

Nutrition support as a cornerstone of a high-performing benefits plan



As employers and insurers face rising drug costs, increasing chronic disease prevalence, and growing demand for mental health supports, registered dietitian coverage offers an evidence-based solution that improves health outcomes while helping manage long-term benefit costs.

dietitians.ca

64%

less health-related lost productivity when employees have access to dietitian support.

52%

of Canadians 20+ are living with at least one chronic condition — most nutrition-influenced.

4x1

return on investment in drug cost savings for every \$1 spent on dietitian services.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Supporting a more productive workforce

- Employees with unmanaged nutrition-related conditions experience significantly higher rates of absenteeism and presenteeism — reduced output while at work.
- Dietitian counselling addresses root causes rather than symptoms, helping employees build sustainable habits that support energy, focus, and resilience.
- Studies have demonstrated significant reductions — up to 87% — in disability days among employees who receive nutrition support.
- Lifestyle interventions involving nutrition guidance can reduce body weight by 3–6 kg within 12 months, improving overall employee vitality.

CHRONIC DISEASE & MENTAL HEALTH

Addressing the conditions behind the claims

- Chronic diseases account for \$68 billion annually in direct healthcare costs in Canada — including diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and hypertension.
- Two in five Canadians have high blood pressure or are pre-hypertensive; 1.3 million live with heart disease; more than one in four have diabetes.
- Diet is among the most significant modifiable risk factors for all the above, as recognized by the World Health Organization.
- Evidence-based nutrition interventions have been shown to substantially reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes among high-risk individuals by up to 70% — one of the most prevalent and costly conditions in any benefits pool.
- Dietitians play an important role in mental health care, supporting individuals experiencing disordered eating, stress-related eating patterns, and conditions linked to mental wellness, and nutrition-related factors that affect mood and cognitive function.

COST CONTAINMENT

Protecting the long-term sustainability of the plan

- Every \$1 invested in dietitian services generates approximately \$4 in drug cost savings — a compelling return within the plan's own budget.
- By reducing the incidence and severity of chronic conditions, dietitian coverage works upstream of the most expensive claims categories.
- Nutrition interventions improve cholesterol, blood pressure, and glucose levels — measurable changes that reduce reliance on ongoing prescription medication.
- Provincial health plans do not cover dietitian services, making extended benefits coverage a genuine value-add that employees notice and use.

“Current practice guidelines for treating obesity, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and kidney disease specifically recommend the clinical expertise of a registered dietitian.”

– Dietitians of Canada, Dietitians and Chronic Disease Management (2017)

WHY REGISTERED DIETITIANS?

A regulated profession with clinical accountability

- The title “dietitian” is protected by law in Canada — equivalent standing to nurses and pharmacists.
- Dietitians hold university degrees in foods and nutrition and are committed to continuous evidence-based professional development.
- All major direct-claim platforms already support dietitian billing — no new infrastructure required for plan administrators.
- Employees can use existing Health Spending Accounts (HSAs) for dietitian visits, maximizing existing plan flexibility.
- Dietitians tailor advice to the individual — managing complex conditions alongside allergies, intolerances, and personal circumstances simultaneously.



Dietitians credentials at a glance



University trained
Foods & nutrition
degree required



Provincially regulated
Licensed in all
provinces



Liability insured
Professional coverage
carried



Code of ethics
Formal standards
of practice



Evidence-based
Practice informed by
clinical research



**Learn more about adding
dietitian coverage**

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