

## Update on H1N1: Flu season is behind us

With the end of the second wave of H1N1 in Canada, there is no longer a need for the ["Plan Member Confirmation of Illness"](#) form and as of **April 1, 2010** we will be reinstating the requirement for an Attending Physician's Statement (APS) for *all* medical conditions.

In [Focus Update #193](#) we recognized the increasing pressure on our medical clinics and hospitals due to the H1N1 pandemic situation. In light of that pandemic we introduced the "Plan Member Confirmation of Illness" form to be used in place of an Attending Physician Statement (APS), for influenza - or H1N1-related absences.

The implementation of this form was to address a social need during a time of increased incidence of influenza and H1N1 cases, and to ease the burden on our health care system. The use of the Plan Member Confirmation of Illness form when the plan member had flu-like symptoms and was designed to:

- encourage plan members to stay home if they are sick
- limit the possible spread of infection by not requiring a visit to a doctor's office
- ensure that plan members are able to submit a claim for STD benefits in the event their physician refuses to complete an APS
- limit the number of visits to doctors' offices to get forms completed during this period of increased strain on the health care system.

### Did you know?

Across the country, approximately 45 per cent of Canadians have received the H1N1 flu shot to protect themselves and their families.

Recently, the World Health Organization reported that in North America, the overall circulation of pandemic influenza is now low with a declining pattern of influenza activity. Likewise, the Public Health Agency of Canada has also reported that currently, all influenza activity indicators are either within or below the expected range for a normal flu season.

We're happy to announce that we have seen the same rate of decline in the submission of influenza and H1N1 claims, with levels returning to those consistent with past flu season activity.

### What does this mean?

Effective **April 1, 2010** we will no longer accept the ["Plan Member Confirmation of Illness"](#) form and we will reinstate the requirement for an Attending Physician's Statement (APS) for *all* medical conditions. Please share this information with your plan members to ensure they are using the correct form as of April 1.

### Questions?

Contact your Sun Life Financial group representative