



Evaluation of the Employment Insurance Sickness Benefits



ABOUT THE EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SICKNESS BENEFITS

Since 1971, the Employment Insurance sickness benefits offer temporary financial assistance to individuals who are unable to work due to an illness, injury or quarantine, but would otherwise be available for work.

- In 2017-2018, \$1.7 billion of benefits were paid, representing about 411,870 claims.

The evaluation period does not cover specific measures introduced in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



KEY FINDINGS

- The duration of the benefits is adequate for most claimants, but those with severe and/or long-term illnesses are more likely to use the full 15 weeks of sickness benefits and remain sick hereafter.
- There has been significant growth in claims nationally since 2000 that can be explained, in part, by demographic changes.
- Access to employer short-term sickness/disability plans is not uniform across the labour force in Canada. Without such coverage, Employment Insurance sickness benefits remain the main support for many workers.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Explore and report on the possibility of new data linkages to inform policy development on the Employment Insurance sickness benefits.
- Examine claims for Employment Insurance regular benefits with sickness spells to better understand the interaction between these benefit types.

The full Evaluation of the Employment Insurance Sickness Benefits is available at:
www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/reports/evaluations/ei-sickness-benefits

