

# Respite... YOU deserve it!

NS FAMILY PHARMACARE PROGRAM

March 18, 2009

What is Family Pharmacare?

The Nova Scotia Family Pharmacare Program helps individuals and families who don't have drug coverage or who have very high medication costs that are not covered by their private health insurance. The program helps to cover the costs of certain prescription medications as well as some supplies and other services.

Who is Eligible for Family Pharmacare?

You are eligible for the program if you are a permanent resident of Nova Scotia and have a valid Nova Scotia Health Care Card (MSI Card). If you do not have a Nova Scotia Health Care Card, you can apply for one at:

Medical Services Insurance  
PO Box 500  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2S1  
(902) 496-7008 or 1-800-563-8880  
[www.gov.ns.ca/health/msi](http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/msi)

Who is **not** Eligible?

Families or individuals currently involved in one of the following programs.

- The Nova Scotia Senior's Pharmacare Program
- The Nova Scotia Diabetes Association Program
- The Long-Term Care Pharmacare Program (for people under 65)
- Any of the Department of Community Services Pharmacare Programs.

How do I register my family?

In order to register, you must have a Nova Scotia Health card (see above contact information). You are required to complete a registration form which you can get by calling (902) 496-5667

or 1-877-330-0323 or from the NS Department of Health's website at [www.nspharmacare.ca](http://www.nspharmacare.ca).  
Once you fill out the registration form for your family, you can mail it or fax it to:

Nova Scotia Family Pharmacare Program  
Nova Scotia Pharmacare Programs  
PO Box 500  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2S1  
Fax: (902)-468-9402

You must register for this program as a family. A family can be any of the following:

- A single adult (18 +)
- An adult and their spouse or partner
- An adult and all children under 18 years of age
- An adult, their spouse/partner and all children under 18 years of age.

All family members should be registered, even if they are covered by other insurance plans. This is important as the number of family members is considered when determining the family deductible. Any children over 18 living in the home must register as their own family.

How does the program work?

Family Pharmacare coverage starts on the first day of the month that you register for the program. Your Nova Scotia Health card is also your Family Pharmacare card. When you take your prescription to the pharmacy, you must show your Nova Scotia Health card.

There is no cost to register for the Family Pharmacare program. However, you will be required to pay an annual family deductible and the copayment for each prescription.

The family deductible is based on your family income and the number of people in your family. To find out what your family deductible is, go to the Family Pharmacare website (see address below) and click on **Calculating your Family Deductible**.

The copayment is a fee that is paid when filling prescriptions and is set at 20 per cent of the cost of the prescription under the Family Pharmacare program.

You pay the copayment fee **and** the balance of the prescription cost until your annual family deductible is reached. Once you have reached your annual family deductible, you only need to pay the 20 per cent copayment and the Nova Scotia Family Pharmacare Program will cover the balance.

The amount you pay as your annual family deductible and the copayments you make are considered medical expenses when you complete your income taxes. For more information about this, contact Revenue Canada at 1 800 959-8281.

What is covered?

Certain prescription medications, supplies and related services provided by pharmacies in Nova Scotia are covered under Family Pharmacare. Your pharmacist will have a complete list of medications and services. Some medications will require special approval from the Family Pharmacare Program. Some medications will not be covered by the program and you will have to pay for those prescriptions yourself.

For more information and answers to other questions about the Family Pharmacare program, please go to this website:

[http://gov.ns.ca/health/pharmacare/family\\_pharmacare/family\\_pharmacare.asp](http://gov.ns.ca/health/pharmacare/family_pharmacare/family_pharmacare.asp)

The topic of next week's Caregiver Weekly is: Access to Entertainment program

This article can also be found at: [www.caregiversns.org](http://www.caregiversns.org)

Previous issues of the Caregiver Weekly can be found at:

<http://www.caregiversns.org/RespitePartnership.php>

Comments? [Talk to us.](#)

**See you next week!**

**The Nova Scotia Partnership on Respite, Family Health, and Well-Being is made up of:**

Autism Society of Nova Scotia; Caregivers Nova Scotia Association; Central Region Respite Society; Halifax Association for Community Living; IWK Health Centre – Autism Research Centre; IWK Health Centre – Children's Health Program; IWK Health Centre – Social Work; Northern Region Respite Services; Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; Nova Scotia Association for Community Living; Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (Services for Persons with Disabilities); Nova Scotia Disabled Persons Commission; Progress Centre for Early Intervention; Society for the Treatment of Autism; Spina Bifida Association; and Yarmouth Association for Community Residential Options (YACRO).

The information contained in this Family Caregiver Weekly article is not intended to be formal legal or financial advice. It has been gathered from a variety of sources and is provided as an introduction to the topic. It is not complete and should not be used in the place of professional advice or consultation.

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