



British Columbia Teachers' Federation

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BCTF Health and Wellness Program—Frequently asked questions

What is the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

The BCTF Health and Wellness Program supports and empowers members recovering from illness or injury to regain an optimum state of wellness, health, and productivity by providing rehabilitation services and promoting self-care. It is funded by the membership of the BCTF.

How do members find out more about the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

Posters are sent to every school staffroom. Members may call their Local Presidents for more information, or call the BCTF directly. Information about the program is on the BCTF website at bctf.ca/wellness.

Who can access the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

Any BCTF member who contributes to the Salary Indemnity Plan is entitled to request a referral to the program if they are working in one of the districts covered by the BCTF Health and Wellness Program. Currently 57 of 60 districts are part of the program. To find out if your district is part of the program, you can ask your Local President or call the BCTF directly (604-871-2283 or toll-free 1-800-663-9163) and ask to speak with someone from the BCTF Health and Wellness Program.

Do members have to be off work or on disability benefits in order to access the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

No, members do not need to be off work or on disability benefits in order to participate in the program. A referral to the program can be made on the basis that a member is struggling with a health issue that could result in disability if it is not addressed.

How are members referred to the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

A member may call the BCTF directly (604-871-2283 or toll-free 1-800-663-9163) and ask to speak with someone from the BCTF Health and Wellness Program to self-refer. A member may also be referred by the employer or Local President if there have been absences that would suggest the member might need some rehabilitation support to maintain her or his assignment successfully. Referrals are also generated by the Salary Indemnity Plan, short-term or long-term, if medical reports indicate that recovery/return-to-work could be enhanced through rehabilitation assistance.

How do I know if I've been referred to the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

If a referral has been received and approved by the BCTF, you will receive a telephone call from a representative of the Health and Wellness Program, who will give you general information about the program and ask you whether you would like to participate.

If I am referred to the BCTF Health and Wellness Program, am I required to participate?

No, participation in the program is completely voluntary. Even if you initially choose to participate in the program, you may opt out of the rehabilitation process at any time.

If I decide to opt out of the BCTF Health and Wellness Program and I am receiving short-term or long-term disability benefits, will it jeopardize my benefits?

No, the program is entirely voluntary. Your disability benefits will not be affected by your choice not to participate. However, you may miss out on supports that likely would have enhanced your recovery or your return to work experience.

After I indicate that I would like to participate in the Health and Wellness Program, what happens next?

You will then be referred to a community-based Rehabilitation Consultant, who will call you at home, generally within a few days, to set up an in-person meeting to tell you more about the services available to you through the BCTF Health and Wellness Program.

Can you tell me more about the Rehabilitation Consultants?

The Rehabilitation Consultants are credentialed rehabilitation professionals who are contracted by the BCTF to provide services to its members. These consultants are trained in developing rehabilitation programs suited to the needs of BCTF members and are familiar with the challenges of the teaching profession.

Where do the rehabilitation activities take place?

One-to-one meetings with the Rehabilitation Consultant take place in the member's own home, or another location that is mutually agreed upon. If other services, such as physiotherapy, or psychological counseling are part of the rehabilitation plan, they will take place in the member's own community or as close as possible.

Once I am participating in the program, will my Local President and employer be informed?

Yes, your employer and your Local President will be informed that you are accessing the BCTF Health and Wellness Program, but **none of your medical or personal information will be shared**. Only the information that is pertinent to your return-to-work, such as the work accommodations that you require, will be shared with your employer.

Is there a cost for involvement in the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

There is no cost to the member for the Rehabilitation Consultant meetings that are undertaken for the benefit of the member. All costs associated with the involvement of the Rehabilitation Consultant are covered by the program. There may be costs for additional services that the Rehabilitation Consultant recommends, but some costs may be offset by the BCTF Health and Wellness Program. For example, if a physician recommends that physiotherapy would assist in a member's recovery, and extended health benefits through the employer have been exhausted, the BCTF Health and

Wellness Program is able to cost-share the sessions while the member is involved with the Health and Wellness Program.

What services might be cost-shared by the BCTF Health and Wellness Program?

Psychological services, physical therapies, occupational therapy services, speech therapy, and naturopathic services are among the services cost-shared by the program, if medically indicated.

Who decides which services will be offered and how long I can access the program?

You and your Rehabilitation Consultant will develop an individual rehabilitation plan in conjunction with your medical practitioners. It may include various therapies and services, as well as workplace accommodations that will enhance your medical recovery, quality of life, and/or return-to-work experience. Involvement is not limited to a set time frame, but it is based on the individual rehabilitation goals that are set. For example, if the rehabilitation goal is to assist you with returning to work after knee surgery, the rehabilitation plan may involve cost-sharing of physiotherapy, a work-site assessment, a gradual work re-entry, and discussions with your employer to supply workplace modifications such as a sit/stand stool. Once your return to work plan is completed and is durable, your rehabilitation case is closed.