

December 18, 2012

## **NURSES AGREEMENT: POSTPONEMENT OF EFFECTIVE DATE FOR THE PHARMACARE TIE IN**

On December 6, 2012, HBT informed employers of benefits changes to the Nurses Agreement, including a BC PharmaCare tie-in with an effective date of January 1, 2013.

HBT has received direction from HEABC today to postpone the implementation date of the PharmaCare tie-in to February 1, 2013.

Please find two revised documents attached:

- New Health and Welfare Benefit Provisions (Nurses Agreement 2012-2014)
- Notice to Employees (Nurses Agreement) - Prescription Drug Coverage Changes

Further, Extended Health rates provided by HBT in our December 6 communication will now be effective February 1, 2013. Pacific Blue Cross will reverse the changes made to the Extended Health plan that were to be effective January 1, 2013. Due to the timing of this change the January invoice from PBC will reflect the revised contribution rates as outlined in our December 6 correspondence. PBC will make changes to the rates retroactively and the adjustments will appear on your February 2013 invoice.

If you have any questions about the attachments, please feel free to contact:

- Wendy Fullerton ([wendy.fullerton@hbt.ca](mailto:wendy.fullerton@hbt.ca) or 604-678-8316)
- Darren McKnight ([darren.mcknight@hbt.ca](mailto:darren.mcknight@hbt.ca) or 604-678-8512)
- Toll free at 1-888-736-2087.

*Please ensure that this communication is distributed to the appropriate people within your organization.*



## New Health and Welfare Benefit Provisions Nurses Agreement

2012 – 2014

Administrative Guidelines #2 – 2012 - Revised

To: Benefit Administrators at Healthcare Benefit Trust Member Organizations

C: Payroll Department  
Head of Organization

Date: December 18, 2012

Subject: 2012 – 2014 Nurses' Provincial Collective Agreement Changes

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We have received confirmation from HEABC regarding changes to the Extended Health Care (EHC) and Long Term Disability (LTD) plans under the Nurses Provincial Agreement.

Please find attached:

- Administrative Guidelines - Revised
- Information for employees that you may wish to distribute or post

The new provisions apply to the following HBT Class Codes 5, 109, 116, 146, 187, 718, W.

If you have any questions about the attachments, please contact:

- Wendy Fullerton, Client Consultant [wendy.fullerton@hbt.ca](mailto:wendy.fullerton@hbt.ca) or 604-678-8316
- Darren McKnight, Manager, Operations [darren.mcknight@hbt.ca](mailto:darren.mcknight@hbt.ca) or 604-678-8512
- Toll-free at 1-888-736-2087

*This Administrative Guideline is to advise you of the new Extended Health Care (EHC) and Long Term Disability (LTD) provisions that were recently negotiated under the 2012 – 2014 Nurses Provincial Collective Agreement.*

<b>Changes to Extended Health Care Provisions Effective February 1, 2013</b>	
<b>Prescription Drugs</b>	Prescription drug coverage will be limited to those drugs that are approved by BC PharmaCare. Prometrium, oral contraceptives and contraceptive injectables will continue to be covered.
<b>Effective Date</b>	February 1, 2013. Prescription drug claims incurred on or after February 1, 2013 will be adjudicated by Pacific Blue Cross under the new provision.
<b>Cost</b>	<p>The monthly Extended Health contribution rates will reduce from \$73.04/single and \$175.29/couple or family, to:</p> <p><b>Effective February 1, 2013</b>     \$ 56.68 Single                                                                         \$136.03 Couple/Family</p> <p><b>Effective April 1, 2013</b>         \$ 64.38 Single                                                                         \$154.52 Couple/Family</p> <p>The changes in costs will also apply to casual employees who are purchasing Extended Health coverage, and to employees on unpaid leave or LTD who are paying their own contributions.</p>
<b>Impact of Change</b>	<p>The only aspect of the Extended Health coverage that has changed is that the drug portion of the plan has reverted to the pre-July 2001 plan provisions. This means that only those prescription drugs that are approved by BC PharmaCare will be reimbursed*. Reimbursement for drugs is in accordance with the BC PharmaCare price limit maximums. Certain drugs may be considered Limited Benefits, that is, they are only covered if PharmaCare Special Authority is obtained. In this case, the member's physician may apply to BC PharmaCare for approval and then the plan will cover the drug. If a member chooses to use a drug not covered by BC PharmaCare drug they will not be reimbursed under this drug plan.</p> <p>* As previously noted, the plan will continue to cover Prometrium, oral contraceptives and contraceptive injectables.</p> <p>For further information, please visit:  <a href="http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/nca/">http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/nca/</a>  <a href="http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/decision.html">http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/decision.html</a></p> <p>or refer to attached information for employees.</p>

### Changes to Extended Health Care Provisions Effective February 1, 2013

<b>Employee Communication</b>	<p>We encourage you to direct employees to the following sources of information regarding BC PharmaCare drug coverage and how it may impact them:</p> <p><a href="http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/nca/">http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/nca/</a>  <a href="http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/decision.html">http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/decision.html</a></p> <p>Attached to this Guideline is also a revised notice that describes in brief the changes to the Nurses' prescription drug coverage under BC PharmaCare. We encourage you to distribute the weblinks and copies of the notices to eligible employees.</p> <p>At a later date, revised benefit booklets will be produced that will include this new benefit provision.</p>
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### Changes to the Long Term Disability Provisions

<b>Qualification Period</b>	<p>The qualification period was changed from five months to four months for LTD claims with a date of disability that occurred on or after April 1, 2012.</p> <p>Employers were previously notified of change on June 1, 2012. Please refer to Administrative Guidelines #1-2012.</p>
<b>Early Retirement Incentive Benefit</b>	<p>Employees who have elected the LTD Early Retirement Incentive Benefit (ERIB), are eligible to continue to maintain the Extended Health benefit plan coverage to age 65. The contributions will be cost-shared by the employer and employee on a 50/50 basis provided the employee pays their portion of the contribution for the coverage in advance on a monthly basis. Employees who have elected ERIB are not eligible for ongoing MSP and Dental coverage. Enrollment in the Extended Health plan terminates at the end of the month in which the employee's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday occurs.</p>
<b>Effective Date</b>	<p>The new ERIB provision applies to those LTD claimants who accept Early Retirement under the ERIB plan on or after November 17, 2012 (30 days following date of ratification).</p>
<b>Contribution Rate</b>	<p>The revised LTD contribution rate is attached and is effective January 1, 2013. Please apply this rate to earnings for the entire payroll period in which January 1, 2013 falls.</p>
<b>Own Occupation</b>	<p>As per HEABC's Negotiations 2012 Update Nurses # NU-19, a revised interpretation of the definition of own occupation to enable employees to remain employed rather than on long term disability has been added. Further information on this will be provided once it is available along with the revised LTD contribution rates.</p>



## Notice to Employees under the Nurses Provincial Collective Agreement - Revised

### Change in Prescription Drug Coverage as at February 1, 2013

HEABC and the Nurses Bargaining Association have negotiated the following change in the Nurses Provincial Agreement: **Extended Health Care plan will include a BC PharmaCare tie-in.**

#### For Prescription Drug Coverage this means:

- Effective February 1, 2013, reimbursement of prescription drugs, purchased from a licensed pharmacy, applies only to drugs approved by BC PharmaCare unless special authority is granted. Not all drugs are eligible for Special Authority.
- Prior to February 1, 2013 you were reimbursed for prescription drugs based on PharmaCare's Low Cost Alternative (LCA) and Referenced Based Pricing (RBP) restrictions. This has not changed.
- Reimbursement for drugs will be in accordance with BC PharmaCare price limit maximums.
- Exceptions to BC PharmaCare: Reimbursement for Prometrium, standard oral contraceptives and contraceptive injectables continues.

#### WHAT HAS CHANGED?

**Effective February 1, 2013**, only drugs that are approved by BC PharmaCare will be reimbursed unless special authority is granted by BC PharmaCare. Reimbursement of covered drugs is in accordance with BC PharmaCare price limit maximums.

#### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO TO ENSURE YOUR DRUGS ARE/WILL BE REIMBURSED?

##### Talk to Your Physician

When obtaining a prescription for you and/or your dependents, discuss the BC PharmaCare eligibility of the medication with your Physician to ensure that drug is covered by BC PharmaCare. If the drug is not covered, your physician may prescribe an alternate drug that is approved and reimbursed under BC PharmaCare program.

You can search the BC PharmaCare website to see if your drug is covered or find other alternative drugs eligible for coverage: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/benefitslookup/>

##### Apply for Special Authority (SA)

If your drug is not covered by BC PharmaCare and there is no suitable alternative that is available under BC PharmaCare, it may be available with Special Authority approval. Not all drugs are eligible for Special Authority. Your physician can apply to BC PharmaCare Special Authority for approval of the drug. If the criteria is met and the drug is approved by PharmaCare, Pacific Blue Cross will reimburse you subject to any deductible, coinsurance, exclusions and as per the BC PharmaCare price limit maximums.

For a list of drugs eligible for Special Authority approval visit:

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/sa/criteria/genericbrandtable.html>

**More information on drugs approved by BC PharmaCare can be found at:**

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharmacare/decision.html>

**Who can you speak to if you have any questions about BC PharmaCare and your drug coverage?**

Contact BC PharmaCare directly. Customer Service Representatives are available at:

From Vancouver, call **604-683-7151** or from the rest of B.C., call toll-free **1-800-663-7100**

- Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (except statutory holidays)
- Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (except statutory holidays)

**Contact Pacific Blue Cross:**

Client Service Representatives 604-419-2600 or 1-877-342-2583

Visit: <http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/nca/>

**If you have additional questions about the negotiated changes to your drug plan please speak directly with your employer or your union representative.**