

NEWS RELEASE

Health-care costs for typical Canadian family hit nearly \$13,000 this year

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For immediate release

VANCOUVER—A typical Canadian family of four will pay \$12,935 for health care in 2018, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Health care in Canada isn’t free—Canadians actually pay a substantial amount for public health care through their taxes, even if they don’t pay directly for medical services,” said Bacchus Barua, associate director of health policy studies at the Fraser Institute and co-author of *The Price of Public Health Care Insurance, 2018*.

Most Canadians are unaware of the true cost of health care because they never see a bill for medical services and may only pay a small public health insurance “premium” tax (in provinces that impose them).

And because general government revenue—not a dedicated tax—funds health care, it’s difficult for Canadians to decipher how many of their tax dollars go to our public health-care system.

Using data from Statistics Canada and the Canadian Institute for Health Information, the study estimates that the average Canadian family (two parents, two children) with a household income of \$138,008 will pay \$12,935 for public health care this year. After adjusting for inflation, that’s an increase of 68.5 per cent since 1997, the first year estimates could be calculated.

For single Canadians, health-care costs more than doubled over that same time period—from \$2,115 (in 2018 dollars) to \$4,640 this year.

Across the income spectrum, Canadian families pay vastly different amounts for health care. For example, the 10 per cent of Canadian families with the lowest incomes (earning \$14,885 per household, on average) will pay \$496 for health care in 2018, while families among the top 10 per cent of income earners (earning a household income of \$291,364 on average) will pay \$38,903.

“It’s important for Canadians to understand how much they pay for our public health-care system so they can better decide whether or not they get good value for their tax dollars,” Barua said.

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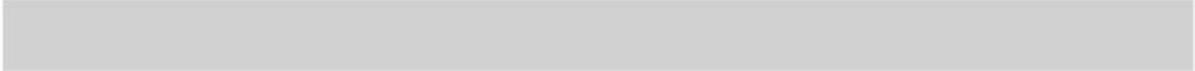
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