

▶ READ MORE



'Twas the Night Before Santa Quit Smoking.... See here how!

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