



The Farmers' Market of Nova Scotia Association has been proactive sourcing a Group Benefit Plan for its members. This is exciting news! A plan is now available to all members and enrollment is open. The program is being administered through RWAM - a third party provider who can access a number of insurance providers under one umbrella. RWAM has customized a program that allows all members to participate with pre-determined coverage and pricing. Please see the attached brochure for more information.

OMG Benefits Consultants are the advisors that will work with you to ensure your questions are answered and enrollment completed as needed. Christine MacDonald is lead consultant and Lyndsay Leedham, Associate can be reached at 902 429-6400. Our team is excited to be helping you get access to the coverage you need!

OMG has been helping small businesses in Atlantic Canada for more than 25 years. To learn more about us go to: www.omg.ca/benefits-and-pension-consulting/

Farmers Market Program – Frequently Asked Questions:

Group insurance allows members to have access to a **set program** offered to the vendors who are members of the Farmers Association. Each Vendor (employer) will be able to offer their employees a group benefit plan. This includes Life Insurance, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Travel Insurance, Extended Health Care, and Critical Illness. The employer can also choose to offer dental coverage or not. Long term disability is not offered through this plan.

What are the key differences between group benefits and individual benefits?

“Group” usually means more than **TWO** people. If your business is two or more members you can join the program right away with no medicals required. If only one, you can still join the plan but you will be required to complete a medical questionnaire. This is a requirement of the insurance industry and cannot be amended.

Group insurance is usually less costly than individual coverage. There can be exceptions to this of course, but as a general rule, group insurance is cheaper and does not require medicals. The rates are reviewed annually. The risk of premium changes year to year will be spread out over an entire block of business. Pooling results this way keep rate changes minimal. The Farmers' Market of NS will be part of a block of business with RWAM and renewals are completed January each year. Over the past number of years there's been minimal changes to rates. **This kind of rate protection is a key advantage to any group association insurance product.**

For example, here is the rate history: In 2020 - no change, 2019 - no change, 2018 Extended Health - no change, and Dental increased + 2% because the standard provincial fee guide changed, 2017 EHC – No Change and Dental + 5% increase for fee guide upgrade, 2016 Extended Health changed by + 3% increase, and Dental + 5% increase



When can I join?

Any time now! You're not required to join by a specific date as we've left this as an open enrolment program. However, you (employer) must be in business for a **minimum of one year and all employees must join** the plan if you decided to sign up.

Who can join?

Any business that is legally incorporated, sole proprietorship or partnership with employee relations. All employees of the business can join as long as they work a minimum of 24hrs/week, and have a true employer employee relationship.

What if as an employee, I already have health insurance?

If an employee has Health Coverage personally or through a spouse, they can waive the Health portion of the plan costs. They simply note this on the application with the policy number. The cost of the plan reduced to \$23.51 monthly instead of the stated single and family rates on the brochure.

Can I just set up an individual plan instead of signing up for Group Insurance?

If you prefer to set up individual coverage only then we have made arrangements for a special ink through Medavie Blue Cross. We have attached a brochure which includes a link to get a quick quote and then follow through with the application. If you do not have access to internet, please call 902 429-6400 for Christine MacDonald. She is licensed to complete the application with you. Her email is Christine.MacDonald@omg.ca. If you are just one person, we would recommend that you get a quote for individual coverage (which you can customize), and then compare that rate with the group rate before deciding on the best option.

If I leave the Farmers' Market of NS Association, can I take my plan with me?

The plan can be converted to a regular plan under RWAM. Simply reach out to Christine MacDonald to advise and she can let you know next steps.

If my family has 5 children, do I pay the same family rate as if I had one child?

Yes.

If I'm common law / married – would we sign up for family coverage?

You're choice. If you are both employed in the business, you could sign up for family coverage or you could each sign up for single coverage. If later you have dependents, you can switch to family coverage.



Who pays for the plan?

The members, employers. Each employer can then decide if they will share costs with their employees. Each member company is paying their monthly premium for the plan by preauthorized debit. It is 100% your choice. Pricing is outlined on the brochure attached.

Do I have to offer dental coverage?

As the employer you have the choice to offer dental coverage in your plan to your employees. It is optional at the vendor level. If you wish to offer to employees, they will all need to take unless they have coverage somewhere else already.

How long does it take to sign up?

The enrolment process is fairly quick. Once your forms are completed, please scan these and email Lyndsay.leadham@omg.ca

Originals can then be mailed directly to RWAM and, you can expect a confirmation of enrollment from RWAM within 5-10 business days. Information on how to sign up is attached.

What support is available from RWAM?

You will have full access to RWAM's customer service lines as well as a portal website and a mobile app to complete your claims, look up coverage etc. More information on these services are sent directly to you once your enrollment is complete.

Examples of premium costs scenarios:

As an employer, if you have elected not to offer dental and you signed up with 3 employees. If 3 employees are 2 singles and one family: See below monthly rates:

Single \$93.16

Single \$93.16

Family \$190.61

If one of your single employees has health coverage through their spouse:

Single \$93.16 **changes to \$23.51** (only covers Life, and Critical Illness)

Single \$93.16

Family \$190.61

In cases where there is dental coverage, you would add :

Single \$40.05

Family \$101.95