

# NEWS

Deadline: Wednesdays at 12:00 Noon. Newsdesk: 453-4983

## Proposed plan would include oral contraceptives

# CFS health plan subject of referendum

by Jonathan Stone

The Student Union will hold a referendum proposing a student-managed health plan to replace the current university-managed plan.

The health plan question will run under the title: "It's Your Health, It's Your Choice", and will be voted upon in the October 5-6 byelection.

The plan, which supplements Medicare, is administered by the Canadian Federation of Students, and would be implemented in the Fall of 1994.

If approved by students, it is subject to further examination from the administration.

The administration indicated it will take the results seriously if there is a high turnout for the referendum, as increased voter turnout will give them a better picture.

The plan itself, according to the Student Union, is better than the existing plan in four respects.

First, every student will receive a pay-direct card, good for 80% of the cost of prescription items, accepted at 90% of pharmacies in Canada. This card will eliminate filing claims and waiting to be reimbursed, and the student pays only 20% up front.

Secondly, oral contraceptives will be included, also covered up to 80%. Birth control pills account for 30% of all prescriptions, and will be the big item of the plan.

## Consumer's Guide to UNB will help students select courses

by Len Madsen

The first-ever 'Consumer's Guide to UNB', a course and professor evaluation guide for students, is now available for the UNB campus.

The courses and professors have been evaluated by past students to give new students an idea of what to expect.

It is designed to help students match their own scholastic abilities and requirements with the information provided therein.

"I think what is presented is both an accurate and useful reflection of student opinion in the evaluated courses," said Shona Bertrand, Editor of the guide.

But she feels it is important that students should not base their course selection decisions solely on past students' opinions.

"The purpose of the project is to enable students to make informed course selection decisions, not to pick the easy 'A' course," Bertrand said.

The new guide's information is compiled from questionnaires completed by students during 1992-93 semesters, from 133 courses in the Faculties of Arts and Engineering.

Course evaluations included questions such as if the instructor was approachable, consistent, and

Thirdly, each student will be entitled to an \$80 Vision Care plan, good for 24 months to cover prescription optical needs.

Finally, students may opt out of the \$100 fee if they are already covered by a plan of their parents, spouses or employers.

The university's comptroller, John O'Brien, feels this opt-out clause may cause problems, as students on other plans can be exempt from paying fees. Since other plans will vary from one student to another, many of those students will not be aware of what coverage they have.

He feels that with a total mandatory plan, there would be no discrepancies amongst students.

In addition, O'Brien said that since the Student Union will be responsible to collect the fee, they may find it difficult, as the cost will be \$100 as opposed to 25\$.

Although he agrees that the plan is better, O'Brien thinks students will not want to pay the larger amount.

Student Union President Jamie van Raalte stressed the importance that students are made aware.

"Students are going to have to weigh the additional benefits of the student plan against the cost," he said.

The existing plan includes UNBSJ, while the proposal does not, although the student association at UNBSJ is

enthusiastic, and whether the course was interesting. Also included were the expected workload and expected grades.

Criticisms of the guide were generally enthusiastic, although the book contains approximately only 30% of the present curriculum.

"It's important that students realize that this first edition is the result of the pilot project in Arts and Engineering, therefore the majority of the courses are not included," said Bertrand.

The most common criticism has been the difficulty in comparing courses due to the fact that raw data was used, as opposed to averaging the results.

According to Bertrand, this was done purposely, as it was felt that any manipulation of the raw data would be misleading, especially in small classes.

She gave some advice for this year's students: "Participation by professors is voluntary, so if you're not asked to evaluate a course, ask the instructor why."

Despite this, surveys are expected to expand campus-wide in the coming year.

"The more people that get involved, the more useful *The Consumer's Guide to UNB* will ultimately be," Bertrand said.

## Health Plan Comparisons

	Existing Plan	Proposed Plan
Mandatory Prescription Payments	YES Student Pays 100%, files claim for 80%	No, providing proof of other plan from a parent, employer or spouse Pay-direct card, student pays 20% up front
Oral contraceptives	No	Yes
Cost	\$25	\$100

examining the plan as well.

O'Brien said that UNBSJ would need the same plan.

The student association at UNBSJ is examining the national plan as well.

This plan is tailor made for UNB students. Student Union Council was provided with some options and choose this one.

In the referendum, van Raalte thinks students with other plans should support it because they can opt out anyway.

CFS-Services is a non-profit national student group, and has administered plans to 22 university student associations in Canada, including St. Thomas

which recently joined.

The history of health plan change at UNB is eventful.

Although a referendum three-years ago concerning oral contraceptives narrowly passed at UNB, it failed at UNBSJ and with the Graduate Student Association.

## Resignations force bi-election

by Tammy Yates

The Student Union is holding an October 5-6 bi-election to fill several vacant positions.

Resignations from both Liz Lautard (VP University Affairs) and Conrad Coughlan (VP Finance & Administration) have been accepted by the Student Union Council.

In addition, both Education seats are vacant, as is one of the five Arts positions. There is also one spot open on the Board of Governors, one 2-year Senate seat and two 1-year Senate seats.

When asked if he was surprised at being left short-handed, Student Union President Jamie van Raalte said, "Statistically speaking, no."

He noted that fall bi-elections to fill vacant executive positions have been an annual event since he started at UNB. He added, "You hope it doesn't happen, but you take it as it comes."

Returning students may remember that Lautard was the only member of the 'Candidates for Change' slate elected to an executive position in the spring general election.

After working full-time for the summer, she decided, "I feel I will be better equipped to serve the Student Union in other ways i.e. Women's Collective and Social Issues Committee."

Coughlan tendered his resignation early in the summer after accepting a full-time job with Kraft General Foods Canada Inc.

In his letter, he noted that he

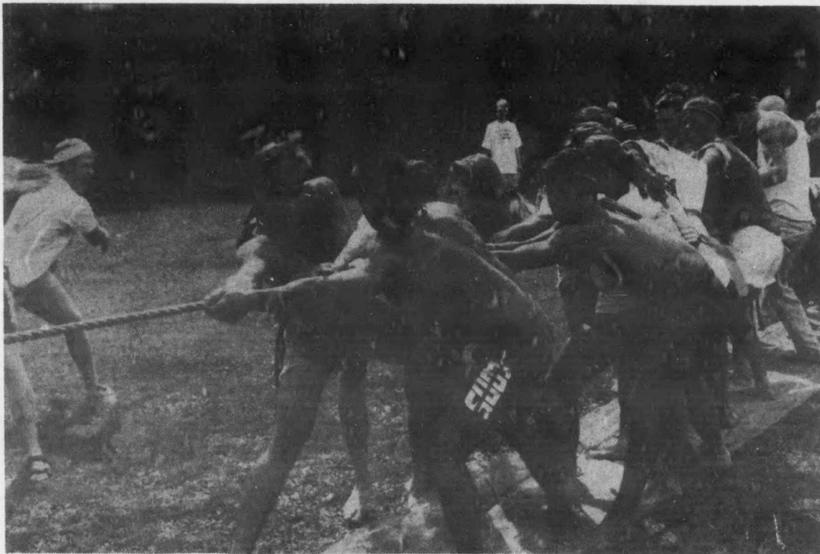
has "worked with some very good people over the years with the S.U."

van Raalte was quick to point out that the work is still being done.

Patricia Kull was appointed interim Chair of the Finance Committee and the Social Issues Commissioners, Colin Longman and Eugene Tan, are responsible for the upcoming Student Health Plan referendum. All other tasks are being done by the remaining three members of the Executive.

Nominations close for all open positions of Council on Friday, September 24, at 4:30 pm.

Students interested in running for any of the positions should pick up a nomination form at the Student Union office in the SUB.



Frosh shown here are enjoying a rousing good match of Tug-of-War. No longer an Olympic event since 1912, these students will realize that this kind of perseverance is the only way to succeed at university. Photo by Marc Landry.