

## Canadian employers underestimate the proportion of their workforce with a chronic condition and its impact

Source: Sanofi (EURONEXT: SAN) (NYSE: SNY)

- Three-quarters of employers are worried about the impact of unmanaged chronic disease
- Two-thirds (66%) of Canadian employees would consent to receive personalized information based on their own benefits claims

TORONTO, June 13, 2018 /CNW Telbec/ - The 21<sup>st</sup> edition of *The Sanofi Canada Healthcare Survey* of Canadian employees with workplace health benefit plans (plan members) and of organizations who offer their employees health benefits (plan sponsors) indicates that while 58% of surveyed plan members report having at least one chronic disease or condition, plan sponsors underestimate the proportion of their workforce with a chronic condition (29%). Three-quarters (77%) of plan sponsors indicate they are concerned about the impact of unmanaged chronic disease on the productivity of their workforce.

However, both groups are open to new benefit offerings in the area of chronic disease management, with a solid majority of plan members (66%) who would consent to their benefit carriers analyzing their personal claims data in order to generate personal, targeted communications. A similar proportion of (64%) of plan sponsors are interested in such a service from their benefit carrier.



### The impact of chronic disease and a desire for new benefit offerings

- Fifty-eight percent of surveyed plan members report having at least one chronic disease or condition, yet plan sponsors estimate that just 29% of their workforce has a chronic condition.
- Just over half of plan sponsors (58%) say they receive claims data analyses that identify the main disease states, yet only 19% say they regularly receive such reporting.
- Almost half of employees with chronic conditions (47%) report they have missed work or found it harder to do their jobs as a result; this climbs to 72% among those with a mental health condition such as depression or anxiety.
- Eighty-four percent of plan members with a chronic disease would like to know more about their condition and how to treat it; 79% of plan sponsors would like their health benefit plan to do more to support plan members with chronic diseases.

### An openness for targeted communications

- Sixty-six percent of plan members would consent to receive information on personal health issues based on their use of benefits (e.g., their drug claims).
- Plan sponsors are aligned: 64% are interested in their insurance carrier sending targeted health information to consenting plan members.
- Plan members are most interested in receiving targeted information about their medications (52%), recommended local healthcare professionals or experts (51%) and how to manage their conditions (47%).

### Stress taking a toll

- One in three plan members (33%) report high levels of stress on a typical day over the past three months, increasing to 50% among those in poor financial health.
- The top sources of stress are personal finances (38%), workload (37%) and work/life balance (31%).
- Twenty-six percent of plan members took time off or left work early due to stress in the past year; among them, they reported 13.8 times when they took time off or left work.

### Medical cannabis: opinions divided

- Sixty-four percent of plan members agree that medical cannabis (medical marijuana), when authorized by a physician, should be covered by their health benefit plan.
- Plan sponsors are much more undecided: 34% would like their plan to cover medical cannabis (including 8% who say they already do); 34% do not want it covered; and 32% do not know or are unsure.

### Other topics addressed

Plan members and plan sponsors each responded to more than 50 questions posed by this year's surveys covering a wide variety of topics including: *Perceptions of quality of health benefit plans* • *What's valued most: coverage of routine or unexpected costs* • *Average number of claims for prescription drugs, dental and*

*paramedical services • Plan members' estimates of drug plan costs • Quality of communications to plan members • Plan sponsors' major concerns about their health benefit plans • Incidence of annual drug plan caps • Incidence of flex plans & health spending accounts • Importance of specific objectives for health benefit plans • Plan members' behaviours to track health • Personal health-risk screenings • Workplace flu shot programs • Trends in workplace wellness programs*

The full report is available at Sanofi Canada's website, [www.sanofi.ca](http://www.sanofi.ca). This year's report also includes "Top 10 Calls of Action" for plan sponsors and their benefit providers.

## **About The Sanofi Canada Healthcare Survey**

The Sanofi Canada Healthcare Survey is Canada's premier survey of health benefit plans, capturing the opinions, concerns and behaviours of employees and employers with health benefit plans. The 2018 edition of *The Sanofi Canada Healthcare Survey* was initiated by TC Media Content Research Group on behalf of Sanofi Canada. The survey was conducted online in January 2018. A total national sample of 1,503 primary holders of group health benefit plans completed the study. The data has been statistically weighted to ensure the age, gender and regional composition of the sample reflect those of the adult population according to the 2016 Census data. This survey was coupled with another online survey of 502 health benefit plan sponsors from across the country, conducted in January 2018. The data was statistically weighted to accurately reflect the geographic distribution of business and business size according to Industry Canada.

## **About Sanofi**

Sanofi is dedicated to supporting people through their health challenges. We are a global biopharmaceutical company focused on human health. We prevent illness with vaccines, provide innovative treatments to fight pain and ease suffering. We stand by the few who suffer from rare diseases and the millions with long-term chronic conditions.

With more than 100,000 people in 100 countries, Sanofi is transforming scientific innovation into healthcare solutions around the globe.

Sanofi entities in Canada employ more than 2,000 people. In 2017, we invested \$131.4 million in R&D in Canada, creating jobs, business and opportunity throughout the country.

Follow us on Twitter [@SanofiCanada](https://twitter.com/SanofiCanada) and on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/SanofiCanada).

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## **Supporting quotes:**

*"At Sanofi Canada we are proud to be a long-standing partner in offering key insights that help evolve and address personal health management since we first launched The Sanofi Canada Healthcare Survey in 1997. We have witnessed major changes in the Canadian workplace over the past 21 years, but the value that employees place in their health benefit plans has remained constant. We all share a vision to improve the health and productivity of the Canadian workforce, which in turn helps ensure the sustainability of our healthcare system."*

**Niven Al-Khoury, President, Sanofi Canada.**

*"There can be a big difference between how effectively you communicate and how effectively the information is received.... We need to move to more just-in-time methods so people can quickly figure out what they really have as benefits, and not assume they don't have something because they just don't remember."*

**Adrian Ebrahimi, Account Executive, SSQ Insurance**

*"Plan members living with a chronic disease see their pharmacist regularly for prescription refills. Now that pharmacists can do more under an expanded scope of practice, combined with enhanced digital health tools, we have a real opportunity to improve population health and to further motivate patients' engagement."*

**Rachel Huckle, Senior Vice-President, Health and Wellness, Shoppers Drug Mart**

*"Data privacy is still a concern for some plan members, but many of them also have begun to see the value of appropriate targeted communications. Five years ago when we talked to clients about targeting members with personal health information, the answer was a flat-out 'No'. That's changing, and insurers are ramping up the technology to make targeted communications a part of chronic disease management support."*

**Barb Martinez, Practice Leader, Benefits Solutions, Group Benefits, Great-West Life**

*"We are encouraging some plan sponsors to hold off on implementing more wellness tactics so they can take the time to determine objectives and assess their foundation in terms of culture and leadership. It can be*

*worthwhile to hit the pause button on some activities, and shift to more of an internal focus."*

**Jennifer Elia, Assistant Vice-President, Integrated Health Solutions, Sun Life Financial**

*"One of the most important things for carriers and advisors to do is to help plan sponsors clearly define their objectives so that they will see even better results from their benefit plan—results that have a direct impact on the success of the business."*

**Marc Bertossini, Director, Marketing, Group and Business Insurance, Desjardins Insurance**

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