

### Online access to doctors now available through Maple

At Green Shield Canada (GSC), we're committed to making quality, evidence-based programs more broadly available (and at a lower cost) by leveraging technology. With the introduction of programs like BEACON and our Coach Ivan and Phzio pilots, we are continually exploring how the digital space can influence not only access to treatment, but also better health outcomes for our plan members.

Canada ranks very poorly compared to other countries when it comes to timely access to health care, and our system is under immense pressure to cope with an aging and growing population. With this reality in mind, as announced in our recent [press release](#), we are excited to now offer access to telemedicine through [Maple \(getmaple.ca/green-shield-learn-more\)](https://getmaple.ca/green-shield-learn-more), a virtual health care provider, offering bilingual access to doctors nationally.

### About Maple's virtual care service

Maple provides quick and convenient access to care, when and where individuals need it so they can feel better, faster. With the largest online network of doctors in Canada, at any given time Maple has over 400 Canadian-licensed doctors available nationwide, enabling it to offer true 24/7/365 care – directly from a doctor in English and French.

Maple's model of health care delivery helps with the sustainability of our health care system by preventing unnecessary trips to the emergency department or walk-in clinics, saving precious public system resources for those who need them the most. Through Maple's website or mobile app, patients can consult with a doctor for diagnosis, treatment, and advice, right from their smartphone or computer. This means they will no longer wait in a walk-in clinic or the emergency department for simple medical issues, to get a doctor's note, or renew a medication they have been taking for years.

## Here's how Maple works...

Plan members can request a consultation with a doctor from their phone, tablet, or computer any time via the Maple app or website. The average wait time to speak with a doctor is less than two minutes. Many common medical conditions can be treated virtually on the app, including allergies, asthma, cold and flu, infections, pink eye, sore throat, and many more. Doctors can provide diagnoses, prescriptions, medical notes, and lab requisitions as necessary during the online consultation. Plan members can also use Maple to keep track of their medical records which promotes easier health care navigation and better continuity of care. Here's a quick [video about Maple](#).

## Why should plan sponsors consider including telemedicine within their benefits plan?

The growing challenge around access to primary care in Canada has impacted absenteeism and productivity for Canadian employers. An average clinic visit results in around four hours away from work, even for a simple prescription renewal. Further, an inability to book a timely appointment with a doctor for ad hoc primary care issues means many Canadians are using the emergency department for primary care\*, which causes stress and takes more time away from the office.

Offering a competitive and innovative benefits plan can help to prevent absences, turnover, and help to improve productivity for plan members. An engaged, healthy, and happy workforce has broad sweeping impacts on competitive success. With only nine per cent of Canadian companies offering telemedicine\*\* to date, adding sponsor-paid coverage is a great way to differentiate and enhance your plan.

Maple sees high utilization rates when a plan sponsor includes their offering within a benefits plan (via a sponsor-paid per plan member per month fee), between 60 to 80 per cent annually, with an issue resolution rate of 91 per cent. This creates a high return on investment for these programs.

\* Grant, Kelly, "[How quickly can you see a doctor? Study shows Canada lags behind other nations on timely access](#)," *The Globe and Mail*, February 16, 2017.

\*\* Lee, Janet. "[Just 9% of employers offer virtual health care: survey](#)." *Benefits Canada*, December 6, 2018.

The option of providing telemedicine within a benefits plan results in broad uptake of the program, ensuring all plan members have equal access, and eliminates out-of-pocket cost from becoming a barrier. Contact your account team for more information about offering coverage for Maple as an addition to your group benefits plan at a per plan member per month fee.

### **Discount pricing now available to all GSC plan members!**

Even if plan sponsors don't add coverage to the benefits plan, we're also offering a discount on Maple's per visit fee for all plan members, their spouses, and dependents. Compare the discounted per visit price:

- Maple's standard direct-to-consumer price is **\$49 per visit** weekdays from 7 a.m. to midnight ET, Monday-Friday; **\$79 per visit** weekends and holidays from 7 a.m. to midnight ET; **\$99 per visit** midnight to 6:59 a.m. ET.
- GSC pricing is **\$43 per visit** weekdays from 7 a.m. to midnight ET, Monday-Friday; **\$69.50 per visit** weekends and holidays from 7 a.m. to midnight ET; **\$87 per visit** midnight to 6:59 a.m. ET.

We will provide plan members with a GSC-specific website link ([getmaple.ca/green-shield](https://getmaple.ca/green-shield)) via Online Services and our corporate site where they can register for Maple using their ID number and date of birth; they will then need to create an account. Maple will automatically apply the discounted fee for GSC plan members (or benefit details if Maple is covered under their benefits plan). Each time the service is used, the plan member is billed the discounted rate accordingly. Plan members can submit this expense through their health care spending account. After their initial registration is complete, plan members can sign in to their account directly from the Maple app or website to use the service.