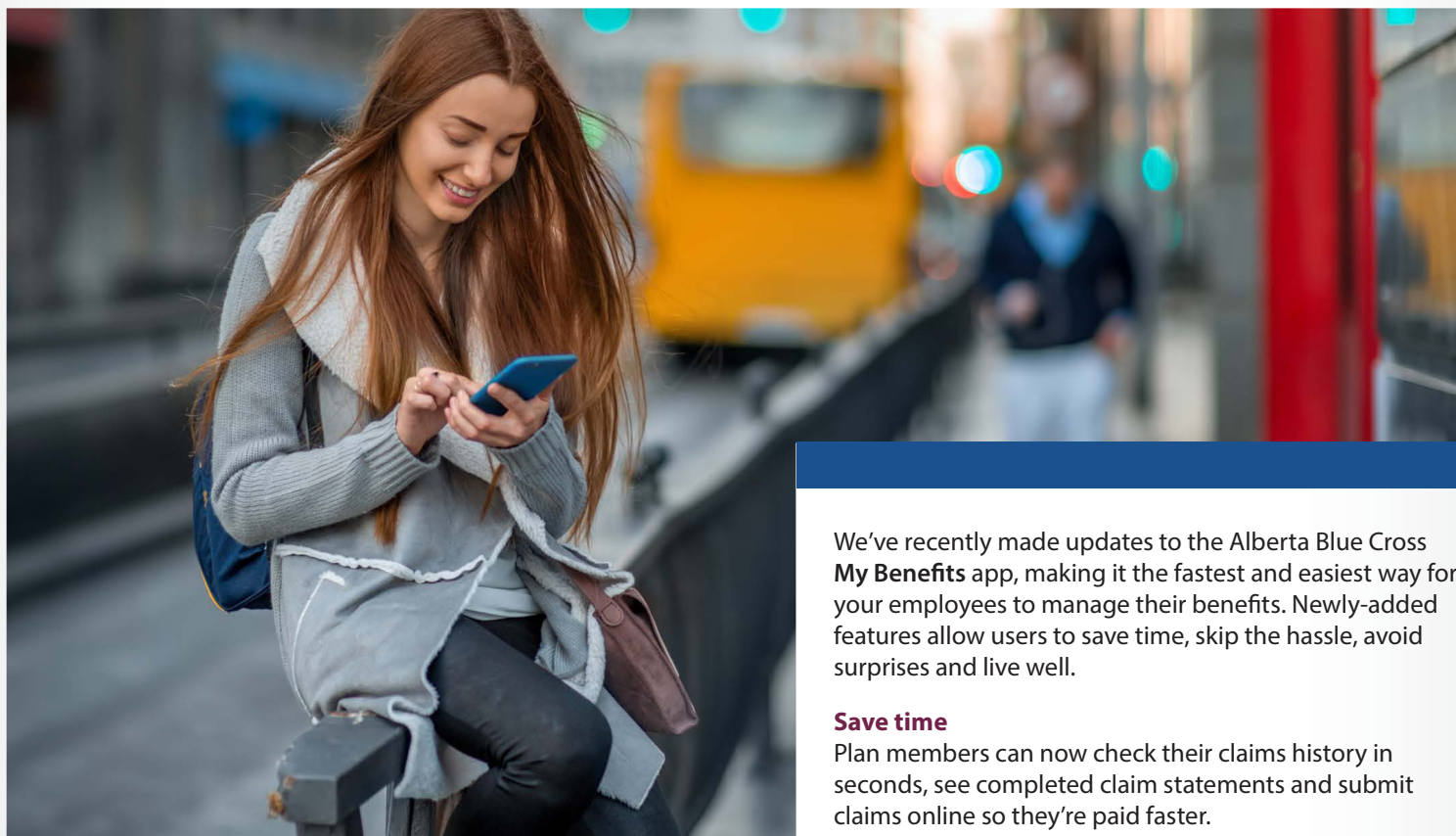


Summer 2018

# CONNECTION BULLETIN

News and information for group benefit plan administrators from Alberta Blue Cross



You can now  
**go further**  
with Alberta Blue Cross's  
**My Benefits app**

We've recently made updates to the Alberta Blue Cross **My Benefits** app, making it the fastest and easiest way for your employees to manage their benefits. Newly-added features allow users to save time, skip the hassle, avoid surprises and live well.

**Save time**

Plan members can now check their claims history in seconds, see completed claim statements and submit claims online so they're paid faster.

**Skip the hassle**

Plan members can now avoid out-of-pocket costs by using the app (powered by Google Maps) to find providers near them who direct bill.

**Avoid surprises**

Plan members can now see if their prescription drug is covered before going to the pharmacy.

**Live well**

Plan members can now access Balance—their online wellness program to support their overall health.

Access a quick, printable reference to the mobile app updates [here](#).

# It's now easier than ever to find providers who direct bill

Acupuncture, naturopathy, osteopathy and podiatry providers are now able to offer direct billing to Alberta Blue Cross plan members.

Providers who are registered for direct billing can verify plan member eligibility and submit claims on plan members' behalf. Additionally, they can provide plan members with a claim statement confirming their claim submission before they even leave the practitioner's office.

Overall, this change makes it easier than ever for your employees to find direct-bill providers—and avoid out-of-pocket expenses.



## Salary updates have been made easier

If your plan requires you to update employee salaries, we have good news. A recent update to our administrator website has made this process faster and easier. This change will mean that, rather than submitting one employee salary update at a time, multiple salary updates can be done all at once. You will be able to see all current salaries as well as the date they were last updated. This change will make updates faster and far more efficient.

## Help your employees make the most of their benefits

Along with this issue of *Connection Bulletin* is the latest *For Your Benefit* newsletter, which is designed to help your group plan members make the most of their benefits. We encourage you to distribute *For Your Benefit*—which is also available as a PDF in the plan administrator's section of our website under "Resources"—to your employees. You can save the PDF and email it to your employees or print hard copies as needed.

We welcome your comments about *Connection Bulletin* and *For Your Benefit*, and suggestions on topics for future issues. Please send your feedback to [connectionbulletin@ab.bluecross.ca](mailto:connectionbulletin@ab.bluecross.ca).



# Reductions in generic drug pricing can reduce expenses and enhance the value of your plan

New reductions in the prices of many commonly-prescribed, generic drugs stand to enhance the value of your plan and give plan members the opportunity to lower their out-of-pocket prescription drug expenses.

Generic drugs are products that Health Canada designates as being equivalent to brand name products, as they contain identical medicinal ingredients in the same amounts. Generics help to control plan cost as they are less expensive than their brand name counterparts. In fact, in 2017, generic drugs accounted for more than 60 per cent of all claims through Alberta Blue Cross benefit plans.

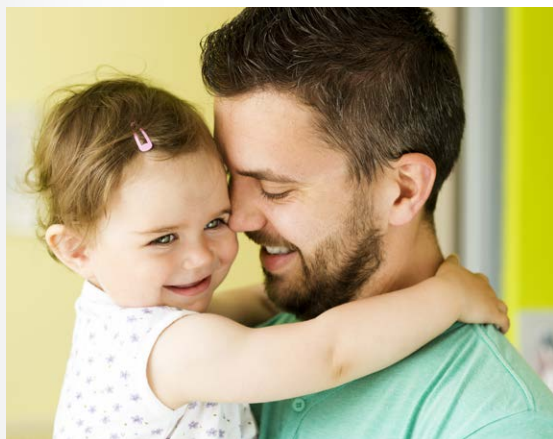


## How will this affect your plan?

As of April 1, 2018, approximately, 70 high-volume, generic medications in Canada had prices further decrease by up to 40 per cent; this means that some of these drugs are now priced at 10 per cent of the cost of the brand name medication. The products affected include generic drugs for high cholesterol, high blood pressure, depression and other commonly-prescribed drugs.



In addition to enhancing the overall value of your plan, reductions to the price of generic drugs may also reduce what plan members pay out-of-pocket. When members pay a portion of their drug costs, the percentage will be based on the lower initial cost that has resulted from these changes.



## Connect with us

Why wait for the next issue of *Connection Bulletin*? Keep yourself and your employees up-to-date about the latest Alberta Blue Cross news by following us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn or reading our blog, *Blue notes*, at [ab.bluecross.ca/blue-notes-blog/blue-notes-blog.php](http://ab.bluecross.ca/blue-notes-blog/blue-notes-blog.php). We'll share interesting health news, information about our community sponsorships, tips to make the most of your benefit plan and keep you informed regarding potential plan or coverage changes.

Connect with us today.





# We've enhanced online claiming options

We always aim to enhance your employees' experience. One of the ways we do this is by making it easy to submit claims through our member website. That's why we've added new benefits to our member site which members can claim online.

**Plan members can now claim osteopathy and occupational therapy benefits online through the member site. Furthermore, we've enhanced the member site's Health Spending Account (HSA) claiming options so that plan members can claim health dental premiums online under their HSA.**

Online submission means that plan members will receive reimbursement more quickly. Plan members can submit claims 24 hours a day, seven days a week using the Alberta Blue Cross My Benefits mobile app or our member site at [ab.bluecross.ca](http://ab.bluecross.ca).

# Staying connected and CASL compliant

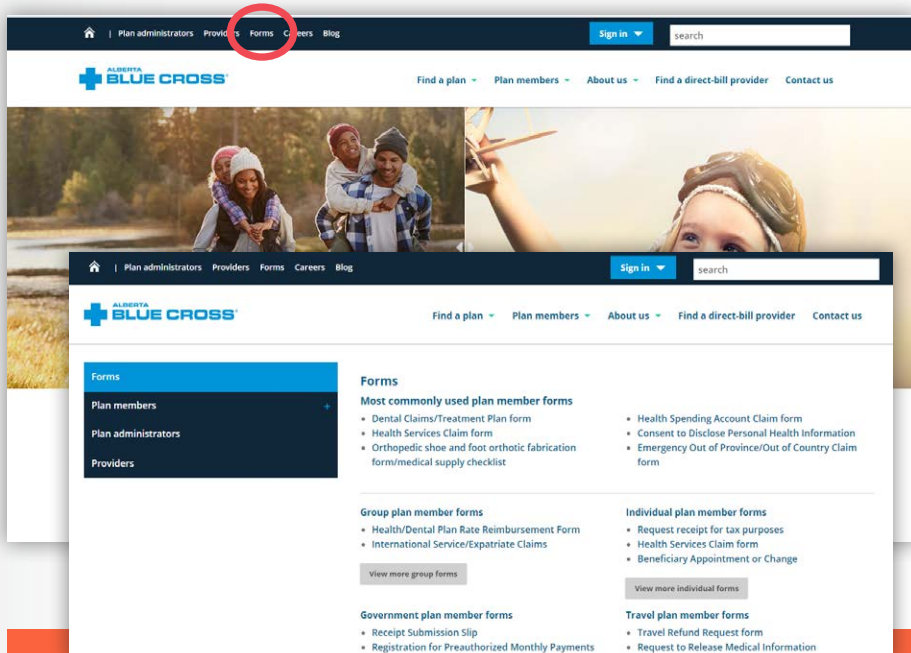


We've recently made some important changes to the *Connection Bulletin* and *For Your Benefit* newsletters in order to fully comply with new Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) guidelines.

Going forward, these publications will no longer feature information promoting products and services. This type of information will continue to be communicated to plan administrators and members; however, it will be as a separate email that offers the reader the ability to unsubscribe.

We know that, for the vast majority of our plan administrators and members, email communication is the fastest and easiest way to access important information about your benefit plan. That is why we want to ensure we keep you in the loop, so you never miss out on updates, changes or information about our organization you may need to be aware of.

# Are you using outdated forms?



Alberta Blue Cross forms are revised, updated and streamlined on a regular basis to ensure that we're continuing to meet the needs of our customers—and to ensure that we're in full compliance with regulations governing the privacy, use and disclosure of information.

To ensure that you and your employees are using the most current forms, please visit the "Forms" page on the Alberta Blue Cross website at [ab.bluecross.ca/forms.php](http://ab.bluecross.ca/forms.php). There you'll find links to some of our most commonly-used forms for both members and plan administrators.

New forms may also be ordered from Alberta Blue Cross Group Administration at **780-498-5925** or toll free at **1-866-498-5925**.

# Involved in your community

- Alberta Blue Cross created the Healthy Communities Grant Program to promote wellness and active living in Alberta's communities. This program is open to community leagues, school councils, municipalities or other non-profit community groups and organizations with new projects in need of funding. Applications for the 2018 grant will be accepted until August 31. For more information, visit [ab.bluecross.ca](http://ab.bluecross.ca).
- Every year, thousands of Albertans visit emergency departments due to unintentional poisoning. This spring, Alberta Blue Cross partnered with The Injury Prevention Centre to support this year's



Poison Prevention Week. Poison Prevention Week aims to improve awareness of medication poisoning and increase prevention of medication-related poisonings in children.

- As an advocate for injury prevention among Albertans, we are pleased to sponsor the Finding Balance seniors fall prevention campaign, which runs each November. Each year, thousands of Alberta seniors are hospitalized due to preventable falls; increasing awareness about what can be done to prevent falls is the best way keep seniors safe.
- Throughout 2018, Alberta Blue Cross will be sponsoring a number of public awareness forums, health expos and conferences in support of organizations including the Arthritis Society, Diabetes Canada, MS Society and Canadian Mental Health Association. Watch our social media feeds for more information about these events.



For more information about topics in this Connection Bulletin, please call your Alberta Blue Cross group sales or service representative.

## We value your comments

Connection Bulletin is published to communicate with Alberta Blue Cross employer group plan sponsors. Back issues may be found on the Alberta Blue Cross website at [ab.bluecross.ca](http://ab.bluecross.ca)

Please send your feedback via email to [connection@ab.bluecross.ca](mailto:connection@ab.bluecross.ca), by fax to 780-498-8096 or via mail to Corporate Communications, Alberta Blue Cross, 10009 108 Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3C5.



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