



Balance

The Group Health Forum

SUMMER 2008

The Baicorp Buzz

Baicorp Financial Inc. and Baitrak Benefit Administrators in conjunction with Blazing Design would like to thank all their clients and sponsors for making the 2nd annual charity golf event a success. In support of F.A.S.T. (Family Adolescent Straight Talk) and the CWF (Canadian Women Foundation) the PLAY IT FORE>WARD golf charity raised in excess of \$32,000.

We would like to especially thank Hockley Valley Resort, Moores, E.D. Smith, Key Equipment, Diebold, Avison Young, R.P. Graphics, UTS Energy, Standard Life, Manulife, Sun Life Financial, DFS, Cooperators, Equitable Life and RBC Insurance for their contribution in making the event a successful one.

Don't Blame Drugs for Rising Health Costs?

A new report examining the often cited claim that government spending on prescription drugs is contributing to the fiscal instability of healthcare in Canada argues that isn't the case.

Released by the non-profit think -tank Fraser Institute, the report concludes that unsustainable growth in health spending is a result of the flawed design of government health and drug insurance programs and not the price of medical treatment or the introduction of new medical technologies such as patented drugs.

"When government health insurance attempts to provide equal access and 100% insurance coverage for any medical need on a universal basis, the system becomes financially unsustainable says the report's chief author, Brett Skinner, the institutes director of health, pharmaceutical an insurance policy research. "Canadians would have a much wider range of benefits and more efficient coverage if we had compulsory private insurance with low-income subsidies that allowed for universal coverage".

Prescription drugs and in particular, patented drugs account for a small percentage of government health spending. The fact that spending on other areas of healthcare (e.g. hospitals, professionals and administration) is growing at unsustainable rates, while accounting for more than 90% of total government health spending, strongly suggest that targeting prescription drugs is misguided, the report says.

Prescription drugs represented only 9.3% of total government health expenditures. The equivalent numbers for patented prescription drugs were 6.3%. In contrast spending on health professionals grew at an average annual rate of 6.5% between 2002 and 2006 and spending on hospitals and institutions increased by 6.9% annually, while total available provincial revenues rose by 5.3% per year in that same period.

Therefore, says Skinner, "even without any spending on drugs, all other areas are growing at unsustainable rates."



Quarterly Quote

Build for your team a feeling of oneness, of dependence upon one another and of strength to be derived by unity

Vince Lombardi 1913-1970



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When Travelling Medical Supplies

Prescription medication for legitimate health conditions may come under intense scrutiny by foreign officials. In some countries, drugs that are legal and readily available in Canada will be considered illegal, require a prescription, or arouse the suspicions of local officials and customs and immigration authorities. Take appropriate precautions when travelling with such supplies. It is always best to contact the Foreign Government Offices Accredited to Canada of the country you plan to visit to confirm the status of your medication.

Travelling with Prescription or Over-the-Counter Medication & Syringes

- Pack an extra supply of your medication in case you are away for longer than expected.
- Carry a copy of the original prescription, and ensure that both the generic and trade names of the drug are included in case your medication is lost or stolen. A doctor's note describing why you are taking the medication is also recommended.
- If you are taking a less common medication, check to ensure that it is legal and readily available in the country you intend to visit.
- If you require **syringes** for a medical condition such as diabetes, carry a supply to last your entire trip, as well as a medical certificate that states that they are for medical use. Syringes are usually prohibited in carry-on luggage due to security concerns. Contact your airline before departure to verify their carry-on regulations.



How Should I Pack My Medication?

Leave all medicine in its original, labelled container to avoid problems with customs officials. Do not try to save luggage space by combining medications into a single container.

Travel to the U.S.

Canadian visitors to the United States should be aware that their personal medication may be subject to U.S. drug importation laws and regulations. In general, personal importation of a 90-day (three month) supply of medication is allowed, but only if the drug is not available in the United States. **U.S. Customs officials have relaxed their policy on importation of prescription drugs through the mail from Canada. However, all packages are still carefully scrutinized.** For further information, please visit the Web site of the US Food and Drug Administration

*Source: Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Website

WSIB Claims Management – the New Regulations

Many employers have used third party consultants to assist them with WSIB claims and appeals for years. Recently, new regulations in Ontario have come into place that require most consultants to be licensed Paralegals to act on behalf of employers before the WSIB.

As a result, a number of consultants have exited the industry, leaving many employers scrambling to find alternative providers. Baicorp Financial has teamed up with CompCall, a national provider of WCB services to employers, to offer our clients access to these services. CompCall has taken the necessary steps to remain compliant under the new regulations.

To find out more, please contact us.

