



## EDITORIAL

### Our absolute priority: our clients

In the high-risk insurance brokerage and consulting market there is currently great emphasis on consolidation. With this in mind, our parent company, SIACI SAINT HONORE, has just merged with DIOT-LSN, a leading broker that is part of the Franco-Swiss Burrus Group. The new DIOT-SIACI entity has therefore become one of the world's top 10 brokers with more than 5,000 staff in 42 countries and revenue of almost EUR 700 million.

In Switzerland, Swiss Risk & Care and Qualibroker, subsidiaries of SIACI SAINT HONORE and the Burrus Group respectively, will gradually initiate their merger to create a single, coherent and ambitious group. Swiss Risk & Care is already the leading company in French-speaking Switzerland. This merger allows us to extend our scope towards the German-speaking part of Switzerland, as Qualibroker is well established in Zurich and Liechtenstein. In these areas, Qualibroker is quite close to our business model.

This union will double our positions and enable us to become a true national player. We will continue our development using our business model, as it has proved its effectiveness and is perfectly aligned with the new Group's strategy: to become an alternative to the large local and international brokers for clients of SMEs,

International Organisations, Large Companies and Multinationals here in Switzerland.

We will take the time required to ensure that this merger is a success both internally and externally. A marriage is first and foremost a human journey. We have to get to know one another, learn to respect each other, assess our practices and define the best path to take to achieve consensus. This is a real challenge, and the answers are to be found at local level. It must be guided by a single purpose: to provide the best service to our clients, and for our clients to be convinced of the benefits of our services!

The benefits are exactly what we will be looking at in this article. Employee benefits are an essential lever for HR departments in retaining and attracting staff. Insurance and pension schemes can make an effective contribution to this. Your broker is there to assist you in exploring these often overlooked avenues.

I would like to take advantage of this holiday season to thank you for your trust and to wish you and your loved ones a very happy new year in 2022.

Pierrick Leprince  
CEO & Director



# Insurance and pension schemes - an alternative effective employee benefits policy

**Retaining talent, attracting high potential, enhancing reputation as an employer, reducing turnover and absenteeism... these are all challenges for companies and their human resources departments. A well thought-out employee benefits programme is an essential lever for meeting these challenges. Among these benefits, insurance and pension plans are very effective if they are used properly. Explanations.**

Variable pay, participation in soft mobility, actions to enhance the well-being of staff - the range of employee benefits is wide. In terms of insurance and pension plans, 4 solutions are available to companies that wish to improve their employees' conditions.

## **1. Partial relief from social security charges**

An initial simple and significant action by the employer is to bear the cost of all or part of the social charges, over the statutory minimum, by financing loss of earnings due to illness (PGM), accident insurance (LAA) and the

supplementary insurance (CLAA) as well as the pension and disability plan (LPP). Without affecting gross salary, and adjusting the company's finances, the employee's net salary, and therefore purchasing power, are increased.

## **2. Participation in the group health insurance policy**

By choosing a group health insurance policy, the company positions itself as a promoter of healthcare. It can thus offer its employees and family members the benefit of easy subscription to insurance cover «packages» at attractive rates. In addition to these benefits, the employer can also pay part of the premium.

Moreover, there is a system of reimbursement of benefits by the employer (SRPE), which makes it possible to self-finance and self-insure part of the benefits which are not reimbursed by the LAMal [mandatory Swiss health insurance scheme].

*All these solutions are highly technical and must be adapted to the company's circumstances and HR policy.*

## Setting up an employee benefits programme: what you need to know

Christian Oberson, Chairman of HR Geneva and human resources consultant, reminds us of the main points to know.

**1. Define your needs:** by reviewing together the analysis carried out with employees and the challenges facing company's HR (building loyalty, attracting the younger generation, compliance with CSR etc.), the HR department will be able to devise a programme that is in line with employees' expectations and an incentive. *"Employee benefits should not be the icing on the cake of HR policy but fully part of it,"* says Christian Oberson. He added: *"Neither are they medicines, i.e. intended as a remedy for internal dysfunctions."*

**2. Knowing how to communicate on the benefit provided:** it is important to explain the reasons for implementing the benefit and what the employer will be requesting in return. For example, in exchange for the introduction of teleworking, employees will be asked to be more flexible, easily reachable, etc.

**3. Ensuring fairness among employees:** In addition to being useful, a benefits programme should be relevant to all employees. Even though some benefits may be more relevant to certain categories, it is important that everyone feels they have been taken into consideration.



### 3. The extension of accident cover (CLAA)

Among the extensions possible, there are two that can provide additional protection for employees:

- **Cover for private medical expenses:** for a reasonable cost, it allows an employee to choose their private clinic and thus obtain an appointment and receive treatment (often!) more quickly... It also means returning to work sooner.
- **Cover of the LAA difference:** this is to compensate for any reduction in benefits that may be applied by the LAA in the event of serious fault (e.g. forgetting to wear a seatbelt when in a car) or a reckless activity (e.g. off-piste skiing). The LAA would indemnify all benefits in kind such as treatment costs but may reduce financial benefits such as daily allowances or pensions. By including this discrepancy in cover, CLAA will offset the financial decrease.

### 4. Additional remuneration and tax exemption by the LPP

Occupational pension plans offer a vast range of options for providing employees with improved cover for events such as disability or death, and a higher pension on their retirement. It also allows them to build up part of own funds for the purpose of purchasing their main home.

It is thus possible to set up a **supplementary pension plan** targeting certain categories of employees (executives, part-time employees, etc.) in order to improve their savings and disability/death cover.

**The choice of pension fund** is also a vital issue. HR departments must verify the performance of a number of criteria such as management, yield or conversion rate.

The employer may also contribute to financing early retirement.

If the employer contributes to financing the premium more than required under the statutory minimum, it can decide to **create optional pension plans** by offering employees the opportunity to increase their individual contributions. It thereby gives employees the opportunity to make up for pension shortfalls and increase their ability to buy back years. These buy backs will increase their savings and will be tax exempt.

Lastly, employees receiving high salaries (>CHF 129 K) can benefit from **bespoke asset management** by opening a 1e plan.

All these solutions are highly technical and must be adapted to the company's circumstances and HR policy. It is therefore highly recommended to seek the advice and expertise of a broker.

We have set up a dedicated Caredesk for a new benefit available to multinational companies specialised in medical technologies. This benefit is special leave for family care. Its Vice President of Global Benefits & Total Reward Operations will present it to us.

Can you explain the benefit “Family Care Leave” in place and the challenge you faced in the implementation?

*Family Care Leave provides peace of mind for employees experiencing a wide range of family care needs – from bonding with a new child to caring for a terminally ill family member. It provides up to six weeks of time away from work at 100% pay – a leave benefit that exceeds other progressive employers and continues to position Medtronic as a talent destination.*

*Family Care Leave is now available to Medtronic employees in more than 70 countries around the world.*

*Implementing Family Care Leave globally was an extremely complex project involving many countries and cultures; requiring analysis of country legislation, statutory benefits and local practices; and standing up service delivery with a new vendor partner.*

What kind of solution has been found for the worldwide implementation of the benefit?

*We focused the solution on a few critical components, including a single technology platform, language capability, and overall employee experience\*.*

What is your assessment? What feedback do you get from employees?

*Family Care Leave is an innovative, market-leading leave approach that reflects the spirit of the Medtronic Mission and demonstrates we are an organization that puts families first. We’ve heard from employees around the world – there is a sense of dedication, pride, and gratitude knowing that the company is there for employees when they need it most.*

*\*Author’s note : the Caredesk Swiss Risk & Care*



**Amina Belkhiria**, Client Manager, supervised the deployment of the Caredesk and supervised client relations. She states: *“The deployment of this Caredesk mobilised the business and IT teams of Swiss Risk & Care. It was a great challenge that showcased our agility and capacity to innovate. The service is now fully operational and can be easily adapted to other companies. 10 managers who speak 12 languages serve 60,000 employees worldwide on a daily basis.”*



### ■ New laws in effect as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022

#### • Disability Insurance (AI) reform

##### - Setting up linear pension schemes

Pensions will be allocated on a linear basis for beneficiaries with a disability rate of between 40 and 69%, replacing the 4 levels of the current system. For disability rates of 70% upwards, the whole amount of the pension will continue to be paid.

##### - Reimbursement of costs for rare illnesses

The list of congenital illnesses will be updated, as well as the list of drugs covered by the disability insurance scheme (AI).

##### - Greater transparency in expert appraisals

The insurance company and the insured will have to agree on an agent and interviews will be recorded.

##### - Improved support

The disability insurance scheme (AI) will provide greater support for children suffering from congenital disabilities and their families. Young people and people with mental health problems will receive better support in (re)starting employment.

##### - Stronger collaboration between the disability insurance scheme, and doctors and employers

The aim is to support the relevant persons in their professional rehabilitation.

#### • Revised Insurance Policy Law (ICA)

##### - 14-day cooling-off period for persons taking out insurance policies

This does not apply to group insurance schemes, provisional cover and policies with a term of less than one month.

##### - Right of termination after three years for long policies

Please note: this provision does not affect life insurance policies.

##### - Waiver of the health insurer’s right of termination

##### - Extension of the limitation period from two to five years

##### - Introduction of a general direct cause of action against all civil liability insurers

Please see the articles in full on our website: [www.swissriskcare.ch/actualités](http://www.swissriskcare.ch/actualités)

#### Impressum

Publisher: Swiss Risk & Care - insurance-inside@swissriskcare.ch - T +41 58 178 85 85 • Director of Publishing: Pierrick Leprince • Head of publishing: Valérie Cruchet  
Printing: Imprimerie Baudat, L'Orient • Photo credit: Swiss Risk & Care, iStock by Getty, Céline Michel, studioegard.ch.