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1. **PARA - Know Your Contract: Flexible Spending Account***

What is a flexible spending account?

The Flexible Spending Account (FSA) is designed as an enhancement to your benefits package. Moving forward, each contract year, you will receive \$1000 which you must allocate between three accounts:

1. **Flex Spending Health - Canada** (**Non-taxable**, member & eligible dependent expenses)

This spending account can be used to cover expenses above your health and dental plan maximums, eligible medical expenses not covered by your health and dental plans, and the health/dental premiums deducted from your paystubs
2. **Flex Spending RRSP** (**Tax receipt issued for tax deduction**; member and/or spouse reimbursement)

This spending account can be used to invest in a GROUP RRSP administered by Standard Life. A selection of funds and investment mixes is available to choose from.
3. **Flex Spending Health - Taxable** (Taxable, member expenses only)
 - Family Care – includes daycare, home care, nanny fees, medical and/or non-medical dependent care or expenses related to this care

- Professional Development – includes tuition, books, seminars, course travel costs, etc.; professional and voluntary association fees; software related to professional development
- Wellness – includes fitness & wellness instruction (aerobics, weight counseling, etc.); fitness centre, sports league or facility fees; purchase of new or used home fitness equipment; sports equipment (skis, helmets, bicycles, athletic footwear

If you are not sure whether an expense is eligible for any of these accounts, please contact Benefits (contact information below) to clarify *before* making the purchase where possible.

★★★ **What do I need to do about my flexible spending account THIS MONTH?**

For this year, because of the administration delay generated by the June Arbitration Award that established the FSA, you will be asked to allocate your FSA credits between August 15 and August 28. **If you do not allocate your funds during this period, all your credits will automatically revert into the health spending account (account #1 above). After August 28, you cannot change your allocations.**

Step 1:

Sign into e-People and click "Employee Home". On the Employee Home Page, click "Benefits Home." On the Benefits Home Page, click "Benefits Enrollment" located near the bottom of the page.

Step 2:

On the Benefits Enrollment page, under "Open Benefit Events," find "Open Enrollment" and click the "Select" button on the right hand side of that event.

On the Open Enrollment page, you will find an "Enrollment Summary" with a list of your three flex spending account options. The "New" amount under *Flex Spending Health - Canada*, is the total number of credits available for allocation between your three account options.

To allocate your FSA credits, click the "Edit" button on the left side of each account listing and designate your allocation choices.

Enrollment Summary		
Edit	Flex Spending Health - Canada	Your Cost
Current: Health Choice Spending HS1/HS2: \$600.00		
New: Health Choice Spending HS1/HS2: \$1000.00		0.00
Edit	Flex Spending RRSP	Your Cost
Current: No Coverage		
New: No Coverage		0.00
Edit	Flex Spending Health - Taxable	Your Cost
Current: No Coverage		
New: No Coverage		0.00


Once you hit the "Edit" button, a "Select an Option" window will appear.

Select an Option

No, I do not want to enroll.

[Health Choice Spending HS1/HS2](#)

This plan requires that you specify an annual pledge amount.

Annual Pledge: 

- If you do not wish to allocate credits to the account, select "No, I do not want to enroll."
- If you wish to allocate credits to the account, choose the second option and fill in the "Annual Pledge" Box with the amount you wish to allocate. There is no minimum allocation amount per account.

Click the "Continue" button to save this information and designate your allocations for the remaining accounts. A confirmation message will appear.

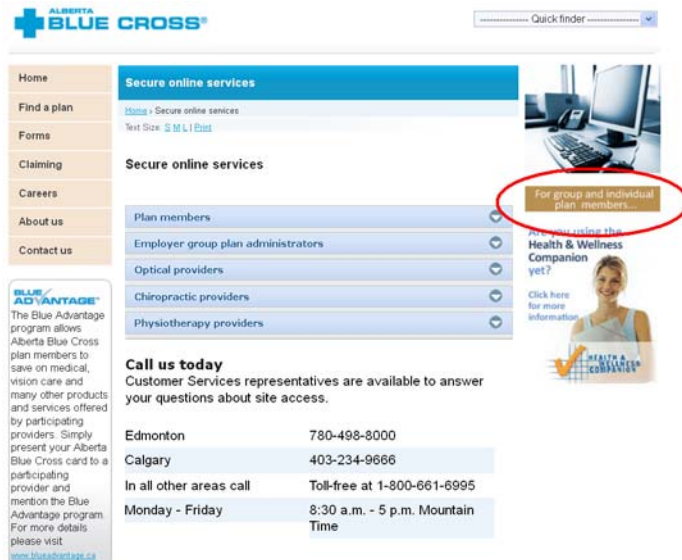
Step 3:

After you have allocated your total FSA credits, click the "Submit" button. If you have incorrectly allocated too many or too few credits, the page will display an error message and you will need

to go back and correctly re-allocate your credits. Otherwise, the page will refresh and you will be presented with one last chance to go back and change your allocations. If you are satisfied with your choices, scroll down the page and select the "Submit" button again to send your final choices to the Benefits Department. The page will refresh to indicate successful submission. Click "Ok."

For help with the e-People system, call 1 (877) 511-4455 or email HRSupportCentre@telus.com.

Step 4:

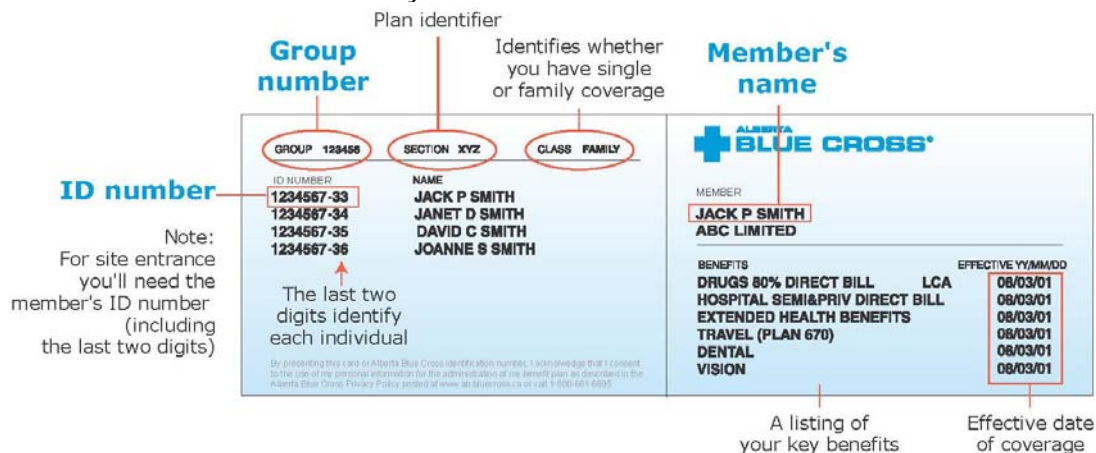


If you allocated funds to the personal spending account, you will need to register on the Alberta Blue Cross Website in order to access the personal spending account claim form, which is an online form. If you have not yet registered for your Blue Cross online account or have not registered since your group plan number changed last June, go to www.ab.bluecross.ca/online_services.html. Click on the "For group and individual plan members..." area on the right side of the page. In the "Health and Wellness Companion" Box that appears on the next page, select "Register".

You will be asked for the following information:

- Group (Plan) number
- Alberta Blue Cross ID number (9 numbers long, make sure to include the dash)
- Member's date of birth

This information can be found on your ID card:



Finally, you will be asked to enter a password. The password must be at least 7 characters long. Your registration will now be complete and you will be able to sign into the secure website.

If you are having difficulty obtaining access to the site, call Alberta Blue Cross Customer Service toll free at 1 (800) 661-6995.

Step 5:

If you allocated credits to the RRSP Account, you will receive a User ID and PIN by mail from Standard Life within two weeks of making your allocations. Using this User ID and PIN, you have until **October 28, 2011** to register your plan selections with Standard Life at <https://viproom.standardlife.ca/pin/Login.jsp>. You will be required to select your choice of RRSP funds and investment mixes. If you miss this 60-day window, your RRSP allocation will revert to your health spending account.

Once you have registered with Standard Life, your RRSP allocation will be automatically be invested into your Group RRSP account administered by Standard Life.

How do I claim expenses from flexible spending account?

Your RRSP Account credits will automatically be invested once you register with Standard Life. (See Step 5 above.)

You can begin submitting claims for your health spending account and your personal spending account as of September 1, 2011 if you have allocated credits to these accounts. These claims can relate to expenses incurred any time after July 1, 2011.

Your health spending account credits can be claimed as in previous years; depending on the vendor/ care provider; this reimbursement is either automatic or will require you to submit a claim form.

Personal spending account claims can be submitted through an online form.

Both these forms and other health and dental insurance forms can be found:

- **PARA** website: <http://www.para-ab.ca/residents/frequently-used-forms/health-benefits-forms>
- Blue Cross website: <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/plan-members/gpm-form.html>.

The addresses to which these forms should be mailed can be found on the forms themselves.

Who do I talk to if I have questions about my flexible spending account?

If you still have questions, contact:

AHS Benefits: 1 (877) 511-4455

HRContactCentre@albertahealthservices.ca

***The Flexible Spending Account is a benefit only available to Ministry-funded PARA resident physicians.**

For more contract tips, visit the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/agreement/know-your-contract>.

2. PARA Aggregate Representative Elections

The **PARA** Aggregate Member Elections will take place during the August 8 **PARA** Board Meeting in Edmonton. (Information on the time and location of the board meeting, the bus from Calgary, and how to RSVP can be found in the Upcoming Events Section below.) **PARA** members are welcome to attend the Board Meeting to vote in person; however, for those who are unable to attend, you will have already received an on-line proxy form through email on Friday, July 29 allowing you to vote by proxy. A list of candidates and their letters of intent are available within the online form as well as on the PARA website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/board/para-upcoming-elections>.

You will have until 11:59pm on Thursday, August 4 to submit your proxy. Have your say in who represents you on the **PARA** Board of Directors! If you have any questions about your online proxy vote please contact the PARA office.

3. Wellness Tip

➤ Finding a Family Physician

The AMA Physician and Family Support Program (PFSP) keeps a list of family physicians willing to treat resident physicians and their immediate families.

Contact the PFSP:

AMA Physician and Family Support Program

Toll-free: 1(877)767.4637

Email: pfsp@albertadoctors.org

University Health Services in the MacEwan Student Centre at the University of Calgary is staffed by registered nurses, psychiatrists, family physicians, chiropractors, a nutritionist, and massage therapists. For more information call (403) 210-9355.

➤ PARA's Compassionate Benefit

All resident physicians who are licensed in the educational or general register to practice in the Province of Alberta, members of **PARA** and in need of temporary assistance on compassionate grounds are eligible for subsidy under this program. Compassionate grounds include but may not be limited to issues of addictions and substance abuse. Preference will be given to applicants who have not received previous benefits under this program.

Eligible expenses include direct personal costs of the individual attending: a) a residential treatment program; b) a recommended individual assessment program, including travel costs and other legitimate associated costs, supported by receipts; the cost of spousal attendance will be considered on a case by case basis; or c) other expenses as recommended by the Program/Clinical Director of the Physician and Family Support Program, and the Registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.

4. Conference Sponsorship Opportunity

The **PARA** Conference Sponsorship Program was established to help embody the value **PARA** places on resident physician education and resident physician wellness. As part of this program, **PARA** sponsors a resident from the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary to attend two specifically chosen conferences on either physician health or medical education. The two conferences selected this year are the International Conference on Physician Health and the Canadian Conference on Medical Education (CCME).

- Canadian Conference on Physician Health, October 28-29, 2011, Toronto, Ontario.
 - Visit <http://www.cma.ca/2011CanadianConference> for more information.
 - **Application deadline: Wednesday, August 31, 2011**
- Canadian Conference on Medical Education, April 14-18, 2012, Banff, Alberta.
 - Visit <http://www.mededconference.ca/about-ccme.php> for more information.
 - **Application deadline: Wednesday, February 29, 2012**

Interested applicants must submit a one-page summary to **PARA** indicating who they are, their leadership experience, and why they wish to attend.

These conferences were selected based on how they met both **PARA**'s mission statement and its goals. Part of **PARA**'s mission includes "advocat[ing for] excellence in education and patient care while striving to achieve optimal working conditions and personal well-being for all its members." **PARA**'s goals also include:

- **Well-being** - PARA will work to improve the wellness of its members
- **Education** - PARA will be an advocate for quality education and develop and support educational opportunities for its members.

For a closer look at **PARA**'s Mission, Vision, Values, and Long-term Goals go to the **PARA** website <http://www.para-ab.ca/upload/files/docs/PARA%20Mission%20Vision%20Values%20Long-term%20Goals2010.2011v2.pdf>

Successful applicants will be responsible for their own registration and travel arrangements. PARA will reimburse these resident physicians for their expenses according to the PARA Expense Reimbursement Policy.

5. Pull Over to Page Campaign Reminder

For the last two years, **PARA** has been involved with the Coalition for Cellphone-free Driving first as a partner and, then, as a member with our own cellphone-free driving policy for **PARA** staff and members on **PARA** business. Last year and this year, the **PARA** Board chose to sponsor medical students from the Coalition to present to high school students in rural communities on the risks associated with distracted driving. This initiative was particularly attractive because it exposes rural students to the idea of medicine as a career, provides medical students with leadership opportunities that will benefit them as future resident physicians, and focuses on a form of preventive medicine that can help keep Albertans out of our emergency rooms. Since May of 2011, the Coalition medical students have delivered over 110 presentations to high school students in 18 communities across Alberta.



Also as part of our membership, PARA plays a part in the coalition's media campaign to spread the message that cellphone use while driving can be deadly. To target our specific demographic, PARA continues its "Pull Over to Page" Campaign. Look for our "Pull Over to Page" buttons and posters in resident lounges near you. To obtain buttons or copies of the poster, contact the PARA office or your aggregate representative.

For more information on the Students for Cellphone-free Driving, please visit <http://www.para-ab.ca/about/media/coalition-for-cellphone-free-driving>.

6. A Call for Health Promotion Ideas: opportunity to collaborate with the AMA - get involved; become empowered

In collaboration with the AMA and the undergraduate medical student associations, **PARA** is looking for project ideas for health promotion in Alberta. Grants will be available for resident-driven initiatives so if you have an idea for health promotion (eg. STI prevention, hypertension multidisciplinary management, chronic disease awareness, mental health issues, etc.), please contact

Dr. Gillian Shiao
PARA's VP External Affairs
gillian.shiau@gmail.com.

PARA's vision for its members is to be **informed, empowered** and **involved**. If you have an idea, we would love to hear it and then help you transition that idea into a meaningful initiative. For a closer look at **PARA**'s Mission, Vision, Values, and Long-term Goals go to the **PARA** website <http://www.para-ab.ca/upload/files/docs/PARA%20Mission%20Vision%20Values%20Long-term%20Goals2010.2011v2.pdf>

7. CAIR Update



To see the July 2011 edition of *CAIR Update* is now available, visit the PARA website at

<http://www.para-ab.ca/upload/files/docs/CAIR/2011%20July%20CAIR%20Update.pdf>

In this issue:

- Report on 2011 CAIR AGM/Board Meeting
- 2011-2012 Board of Directors
- Transition to Practice Service (TIPS)
- Education Opportunities

8. Upcoming Events

▪ **PARA Board of Directors Meeting**

Date: Monday, August 8, 2011

Location: Varscona Hotel on Whyte (8208 – 106 Street, Edmonton)
Thomas Bennett (Main Floor)

Time: Board Meeting: 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Lunch will be made available at 11:30 a.m.

An orientation dinner & social will take place after the board meeting.

RSVP to para-ab@shawbiz.ca by noon on August 2.

Calgary bus pick up: outside the Tom Baker/Special Services Building, Foothills Medical Centre.

Report time: 8:00 a.m.

Departure time: 8:15 a.m. – Muffins and juice will be available on the bus.

Arrival time: 11:30 a.m.

Edmonton Departure: 8:00 p.m. (or earlier depending on meeting length)

▪ **PARAtreat**



Date: Thursday, August 18, 2011

Location: Vicious Circle (1011 – 1 Street SW)

Time: 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Hospital ID required.

RSVP to para-ab@shawbiz.ca by noon on August 17 to add your name (and that of your guest without hospital ID) to the guest list.

▪ **PARA Labour Day Classic Football**

PARA
Labour Day Classics
ALBERTA Football

WIN 1 pair of Tickets!
First 30 residents in Calgary and Edmonton to email para-ab@shawbiz.ca with their complete residential mailing address will be going to the game.

Stampeders vs. Eskimos
Monday, September 5, 2011
2:30 p.m. @ Mahon Stadium, Calgary

Eskimos vs. Stampeders
Friday, September 9, 2011
7:00 p.m. @ Commonwealth Stadium, Edmonton

Deadline is August 10, 2011

WIN 1 pair of Tickets!

The first 30 University of Calgary resident physicians to email para-ab@shawbiz.ca with their complete home mailing address will be going to the game. Deadline is **August 10, 2011.**

Stampeders vs. Eskimos

Monday, September 5, 2011

2:30 p.m. @ Mahon Stadium

For more information on upcoming events, visit **PARA's** events calendar online at <http://www.para-ab.ca/calendar.aspx>.

PARA has a new facebook page to allow resident physicians to RSVP for **PARA** events. You can find our page at

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=185755111347>. Feedback on the site is welcome.

9. PARA's July 2011 Resident Physician of the Month

Dr. Basem Al-Shareef, General Surgery, PGY 4, University of Alberta

A fellow resident physician had this to say about Dr. Al-Shareef:



Dr. Al-Shareef is an exemplary physician and leader. In spite of carrying a heavy workload as chief resident on the general surgery service, he consistently demonstrates not only a cheerful attitude towards his career, but genuine compassion and respect for patients and colleagues alike. He is dedicated to keeping his surgical team happy, and his amiable personality is evidenced by big smiles on the faces of his former learners whom he might encounter in the hallways. Out of a personal sense of responsibility, Dr. Al-Shareef has voluntarily led daily after-hours teaching sessions for his team, and made it clear that he is always available should his team or

patients have questions. Equal to his concern for his workplace are his strong family values; Dr. Al-Shareef endeavours tirelessly to keep his household together and encourages us to do the same. I'm sure his teacher father is proud of the highly capable, yet refreshingly modest leader his son has become. This rotation would not have been as enjoyable and valuable as it was, were it not for such a wonderful chief resident. (Add ten extra points to that last statement, coming from an off-service resident on their last post-exam residency rotation ever!)

For this and previous months' Resident Physician of the Month announcement, visit **PARA** online at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/news-and-events/awards>.

Regards from,

Your **P**rofessional **A**ssociation of **R**esident Physicians of **A**lberta

#340, 11044 - 82 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6G 0T2

Edmonton: (780) 432-1749

para-ab@shawbiz.ca

Calgary: (403) 236-4841

www.para-ab.ca

Toll-free: 1 (877) 375-PARA (7272)

Fax: (780) 432-1778