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# Getting plan members the right drugs at the right time

Jacqueline Louie | November 23, 2016

What are the best ways for plan sponsors to ensure the affordability of their drug plans while providing their employees with the medications they need?

Speakers at *Benefits Canada's* Calgary Drug Trends Summit covered the bases in front of a large audience of plan sponsors gathered at the Downtown Marriott Hotel on Nov. 2. From addressing chronic disease to plan sponsors' role in addressing the opioid crisis, speakers provided answers to some of the big challenges faced by employers.

Below are some of the highlights of the sessions from the event.

Don't forget to check out photos from the event in our [photo gallery](#).

## [Employers encouraged to 'invest in making people healthier'](#)

In the face of rising overall health premiums, how can plan sponsors ensure the sustainability of their benefit plans?

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## [A primer on treatments for inflammatory bowel disease](#)

Inflammatory bowel disease is on the rise, particularly among children. And at a cost to the Canadian economy of approximately \$2.8 billion a year, early intervention is key, a doctor told *Benefits Canada's* Calgary Drug Trends Summit.

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## [Plan sponsors urged to sound 'early-warning bells' about opioid addiction](#)

The benefits industry is in a unique position to make a difference to Canada's growing opioid crisis, according to Margaret Wurzer, senior manager of benefits and product development at Alberta Blue Cross.

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## [A patient perspective on access to treatments](#)

When she was in her early 30s, Dawn Richards had so much inflammation and pain in her hands that she couldn't turn the key to open her front door. Every morning, getting up required a monumental effort. Her feet were stiff and swollen, she ached all over and no matter how much rest she got, she was overwhelmed by fatigue.

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**[Navigating the drug approval labyrinth to ensure access to new medications](#)**

With a complex approval process in Canada and new medications in rapid development, it's important to look carefully at what a drug plan covers, according to Dr. Alexander Paterson, a medical oncologist at the Tom Baker Cancer Centre.

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**[Cost, effectiveness of biosimilars touted](#)**

Biosimilar medicines present a significant opportunity to address the demands on drug benefit plans, the president of Biosimilars Canada told *Benefits Canada's* Calgary Drug Trends Summit on Nov. 2.

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**[How do patients feel about biosimilars?](#)**

As the debate continues over which drugs plan sponsors should cover, how do patients feel about biosimilars?

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