

The Connection

March 2009

Mission: To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to the employee and the employer

Save Your Vision

Take a moment to learn how to improve your vision and prevent eye injuries.

Computer users

Do you work on a computer and experience eye irritation? Using artificial teardrops and blinking frequently can help dryness and itchy eyes. Eye specialists also recommend looking up from the computer every 15 minutes to focus on a distant object.

Beware of the sun

UV exposure can lead to cataracts and other eye problems. Protect your eyes by wearing a hat or sunglasses with UV protection.

Take care of your eyes

Minimize eye injuries by wearing protective eye gear in situations when particles or chemicals could get in your eyes.

See your eye doctor

Your Benefit Board wants you to take care of your eyes. See your plan for coverage details.

— *Employee Assistance Program*

Diabetic Eye Exam

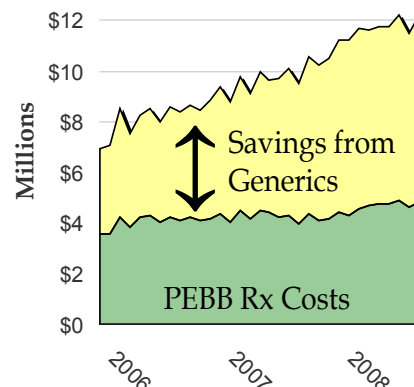
Diabetes can lead to blindness. If you have diabetes, be sure to see your eye doctor on a regular schedule. The doctor will dilate your pupils to get a thorough look at your retina.

Take Care of Yourself

In these lean times, your Benefit Board wants to help you make the best use of your benefits and keep healthcare costs manageable.

Healthy Budgets

Some PEBB members have written about how they're saving money by changing to generic medications. Your Benefit Board changed the plan design to encourage use of generics in 2006. Since then, member use of generics has increased from 61 percent to more than 68 percent.



Did you know? With every one percent change from brand to generic medications, the pool of PEBB members saves more than \$1 million in annual medical costs.

Healthy Practices

The PEBB plan design covers a number of generics for chronic conditions at low or no cost. This brings down cost barriers to taking these critically important medications. You may want to talk with your provider about switching from a brand drug to a generic version to get the same quality at a savings.

Did you know? Generic versions of Imitrex (for headaches) and Effexor (for depression) should be available later this year.

Healthy Weight

This year, the Board offers a weight management program. More than 5,000 employees have already signed up for the program. Many have written to share early and ongoing successes (see reverse).

Did you know? Within just one year of losing weight, you save money on healthcare and have a better quality of life.

Healthy Habits

Do your part to stay healthy and keep costs down.

- Take care to eat right and exercise
- Move to generic medication when possible
- Brush and floss every day
- Use the healthcare system wisely

When times are difficult, it's even more important to take good care of your health – your most valuable resource.

oregon.gov/das/pebb

New Offer for Dependents

Just because your dependents aren't the principal subscriber in your medical plan doesn't put successful weight loss out of reach. Learn how they can join Weight Watchers at a discount and get a free exercise DVD: http://mypowwr.com/downloads/PEBB_Gateway_Attachment-Dependents.pdf.

Many employees participating in Weight Watchers want to make healthy weight a family affair. Your Benefit Board encourages you and your family to act on opportunities that keep you all healthy.

Even your four-legged family members can be part of your personal health plan.

"This week I got myself a four-legged walking partner. He keeps me and my husband on our feet in the a.m. and the evening. We are getting plenty of exercise walking Charley and enjoying it too. I have lost 5 lbs since I started walking with him. He is a fast walker for a little guy."

Resources

oregon.gov/das/pebb
inquiries.pebb@state.or.us
(503) 373-1102

To cut costs, PEBB no longer operates a toll free number

Medical Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb
Providence Choice providence.org/pebb
Regence BCBSO or.regence.com/pebb
VSP (Vision Service Plan) vsp.com

Mail-order Prescriptions

PPS ppsr.com
Walgreens walgreenshealth.com

Dental Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb
ODS odscompanies.com/pebb
Willamette Dental willamettedental.com

Optional Plans

The Standard standard.com
UnumProvident <http://w3.unum.com/enroll/pebb>

Other Benefits

FSA's orpebb.asiflex.com
EAP cascadecenters.com (800) 433-2320

Celebrate Your Success – Again

If you enrolled in Weight Watchers at the beginning of the year, now's the time to re-enroll. Members report great success in their first term. You can keep that momentum going by joining for a second term at no cost.

If you haven't started, what's stopping you? Employees who are the principal subscriber in a PEBB-sponsored medical plan (Kaiser, Providence Choice or Regence) can join Weight Watchers at no cost any time this year.

Learn how to enroll and re-enroll at www.mypowwr.com/downloads/PEBB.pdf.



Members share their thoughts on the Weight Watchers benefit

Thank you, thank you, a thousand times, thank you! This is such a wonderful and very much needed benefit for state workers, and I wanted the Board to know how much it is appreciated. And the fact that we can meet on-site is such a convenience.

It's been challenging to motivate people to eat better and exercise. When the weight watchers program was offered, over 1/4 of our staff decided to participate! Now they're interested in finding out how to move more.

It was just the encouragement I needed to get started on a new road to better health...The bottom line is I am learning new life skills, losing weight consistently, and am on the road to a healthier future, one day at a time.

I am so glad that we all have this opportunity to attend this great plan. Even though \$40 sounds minimal it really does cut into our budgets. This makes it so much easier. No more excuses.

I joined Weight Watchers online the beginning of January. I have lost 13 pounds and my husband who is following the plan with me has lost 30. We both have a lot more to lose but feel we will succeed.

I have already lost 5% of my weight. The program was the structure I needed to get me on my way. Since my husband has seen my progress he has started the program as well, even though he isn't covered yet.

I'd like to express my appreciation for the addition of Weight Watchers program to our benefits. Our Branch started a worksite meeting on Jan. 22 and to date, the group has lost approx. 170 pounds!

Our WW at work is really the only way that I would be able to participate, and so far so good!

THANKS!

So far I've had a weight loss of 10 lbs and I feel wonderful. My blood pressure is down and I am no longer on the edge of being diabetic. So thank you again for offering this wonderful benefit.