

Offering Workplace Health Benefits into Retirement Likely to Encourage Employees to stay in Workforce Longer

*Nine in ten (91%) Say Good Benefit Package an Important Factor
in Determining Whether or Not a Job is Good*

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Nine in ten (91%) Say Good Benefit Package an Important Factor in Determining Whether or Not a Job is Good

Toronto, ON – As Canada's population get older, more and more Canadians are approaching the age of retirement, resulting in a workforce that is facing shortages in many sectors. The results of a recent Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Sanofi Aventis reveal that many Canadians aged 55 and older say that if an employer offered a number of health benefits into retirement, they would likely be encouraged to come back from retirement or to stay on longer than originally planned.

More specifically, two thirds (65%) of Canadians aged 55 and older would likely be encouraged to stay in the workforce if their employer wanted to offer prescription drug coverage that would continue into one's retirement, while six in ten (61%) agreed that they would 'likely be encouraged' to stay in the workforce if their employer offered dental coverage that would continue into retirement. Interestingly, even employees who are still some time away from retirement (under the age of 55) cite drug (68%) and dental coverage (63%) that continues into retirement as a likely factor to encourage them to move to new employer.

With the costs of health care treatment and medication continuing to increase, almost all (91%) Canadians cite a good benefit package as an important factor to them when determining whether or not a job is good. Further, the quality of a benefit package appears to

be connected to job satisfaction with 95% of Canadians who identify their health plan as being ‘excellent’ also agreeing that they are satisfied with their job. Naturally, a good benefit package is not the only thing that Canadians rate when determining whether or not they have a good job. Almost all Canadians cite being treated well by the organization (96%), supportive coworkers (94%), trust in one’s coworkers (93%) and competent management (92%) as important factors when determining whether or not they have a good job.

Employers Doing a Good Job at Communicating Details of Health Benefit Plans...

A vast majority (86%) of Canadians say that their employers are doing a ‘very good’ (41%) or ‘good job’ at communicating their employee health care benefit plan (45%), suggesting that employers see this as an important role of their human resources activities. Despite this acknowledgement of good communication, just seven in ten (68%) say that they understand their plan ‘extremely’ (19%) or ‘very well’ (49%). However, just 4% of Canadians maintain that they do not understand their health care benefits very well.

Further, effective communication of health care benefits appears to have an impact on one’s level of job satisfaction. Almost all (94%) Canadian health care plan members who say that their employers do a ‘very good’ job of communicating the details of their benefit plans are satisfied with their jobs, compared to just over three quarters (77%) of those who say that their employers do a poor or very poor job at communicating who claim that they are satisfied with their jobs. In fact, nearly half (45%) of those who indicate that their employer does a ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ job at communicating their health plan care benefits have considered changing employers in the last 12 months. This is compared to just one quarter

(24%) of those who say that their employer does a 'very good job' who report that they have considered leaving their employer in the last 12 months.

Furthermore, in return for good coverage, it appears that Canadians are willing to help their employers with the costs of their health coverage, with eight in ten (81%) of those who indicate that their benefit plan meets their needs 'extremely well' agreeing that they feel that they have an obligation to help their employer with the costs of their employee health benefit plan.

Where There's Health care, There's Government...

As health care is an expensive proposition, the issue of paying for the care is an important one. Most Canadian health care benefit holders believe that the government should take a lead role in paying for expensive medications or treatments of serious illnesses like cancer (87%), and for chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and high cholesterol (70%). Respondents also think that governments should be a primary payee of such services as diagnostic services (79%), vaccines for conditions like hepatitis (70%), and preventive health services (60%). A strong majority (79%) of health care benefit holders believe that the government should set minimum standards and requirements for what is offered under employer-sponsored health benefit plans.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Sanofi Aventis from January 10 to January 28 2007. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1700 adult health benefit plan members in Canada was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 2.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of adult health plan benefit members been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data



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were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data.

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