



Benefit renewal July 1, 2020

Each year on July 1, changes to your group benefit plan premium rates are implemented following a re-assessment by MRU and Sun Life. Following our latest review, the premium rate changes that will come into effect on July 1, 2020 are:

Extended Health premiums (25% employee paid) – 19.7% increase

The Extended Health premiums were appropriately priced last year for popular new features like prescription glasses and increased coverage for psychological services; however, the increase is primarily driven by higher than expected drug costs. This is in part due to higher utilization of these drugs, but also some of the drugs that were historically covered under provincial health care have shifted to the group benefit plan.

Dental Premiums (50% employee paid) – No change

Dental premiums will remain the same. Dental visits declined during April and May because of COVID-19, but as dentists reopen, a significant jump in claims over the next few months is anticipated.

Long term Disability (100% employee paid) – 14% decrease

Because there were fewer claims submitted to the plan last year, we are seeing a 14% reduction to premiums following last year’s 20% reduction. LTD premium rates can be quite volatile depending on the number and duration of claims made. Although we were able to secure a reduction at this renewal, Sun Life did mention that across the market it is seeing a sharp rise in disability claims, which could result in increases next year.

Example of changes for the new benefit year (employee costs)		
Annual salary of \$55,000 – family coverage		
LTD decrease \$12.47	Health increase \$11.47	Total approximate savings \$0.99/month
Annual salary of \$70,000 – single coverage		
LTD decrease \$15.87	Health increase \$3.98	Total approximate savings \$11.88/month

Annual salary of \$90,000 – family coverage		
LTD decrease \$20.40	Health increase \$11.47	Total approximate savings \$8.93/month

All other benefits at a glance

Benefit	Who pays	Cost as of July 1, 2020
Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)	100% University	No change
Life insurance	100% University	1.2% decrease
Accidental death and dismemberment	100% University	No change
Optional life insurance (\$350K new max.)	100% employee	Age band increases only*
Optional dependent (spouse and child) life	100% employee	Age band increases only*
Optional accidental death and dismemberment	100% employee	No change
Optional critical illness	100% employee	Age band increases only*

**While rates remain unchanged, employees may pay higher premiums as they increase at every 5-year age band.*

Personal and Health Spending Accounts

Once again you will be able to choose either a Health Spending Account (not a taxable benefit) or a Personal Spending Account (taxable, but covers many more [goods and services](#)). As this benefit is based on the calendar year, watch for your chance to make changes this fall for the 2021 allocation. Any unused balance from the 2020 calendar year allocation will carry over until December 2021.

Employee and Family Assistance Program – New coverage

Stress Solutions-Life Smart coaching service

Homewood Health now provides a new coaching program that offers up to three telephone conversations with a psychologist. Based on the types of support employees have been requesting through [EFAP](#), the sessions will be geared to helping people manage stress-related concerns and will include coaching on stress management, lifestyle, priority setting, and tools such as meditation and relaxation techniques.

Ways to reduce health and dental costs

To save yourself money and keep costs low:

- You can submit the costs of your premiums for extended health and dental benefits for reimbursement if you have funds available in your Health Spending Account.

- Choose generic drugs, shop around for the best price and get a three-month supply (if available) to reduce dispensing costs. Visit mysunlife.ca for more tips.
- If applicable, ensure you coordinate any available benefits through a spouse's plan.

Reminder to check your beneficiaries

Don't forget to check your beneficiaries for Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance at [MyMRU](#) / Employee Tab. From the My HR Profile box: Benefits and Pension, Benefit Statement, then click on the 'Select' button on the left-hand side.

To change your beneficiaries, go to mru.ca/Benefits under the New Employees option. Please note that the original signed form must be returned to Benefits in E231. While we are out of office, please mail your forms so we will receive them when we return, and email a copy to benefits@mtroyal.ca so we have the most up to date information.

Information about benefits is always available at mru.ca/Benefits.