

**Membership Services Officer
Report to Teachers' AGM
May 18, 2011**

Benefits Committee

In the fall we had our OTIP representative provide an overview on our LTD plan and usage. The focus of the Benefits Committee this year was to prepare the process and package for the LTD Flex Review that occurred in January. This process is so important, and is only successful because we have so many wonderful dedicated benefits reps. Thanks to all of you for completing your forms, and thanks to the Benefits reps and Branch Presidents that courageously took on the oversight task. We are set now until January 2014!

Thanks to Katie Engel for Chairing this committee, to **Kim Sandziuk** as Anti-Harrassment Officer, and **Barb Edwards** for attending Benefits Review Meetings.

Benefits

The Board took our Benefits package to market last year. Although we kept the same plan with Manulife, we received reduced costs, which began in January 2011.

A **reminder** to anyone traveling outside of Canada to carry their Manulife card with them. The card shows the international phone number and the plan number. A personalized card can be printed from the Manulife website, when signed on as a member. A generic card can be printed from the Benefits folder on BEAM.

LTD

The number of members on LTD this year has seen a slight increase, however, we have had some teachers who have very successfully returned to work, others who have retired this year, and of course some new claims. The Board, OTIP and myself worked this year to improve the new member application process, to ensure that our new members were placed in their option choice when it was not the default option.

Teachers who reach **65 years of age or 60% unreduced pension** are eligible to terminate their LTD premiums. The forms for **Termination of LTD payments** are available in the OSSTF Teachers' Unit folder on BEAM or on the Teachers' webpage at www.osstf25.on.ca.

Health and Safety

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee has met monthly this year under our new terms of reference. There has been lots to discuss with reviewing current policies, and working through new policies – on confined spaces, work refusal, working alone, workplace inspections, and violence in the workplace. We have also looked at revising and developing forms for Worker Accident reports, Health and Safety Concerns, Workplace Inspection forms, and of course Workplace Violence reports (Form 733). We are looking at introducing new procedures for selecting workplace site safety reps, and for advising the Joint Health and Safety Committee about health and safety concerns. We received a report from Ottawa Public Health after an outbreak in an elementary school.

Our main focus this year has been to work through the Violence in the Workplace procedure, and to look at the Risk Assessment Report from the site visits performed last year. This also involves

threat assessments and safety plans. We have not been able to move through this as quickly as we would like, so the Violence procedure is still in draft form.

Our second focus this year was asbestos. We want to assure that all workers have received training before they are required to work in areas with asbestos. We also want to assure that the asbestos inventory binders in each school contain specific and up to date information.

Accident investigations are performed when a critical injury occurs, which we have seen this year. I was invited to accompany the Supervision of OHS as he performed air quality testing and noise testing in a couple of our high schools.

Health and Safety is an area requiring a large amount of knowledge and access to information. As a member of the JOHSC, I was required to obtain Basic Certification, and Part II Certification. I also obtained Level 1 & 2 training for WSIB injuries. The more work I do with the Committee, the more it is all starting to become familiar.

Pension Information

Retirement workshops were held this year in October and in April. They were well attended and well received – to the extent that we may look at an alternate venue next year to allow more to participate.

Certification

There were only a couple of changes to certification requirements this year. These and previous changes can be seen on the Provincial OSSTF website at www.osstf.on.ca
If you or anyone that you are aware of in your school are still being paid at Category 1 or 2, complete the Certification Form #2, check the box to “Outline requirements for placement in a higher group”, choose which Specialist program or programs to research and fax the form to the number at the top of the form. Some members may find that they are closer than they think to moving up a category.

A **reminder** as well to use Certification Form #3 to have a **summer course pre-approved**. The Forms can be found on the Provincial website, on our District 25 Teachers’ Unit webpage on the FAQ page, or in the OSSTF Teachers’ Unit Folder on BEAM.

Other

The Board introduced a new standard medical certificate this year. The Employee Attendance Support Program, which includes the new certificate had a rocky introduction, but we believe we have managed to ease the transition. We always encourage members to call the office though if they have any concerns.

This year has been a very interesting year for me and I want to thank you all for the emails and phone calls that have come my way. You have provided some challenges, but I enjoy the easy to answer questions for sure! Thanks for building my knowledge base. I have attended many workshops, listened to audio conferences, and assisted in presenting workshops. I have certainly enjoyed the challenge, and more so visiting schools to get to know more of you, the members.

Respectfully,
Kim Appel