

Summerside Chambers.

The national plan, which has more than 30,000 member firms across Canada is available to any chamber member. In fact, Derek is actually generating money for the three chambers he works with every day, since the local chamber receives an administration fee.

"One of my first clients when I got into the insurance business was a small firm looking for health benefits for its employees," he noted. "There wasn't really much available at an affordable price."

In fact, that was one of the main reasons the chamber plan was developed. One of the main attractions of the plan is the flexibility it offers. It can be tailored to meet the needs of employers and employees when it comes to life insurance, health and dental coverage.

As well, he said plans can be custom made for any size firm, with the latest addition offering coverage to a single owner with no employees. There is 24 hour a day coverage and family members of employees are also covered.

There is also a retiree plan for business owners in the process of easing out of the day-to-day operation of the business that can be offered until age 80. The coverage includes travel insurance should they decide to travel south for part of the year.

Derek explained he wants all chamber members to feel they are getting value out of the plan, adding he works with clients to modify their coverage



Derek and Beth Nicholson hard at work at their office in Lower Montague. Derek said the support of his wife and son, Chris has been a major factor in the success of the business and has allowed them to offer chamber members the benefits of the national Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan. Andy Walker photo

to meet the ongoing challenges in their employee benefit plan. His firm also helps employers any time they require aid filling out forms.

He frequently hears from employers who tell him the plan allows them

to both retain existing employees and attract new workers. That is especially important in rural areas where there are very few large employers that could take advantage of the plans offered in most group insurance plans.

"Without the chamber insurance plan, it would simply be too prohibitive for a small firm to be able to offer this kind of coverage," Derek said.

He suggests employees covered under the plan should look at the possibility of obtaining some additional coverage to cover lost income in the event of a long-term injury.

"None of this would be possible without the support of the business community and individuals from all over PEI," Derek noted.



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