

REPORT OF THE CULE BENEFITS COMMITTEE

The last meeting of the above-noted committee took place via conference call on December 8, 2011. The participants were as follows:

For the Employer: Morna Ballantyne
Bonnie O'Keefe

For the Union : Jim Brohman
Gail Chafe
Larry Welsh

The Employer updated us on the position they intended to put forward for implementation effective January 1, 2012. The position is not the same as CEP, although the only areas of difference will not have an effect on CEP as they have no members working in the geographical area. The position is as follows:

1. Prescription Drugs:

Introduction of a \$9.95 dispensing fee cap for all CULE members (except those in Manitoba (\$10.73) and Nunavut (\$10.27)). The data provided by Coughlin identified three locations where the average dispensing fees were above \$9.95. The two above (Manitoba and Nunavut) and Ontario, however the Employer feels the "Preferred Providers" Agreement in Ontario provides sufficient alternatives at \$9.95 for Ontario CULE members.

2. Massage Therapy:

The \$750 per year cap will be introduced. The Employer did say where an "accommodation" is in place through a "Duty to Accommodate Agreement" the \$750 per year may not apply. In addition, chiropractic and physiotherapy is available through the Benefits Program with no limitations.

3. Psychological Services:

The current \$2,000 dollar limit per year will be increased to \$2,500 per year.

4. The Employer proposed the "Benefits Committee" as contained in the collective agreement between the parties (Memorandum of Agreement #13) be re-established and meet on an ongoing basis to receive regular reports from the Provider (Coughlin) in order to monitor the Plans.

CULE restated their position that the savings in the actions taken by the Employer (approximately \$32,000 per year) are insignificant and the Employer should not be addressing such a small monetary shortfall through cuts to Employee benefits. CULE stated that there are many other areas where a savings of approximately \$32,000 per year could be made and to take such from staff benefits made no sense.

NOTE: The wording in Memorandum of Agreement #13 focuses on “cost containment” whereas the Memorandum of Agreement in the Settlement Agreement speaks to “minimize the adverse impact of cost containment” a significant difference no doubt. Perhaps CULE could propose as a condition of re-establishing a Joint Committee as per M of A #13 the words be amended to reflect those in part 7 of the Memorandum of Settlement.

Submitted by the CULE Benefits Committee