



VIA EMAIL

April 23, 2021

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Dear Partners in mental health and wellbeing,

I am writing in response to your letter of April 21, 2021 concerning improvements to the Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP).

Thank you for highlighting the important areas that require permanent enhancement within the PSHCP. This Plan has not been meaningfully improved for over a decade, however the needs of Plan members have increased and diversified. PSAC is very aware of the need to make significant improvements to the Plan to address these many shortcomings.

As you know, the PSHCP is negotiated jointly by the unions with membership working for the federal government, the retirees, as represented by the National Association of Federal Retirees, and the Treasury Board. Negotiations to update the terms of the PSHCP are now underway; I have copied our lead PSHCP negotiator on this response to ensure he is aware of your concerns. When we are at the table, we expect to be proposing a broader definition of eligible practitioners, services, and coverage for reimbursement. We do not know what position Treasury Board will take in this matter.

The challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted some of the significant shortcomings with the coverage provided by the PSHCP, including support for mental health and wellness. PSAC places very high value on ensuring that the benefits plan that we negotiate provides our members with access to a wide variety of health professionals and services. This includes access to professionals and coverage for members' physical and mental well-being. PSAC agrees that it would be beneficial to expand the range of services and providers under the PSHCP to help better support members' health, and to increase the amounts covered for these services under the plan.

In advance of the PSHCP negotiations, PSAC conducted a membership survey and the need to improve coverage for a greater variety of treatments and services was highlighted. The ongoing pandemic has further exposed the considerable need for improved mental health supports and providers. PSAC is therefore extremely cognizant of this issue and we will certainly be proposing to expand coverage under the Plan.

We will post updates related to negotiations of the PSHCP on the PSAC website when they become available. Thank you for reaching out to me, and please continue to monitor our progress as we work to improve the PSHCP.

In solidarity,



Chris Aylward,
National President

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