

## Sun Life sponsored Conference Board of Canada's research reports now available

In an effort to provide more information to plan sponsors on the trends of specialty drugs, Sun Life has sponsored research reports on specialty medications by The Conference Board of Canada (CBoC). Sun Life's latest pharmaceutical benefits Bright Paper, "[Specialty Drugs: Trends, Challenges and Solutions](#)," was heavily referenced as a strong resource on the topic. The resulting two reports by the CBoC are now available online.

### "Specialty Medications: Background Information for Employers"

This [first briefing](#), delves into the topic of biologics and biosimilars and what future effects these could have on the landscape of pharmaceutical costs for insurers and the employers that engage them to provide workplace coverage. The importance of these drugs is highlighted, as well as the importance of ensuring their appropriate use for the benefits of an employee's wellness.

### "The Value of Specialty Medications: An Employer Perspective"

The [second report](#), further explores the economic model on the value of specialty medication. Sun Life again provided direction and thought leadership throughout the compilation of this report that investigated employer concerns about how to manage rising costs of workplace benefits due to expensive specialty medications. Focusing on three chronic diseases (rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, and multiple sclerosis), the report provides a qualitative cost-benefit analysis. The findings suggest that benefits gained from employer-provided specialty medications extend beyond the workplace of the plan member receiving the treatment, but these benefits may not always have a positive return on investment.

The simple measure of ensuring medications are used as indicated – the right drug for the right member at the right time – will see those receiving them benefit more from their treatment and thus may potentially lead to a positive return on investment. Sun Life's prior authorization (PA) program ensures that new drugs are added to the program prior to their launch in Canada in order to protect drug plans and to encourage appropriate use of them. Our PA program also incorporates the feature of step-therapy and limited approval periods for some treatments which allow for physicians to check-in with patients to confirm whether the prescribed medicines are effective.

To read more about Sun Life's pharmaceutical benefits and drug solutions, visit [sunlife.ca/brightchoices](http://sunlife.ca/brightchoices) today.

### Questions?

Contact your Sun Life Financial group benefits representative.