



Frequently Asked Questions:

Tentative Agreement on the Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP)

On Monday, August 8, the various public sector unions and the PSHCP Partners Committee announced that there had been a tentative agreement reached in the negotiations to update the PSHCP, which had not been updated since 2006.

You can read [CAPE's announcement](#), which includes a list of updated benefits, on its website.

The announcement was also sent to members via email. If you are a CAPE member and are not receiving emails and would like to, you can update your preferences [here](#).

CAPE and other public sector unions will continue to advocate for stronger and enhanced health care benefits when future negotiations take place. CAPE hopes to secure more resources to be able to dedicate to advocating its members wishes at this table in the future.

1. Who was consulted for informing these decisions?

The PSHCP Partners Committee members negotiated the tentative agreement. The PSHCP Partners Committee includes representation from Treasury Board Secretariat, the National Joint Council and federal public sector unions. The proposals were developed through membership consultation via a survey before the negotiations began in 2019. Benchmarking and data analytics studies were conducted to help inform decisions based on science and data.

The tentative agreement recommendations are in line with industry best practices and include market-tested cost-containment measures to ensure the expenditures of running the plan remain sustainable and are comparable to other employer-sponsored plans.

A detailed list of the tentative agreement benefit changes can be found after the news announcement on CAPE's [website](#).

2. Will the proposed changes in the tentative agreement also apply to retirees?

Yes. A representative of The National Association of Federal Retirees sits on the PSHCP Partners Committee to ensure retirees' input was also considered. Retirees make up 49% of the Plan's members.

3. Why is there a new maximum of \$1500 for the physiotherapy benefit in the tentative agreement?

The current Plan was found to need more equal distribution among benefits to balance out the allocation. However, it is possible that there are other avenues for members to be able to claim expenses that are not covered by the tentative agreement for the updated Plan. It would be up to the member to consult with the new Administrator of the Plan once it comes into effect, Canada Life.

Coming to an agreement amongst many parties on this Plan has been a lengthy endeavour and requires compromises and cost considerations as it covers 750,000 members and their dependents.

4. What are the updates to mental health benefit coverage?

The amount available for psychological practitioners has gone up to \$5,000 (from \$2,000). Mental health provider options have been expanded to include psychotherapists, social workers, and registered counsellors.

There has also been a new benefit introduced for gender affirmation coverage.

The full details will be available when the tentative agreement has been ratified. CAPE will share updates as they become available, and the Employer will communicate the details of the updated Plan to its members.

5. What is the mandatory use of generic medications? I have a particular need for a brand name medication – will it be difficult to get an exception made?

Generic medications are less costly than brand name medications and helps ensure the financial sustainability of the Plan. Implementation of a Mandatory Generic Substitution with a 180-day grandfathering period and exceptions only based on medical necessity.

6. Do members get to vote on the PSHCP tentative agreement? Does CAPE get to accept this tentative agreement?

As the PSHCP is not part of Collective Bargaining it is not subject to a vote by members nor the unions. However, the PSHCP Partners Committee includes representation from Treasury Board Secretariat, the National Joint Council and federal public sector unions who together negotiated the updates to the Plan. It used member surveys, data collection and benchmarking studies to inform its recommendations in the updated Plan and is subject to ratification by the Treasury Board Secretariat.

7. When will we find out if the tentative agreement has been ratified?

The tentative agreement will be presented to Treasury Board Secretariat for ratification shortly. CAPE will share updates as they become available, and the Employer will communicate the details of the updated Plan to its members.

8. When is the next opportunity to update the Public Service Health Care Plan?

The current Plan has been in effect since 2006. The new Plan, should it be ratified, includes a new clause stating that the new the Plan should be revisited again in four years, that is, on July 1, 2027.