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Dental Care for Federal Retirees

Increases in Contributions from 25 to 32%

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The Harper government recently declared an increase of an average of 28% in dental care contributions for retired federal employees.

The decision was met with strong disapproval from the Canadian Association of Professional Employees, which contends that the decision was made unilaterally by the Harper government without consultation.

Last week the Harper government announced that, as of October 1st, costs for the Pensioners' Dental Services Plan will be paid half-and-half, by the government and by participating patients.

Previously, dental care costs were shared between the Canadian government and participants at a 60-40 ratio.

“Just when we thought we’d seen it all from the Conservatives, they come along and attack the weakest among us: retirees – those who are no longer protected by unions and who no longer have a strong voice, those who, besides having limited resources and economic clout, often have to struggle with health problems,” commented Claude Poirer, President of CAPE.

The Treasury Board Secretariat states that this change is meant to ensure that social benefits are “modernized in an equitable and sustainable manner” and that the plan compares “favourably with other private and public plans in Canada.”

Furthermore, the increase in the cost of the plan is a result of the 800 to 1000 new participants in the plan each month as well as increases in doctors’ fees and new technologies. The government will save \$17,000,000 with the decrease in its contribution to the plan.

For a single pensioner, the monthly contribution will go from \$12.50 to \$16 – an increase of \$3.50 (28%). For a pensioner and an eligible family member, it will go from \$25.50 to \$31.96 (increase of 6.46% or 25%). For a retiree and another eligible family member, it will go from \$36.20 to \$47.96 (increase of 11.76% or 32%).