

CDCP: Canadian Dental Care Plan Update May 3, 2024

We are observing a poorly-timed and rushed roll-out of a government plan unlike that of any other normal dental benefit plan.

The national plan continues to cause **confusion felt by providers and patients alike**. **We empathize with patients** who need to access care. We understand that patients want to stay with our home office.

Normal dental plans are agreements between plan providers (like the Sunlife insurance company) and the plan beneficiaries (the patients). The federal plan rescripts this as now between a dentist and Sunlife **resulting in loss of patient freedom to choose providers**.

The proposed **business agreement is unbalanced** and maintains one side (the government) universal privileges to change any term or condition at any time. The carrier (Sunlife) also is free to exceed privacy in acquiring any books of the business.

The plan fails to acknowledge the **seriousness of operating a dental practice**. This is especially true considering **heavy regulatory and economic environments that contribute to the high cost of providing quality patient care**. Our patients would know that we don't compromise in the quality of our materials, instrumentation or infection prevention and control.

The ability to provide **clinically advanced dental care is beyond the plan's level of investment**. In other words, patients should expect a compromised level of care and not the highest level of comprehensive care.

Consultation with the dental profession was taken too lightly and little to none of the public health opinions have been listened to.

The **administrative burden** currently absorbed by dental practices still willing to accept assignment of a patient's insurance (such as ours), is at **an all-time high**. The **human effort** to manage claims bears **significant time and cost**. Workforce shortages and disruptions remain an on-going concern.

The plan also **undermines the long-term stability and value of normal dental insurance** that has supported individuals and families.

Pre-existing and long-standing provincial and federal government plans for seniors, children and those with government supports **have not been reconciled** to any new federal plan. Clarity is needed and this is especially true where supports are used daily, **as in Alberta, where plans already exist and exceed those of other provinces**.

It already exists in our region that some general dental and specialty offices do not accept patients on government plans. Many are not aware of this. Our office always has, so we fully understand the nature and technical challenge of delivering a measure of care while receiving less per procedure.

It is unfathomable that the federal plan puts in jeopardy so much. **Our practice is committed to a sustainable future of quality patient care provided by a healthy team that delivers**. We have the best interests of our patients and the sustainability of our 70 year practice, at heart.

Thank-you for your loyalty.

Drs. Morden & Wetherell & Staff