

# Healthcare Coalition Celebrates 10 Years

BY: FERN TARDIF

Reprinted with permission from:

BENEFITS AND PENSIONS  
**MONITOR**

---

September 2018 Issue

# 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

## Healthcare Coalition Celebrates 10 Years

The Atlantic Canada Health Care Coalition Society (ACHCCS) is celebrating its 10-year anniversary as a non-profit organization that helps union members and their families in Atlantic Canada receive group discounts on various products.

BY: **FERN TARDIF**

The ACHCCS was incorporated in July of 2008 with four founding local unions with a total of 2,000 members. Today 70 union groups, made up of over 800 local unions, represent over 250,000 members and their families in Atlantic Canada.

The coalition unions are spread across many different sectors and industries and use their purchasing power to develop discounts and value-added programs for their members and families. Current coalition members include most of the building trade locals in Atlantic Canada and all of the locals from CUPE, PSAC, CUPW, the United Steel Workers, IBEW Utilities, and UFCW in Atlantic Canada. Also included are the NSGEU, NSGREU, federal government dockyard trades and labour council, Atlantic Police Association, various UNIFOR locals, the Dartmouth Fire Veterans Association, the Nova Scotia Union of Public and Private Employees, PEIUPSE, SEIU, IATSE, the Halifax Typographical Union, ILA in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, IAMAW, and the Amalgamated Transit Union.

The coalition has agreements with companies that offer programs to members and their families. MHCSI provides coverage to plans/members starting at \$3 per prescription processed through its preferred provider network, which includes Lawtons Drugs, Sobeys, Foodland, Safeway, Thrifty Foods, IGA, and FreshCo pharmacies. Also, members receive a Lawtons Partner Discount card where they can save five per cent to 40 per cent on front of store retail purchases.

There is a group home and auto program with HB GROUP Insurance, a Co-operators Company, offering discounts and other benefits for home and auto insurance as well commercial and fiduciary insurance. Discounts on hearing aids with connect hearing are offered through an agreement with Epic Hearing.

Fleet pricing is available on all new Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram, and Fiat vehicles. An Optum Rx Discount Card can be used at hundreds of U.S. pharmacies when members need to purchase prescription drugs while travelling in that country.

The one-time cost for a local union or large union comprised of many locals is an initiation fee of \$50. Each union has a representative on the coalition's board of directors who attends an annual meeting.

After 10 years, the coalition can go back and show the success of its programs which has been very helpful in the ongoing increase in membership over the last number of years.

The coalition is a part of the National Labor Alliance of Health Care Coalition which has over 10 million members throughout the U.S. and Canada. This allows the ACHCCS to access discount benefit programs through the purchasing power of the NLA such as the hearing aid and U.S. prescription drug discount programs.

The goals and objectives of the coalition are to continue to look for programs that not only provide discounts, but added value products for members and families. While various companies have offered products to the coalition, the discount and value of the program is a key factor on whether the coalition will approve and promote the program to its members. **BPM**




Atlantic Canada Health Care Coalition Society

Union Benefits Purchasing Power



**Fern Tardif** is executive director of the Atlantic Canada Health Care Coalition Society.

ferntardif@eastlink.ca   
\*The coalition's website is [www.achccs.ca](http://www.achccs.ca) 