

Report to ADRP AGM, April 27, 2017
from the Benefits Committee chair

Items to report since the publication of the last Newsletter

1. We have a new ADRP member of the committee to replace Diane Pothier as the under 65 representative on the Dalhousie Retiree Benefits Advisory Committee:

Christine Matheson-Studley,
former Associate Director, Administration, Department of Facilities Management

2. Regarding T4A slips and their lack of Travel Premiums paid

We asked the Benefits Office why the Travel Premiums were left off the T4A slips and what they were doing to take corrective action because Travel Insurance is a deductible medical expense. Here is part of their response:

... has completed the letters for the retirees who have family coverage as the annual premium for travel is much greater for family coverage (\$416.88) than single premiums (\$207.48). She is doing the single coverage letters on demand.

That means all single members have to look out for themselves and be aware of this deduction. If you include Travel Premiums as a deduction you can get your amount paid from the Year-to-Date box on your December 2016 pay stub. (Note that you do not need to include medical receipts with your tax forms but have them handy for 7 years in case you get audited.) The Benefits Office is aware we are not pleased with this and at this point I am stymied as to what to do. Hopefully this will not happen again.

3. Regarding Travel Premiums, we asked 2 questions of the Benefits Office:

Question 1: Why is there such a rate differential between regular employees and retirees?

Answer: ... age demographic play a large role in the cost of benefits as well as risk of something occurring. Comparing to the active policy is not a true comparison as the active plan has varying age ranges, which means the risk is spread over many lives and ages. This has a large impact on the rates. ... even under the retiree policy you can view the difference between age; under 65 travel cost vs. over 65 travel – the rates are quite different.

Note: regular employees pay one-third of \$3.81 (single) and 7.62 (family)

Question 2: For Blue Cross the major expenses are documented (such as for nursing care, foot care, etc.) but any charges against Travel are not. In fact, we do not even know what costs charged against travel are. Why is this so?

Answer: The travel increases are actually set at the interuniversity services level for active and retired members. This past year SSQ requested a 15% increase for active and retired members - this increase

was the same across all Atlantic Universities and Colleges. I will point out that the rates are experience based in each institution, so the rates here at Dal, will be different than at other institutions.

The current travel plans (active and retired) **have a 5-year loss ratio of 102%** (net claims). We do not have numbers on the types of claims being issued to SSQ as they're (sic) reporting is not up to par. This has been discussed at the ISI level that reporting information is a requirement – SSQ is currently working on updating this.

As always, we look forward to your suggestions, comments, and contributions.

BenComm members: Randy Barkhouse, John Barry, Michael Bradfield (Secretary), Phil O'Hara, Grace Patterson, David Tindall, Peter Wallace (Chair), Philip Welch, and Christine Matheson-Studley (new)

Retiree Benefits Advisory Committee Members: The ADRP nominees to RBAC are: Peter Wallace (Chair), David Tindall, Christine Matheson-Studley (under 65 member) and Phil O'Hara (secretary)
From the BoG: Jenny White (Vice-Chair) and Susan Whitman with Matt MacLean (Mercer) as advisor.