

Health plan referendum forthcoming

by Susan Vanstone

In a referendum to be held later this month, York students will vote whether to implement a mandatory Blue Cross health insurance plan starting September 1, 1990.

Undergraduates registered in three or more courses will answer yes or no to the following questions:

Would you approve of an annual levy of \$42.72 (based on \$3.56 per month) for a twelve-month health plan, covering 100 per cent of the cost of prescription drugs? If yes, would you approve an additional levy of \$9.36 per year (78 cents per month) for a plan including oral contraceptives?

Part-time and full-time graduate students will be asked:

Do you approve of an annual per student levy for a twelve-month pay direct drug plan, covering 100 per cent of the cost of prescription drugs and other specified benefits, which will cost up to \$61.56 for the first year of coverage (September 1, 1989 to August 31, 1989)?

The referendum will take place at the main campus from October 30 to November 3, with a possible advance poll for MBAs, since their reading week conflicts with the referendum. However, this depends on whether the Graduate Business Council (GBC) decides to include its students in the referendum, since many work full time

and are covered by other health plans. Glendon students will vote on October 23 and 24.

The monthly levy paid by graduate students would depend on the outcome of the undergraduate referendum, explained Graduate Students Association (GSA) president Lee Wiggins. Costs would be less than the maximum if undergraduates participate in the plan.

Although not stated on the ballots, the graduate students' plan would include oral contraceptives, but this and other coverage information will be stated in a preamble attached to the ballots.

"As far as the Graduate Students Association (GSA) is concerned, oral contraceptives are

not an issue," said Wiggins. "The GSA council passed a motion that oral contraceptives should be part of the costs, and we didn't want them targeted as special items. That's the basis of social services — paying for something that not everyone uses."

"This is one of the most comprehensive health care plans for students at any Canadian university," said CYSF vice president (internal) Caroline Winship. "We feel we've offered the best possible plan, and it's cheaper for students to use this plan than getting one on their own."

Winship said if the plan including oral contraceptives is passed by undergraduates, condoms will

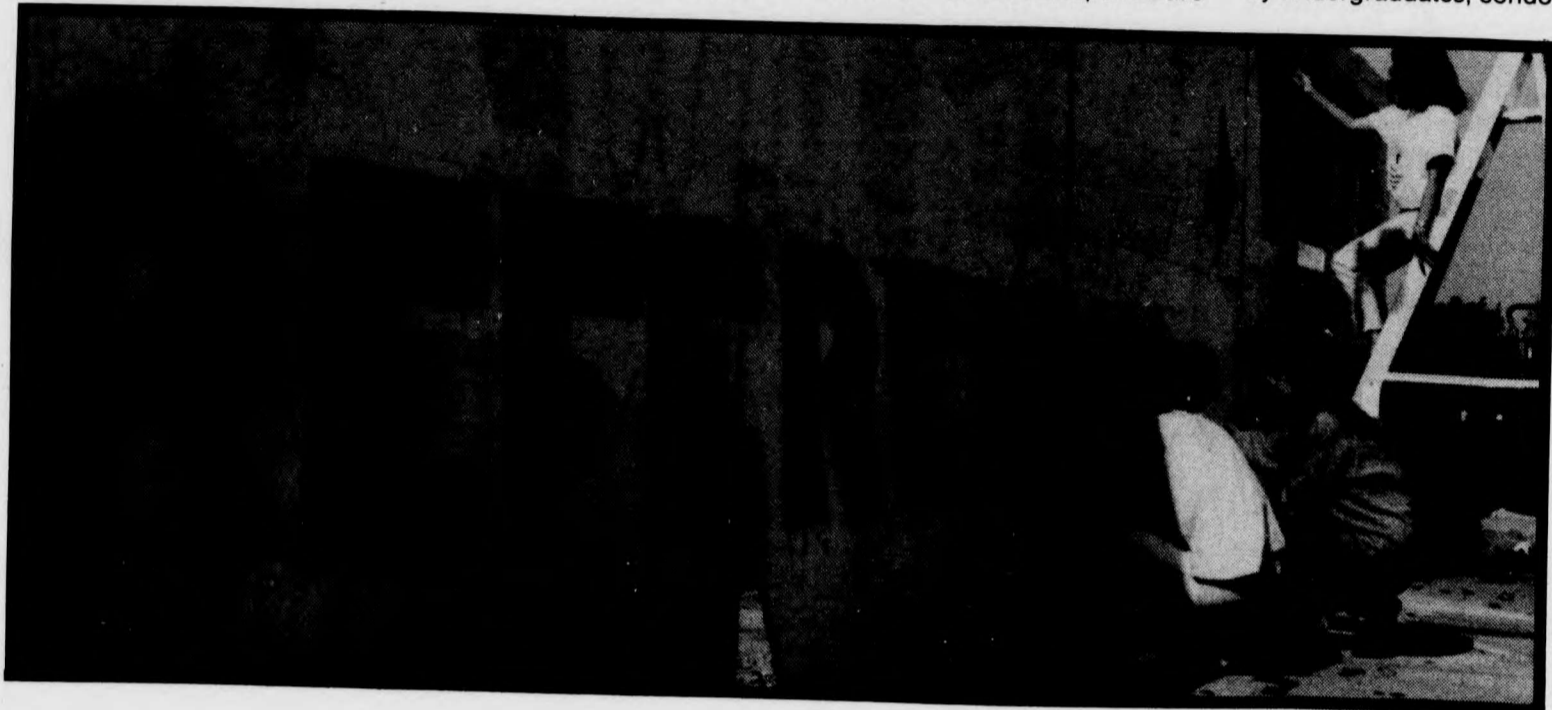
be made available free of charge from the CYSF. She added that condoms could not be included in the plan since it would increase the cost, and it is not in the mandate of health insurance companies to include them.

If the referendum is implemented, pay direct cards will be issued to participating students, enabling them to obtain prescribed materials from 95 per cent of Ontario drugstores with no out-of-pocket cost. Reimbursements will be issued if the store was not part of the Blue Cross network. Supplementary benefits will include limited coverage for services by physiotherapists, speech language pathologists, psychologists, chiropractors, massage therapists, naturopaths and dental surgeons. The plan will also cover ambulance service and equipment rentals such as wheelchairs, crutches and braces.

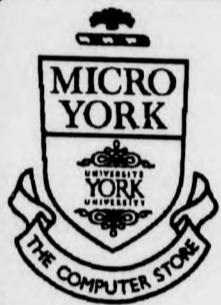
Students will be able to opt-out of the plan if they can prove coverage by another. An opt-in policy will also exist at a higher rate, so that part-time students can be covered by the York plan. If eligible, students will also be able to opt into family plans with spousal and dependent coverage.

Included in the levies is an 18 cents per month fee to hire a full-time employee, and to cover administrative costs.

This week, the Referendum Board will determine the minimum voter turnout necessary to make the plebiscite valid. A majority vote will be required to implement the health plan.



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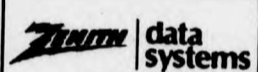





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