

RTAM:

A Sustainable Future



RTAM offers programing and products for our members' health and mental well-being.

Currently, we have a little over 10,000 members. Our members have indicated that they value the programs RTAM offers and have appreciated a variety of activities from travel opportunities, seminars on wellness and mental health, participating in local Chapters to developing Special Interest Groups. They also feel fortunate that RTAM offers Johnson Insurance for health, dental, and travel.

RTAM needs to do more to secure a sustainable future. Health, dental, and travel insurance continues to increase significantly.

The RTAM Board has been allowing these insurance premiums to be held to a minimal increase in the past couple of years



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RTAM Director and Secretary

by utilizing a portion of funds being held in reserve. RTAM needs to significantly increase our membership base to help counter these increases.

Statistics Canada estimated that 21.8 % of the current workforce is between 55 and 64, and therefore on the verge of retirement. As they retire and age, they will draw more on extended health and dental benefits.

As this demand increases, costs will outstrip premiums being paid and the rate of health care insurance will increase. RTAM offers health, dental, and travel group insurance through Johnson Insurance. The cost of premiums for these services depend on many factors. Some of them are:

- Member Count: An increase in membership will decrease the overall cost of premiums as more members are contributing.

- Demographics of Members: Although RTAM member-age ranges from age 55 to 100 plus, the number of persons aged over 85 years is increasing.

- In June, 2024, this the distribution of ages and the number of RTAM members in each range:

| | |
|--------|--------|
| 100+ | 12 |
| 90+ | 400 |
| 80+ | 2272 |
| 70+ | 4724 |
| 60+ | 2703 |
| 50+ | 442 |
| 40+ | 1 |
| Total: | 10,554 |

As we age, our health needs increase and we use even more of our extended health benefits. As we use more benefits, our group insurance premiums will keep going up.

A Sustainable Future Continued

- **Prescription Drug and Health Services Costs:** Annually, health services and prescription drug prices increase due to inflation and other factors. In addition, as Health Canada approves more drugs, many of them are more expensive medicines, in the marketplace, clients' claims increase and costs of extended health claims for medications and services increases. In 2022, overall drug plan spent per member went up by about 4.3% and in 2023, about 5.2%. But there was a 2.6% decrease in the number of people registered for health and dental group plans. Thus, resulting in an overall increase in our premiums.

In 2022-2023, Retired Teachers Association of Ontario (RTAO) reported a membership of just over 80,000 compared to about 10,500 for RTAM. Because of the numbers of members, RTAO may be offering cheaper health, dental, and travel insurance rates. To continue to increase their size, they are actively recruiting and welcoming retired teachers from other jurisdictions, such as RTAM. RTAM will lose members if there are cheaper group insurance plans available elsewhere. According to the TRAF 2023 Annual Report, there are 40,722 retired teachers collecting TRAF Pension; with our membership at 10,554, where did the other 30,000 retired teachers go? If our membership continues to decrease, our premiums will continue to go up. As our premiums go up, more members will leave for retired teacher organizations with cheaper premiums. So, it becomes a spiraling downwards scenario. How long can RTAM survive if our membership keeps decreasing?



To break this cycle of downward spiral, the Board of Directors would like to work actively to increase our membership and thus assure the long-term viability of RTAM. To mitigate this, another classification of RTAM membership is needed. The Board of Directors propose that we introduce 'Community Members' for non-Kindergarten-Grade 12 teachers. Here is what our membership classifications can look like:

1. **Full Members:** Retired teachers. These members can vote and sit as RTAM Board members. These members solely control the operation of and the future direction of RTAM.
2. **Associate Members:** These are spouses of deceased RTAM members who wish to continue with RTAM as well teachers from other jurisdictions from outside of Manitoba. They can not vote nor can they sit on any RTAM Board positions. Thus, they can not control or have a say in the future direction of RTAM.
3. **Community Members:** These are interested parties wishing to join RTAM. They do not have to be educators but need to have retired from an educational institution. They are non-voting members and can not sit on the RTAM Board. Thus, they can not control or have a say in the future direction of RTAM.

A Sustainable Future Continued

RTAM

Retired teacher associations in other provinces accept non-teacher members as long as they were employed in an educational institution, regardless of their job title.

By allowing Community Members, the cost of health care insurance for our members may decrease and RTAM can manage to remain a sustainable and a vibrant organization for the future.

Several notes are worth mentioning:

RTAM is not considering amalgamating with any other retired teacher organization. RTAM would lose its unique flavour of programming and supports that it offers for all its members.

- RTAM offers separate health, dental, and travel insurance packages through Johnson Insurance and members can pick and choose which one or more of the insurance modules will fit their needs best.
- Retired Teachers of Ontario offer one package for all three insurances and members do not have a choice. If you join their plan, you are forced to take all three modules as one package, whether you need them or not.
- RTAM has a liaison on the TRAF Board. But TRAF benefits are set solely by TRAF and not linked to RTAM.

Sources:

Express Scripts Canada 2024 Drug Trend Report: [Drug Trend Reports](#) | [Express Scripts Canada \(express-scripts.ca\)](#)

Statistics Canada Demographic Division [Population and demography statistics](#) ([statcan.gc.ca](#))

TRAF Annual Report [Annual Report - TRAF](#)

