

## FINANCES AND TYPE 1 DIABETES

Diabetes often adds financial strain to families. With or without insurance, the extra costs of medication and doctor visits can be overwhelming. According to [Diabetes Canada](#), the financial burden of diabetes and its complications can be extensive and people with diabetes can incur medical costs that are 2-3 times higher than those without diabetes.

The following information can be used as a guide to ensure you receive the maximum financial coverage available:

1. Register for the [BC Fair PharmaCare Program](#) online at <https://pharmacare.moh.hnet.bc.ca> or by calling 604-683-7151 from Vancouver or 1-800-663-7100 for the rest of the province.
  - Everyone in British Columbia **MUST** register for this program.
  - Not sure if you are registered? Follow the link to check your registration status:  
<https://pharmacare.moh.hnet.bc.ca/PPIBroker?ExternalAction=JppiSearch>
  - You can also request confirmation of your Fair PharmaCare Assistance:  
<https://pharmacare.moh.hnet.bc.ca/PPIBroker?ExternalAction=JppiReprint>
  - Have your family circumstances changed? Divorced or separated? Has there been a 10% decrease in income during the past two years? Child custody changes? You may be eligible to have your Fair PharmaCare assistance adjusted. Follow this link to find out more about a reassessment for increased assistance:  
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare-for-bc-residents/who-we-cover/fair-pharmacare-plan/increased-assistance-and-payment-options#apply>
  - Unable to pay the deductible? You can request a payment program that suits your financial needs. The following link provides you with more information regarding this option:  
<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare-for-bc-residents/who-we-cover/fair-pharmacare-plan/increased-assistance-and-payment-options#payment-option>
2. Speak to your employer to see whether you have Extended Health Benefits and the extent of coverage offered by your plan.
  - Self-employed? You may wish to explore some of the benefit plans available and find one that is a fit for you.

3. Apply for the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC).

- The [Canada Revenue Agency](#) recognizes insulin as a life-sustaining therapy. Anyone with diabetes using insulin whose doctor certifies they spend an average of at least 14 hours per week on activities related to determining and administering insulin may be eligible for the DTC. The DTC is automatically approved for all children **under the age of 18 years** with type 1 diabetes.

See also our handout [Disability Tax Credit for Children with Type 1 Diabetes](#).

4. Consider long-term planning including the Registered Disability Savings Plan.

- The [Registered Disability Savings Plan \(RDSP\)](#) is a savings plan that is intended to help parents and others save for the long-term financial security of a person who is eligible for the disability tax credit (DTC).
- Contributions to an RDSP are not tax-deductible and can be made until the end of the year in which the beneficiary turns 59. Contributions that are withdrawn are not included in income for the beneficiary when they are paid out of an RDSP. However, the Canada Disability Savings Grant, the Canada Disability Savings Bond, investment income earned in the plan, and rollover amounts are included in the beneficiary's income for tax purposes when they are paid out of the RDSP. Parents or guardians may open an RDSP for a minor.
- You should consider opening an RDSP if you have a long-term disability and are:
  - eligible for the DTC;
  - under the age of 60 (if you are 59, you must apply before the end of the calendar year in which you turned 59);
  - a Canadian resident with a [Social Insurance Number \(SIN\)](#); and
  - looking for a long-term savings plan.
- You may contribute any amount to your RDSP each year, up to the lifetime contribution limit of \$200,000. With written permission from the RDSP holder, anyone may contribute to the RDSP. If you have an RDSP, you may also be eligible for grants and bonds to help with your long-term savings.

For more information:

- [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdl/tpcs/rdsp-reei/menu-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdl/tpcs/rdsp-reei/menu-eng.html)
- [www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/savings.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/savings.html)
- <http://www.rdsp.com/how-do-i-qualify/>

For information regarding financial concerns, please contact the BCCH Diabetes Program Social Worker at 604-875-2345, local 7091.