

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Keeping young adults in touch with their health and wellbeing

Alberta Blue Cross® is putting the mental wellness of young Albertans front and centre. During [Mental Health Week](#), which runs from May 1 to 7, Canadians are encouraged to share their stories about mental health—and Alberta Blue Cross wants to start a conversation about how mental health is a growing challenge for young adults in Alberta.

Nirmal Singh, vice-president of Individual Products with Alberta Blue Cross, has a 23-year-old son, Dante, who spends months away from his family and friends, working in the oil field. The long hours and isolation can take their toll.

It's one of the reasons Alberta Blue Cross®'s new Young Adult plan is so close to Nirmal—it gives young adults like Dante the option to access benefits they need when they need them. It also gives Nirmal a sense of security knowing his son has options to maintain his health and wellness.

According to [a report released by the University of Calgary School of Public Policy](#), mental illness now affects 1 in every 4 Canadian youth and 80 per cent of mental health disorders first occur before the age of 26. And according to the [Mental Health Commission of Canada](#), as youth transition to the adult mental health system, they are not well supported—less than 20 per cent receive the treatment they need.

As demands for support have steadily increased in the past decade, the Alberta Blue Cross Young Adult plan is the first health and dental plan developed specifically for young adults. The goal was to ensure young people can continue to access health and dental coverage that's similar to what they may have had while covered on their parent's plan—and to make the transition off their parent's plan as easy as possible.

"We know that when the proper mental health support is provided at a young age, it paves the way for better mental health down the road," explains Nirmal. "We need to provide young adults with health and wellness options. Our Young Adult plan wasn't made by people in a boardroom. We had young adults at the table while designing this product."

This plan provides extensive mental health coverage, including access to psychologists and social workers. It offers mental health tools and resources, such as internet-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (iCBT) and virtual care. The Young Adult plan is designed to support Alberta residents between the ages of 18 to 29 with the health and wellness needs they care about most.

More information about the Young Adult plan is available on the [Alberta Blue Cross website](#).

About Alberta Blue Cross

As Alberta's largest benefit provider, Alberta Blue Cross® provides health, dental, life and travel coverage to more than 1.8 million plan members.

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