

New online tool helps Great-West Life group retirement plan members track their progress towards achieving retirement income readiness

Personal rate of return widget can help increase plan members' financial literacy by illustrating the impact of their personal investment decisions

London, Ontario, December 15, 2011 . . . Great-West Life group retirement and savings plan members can now access a new *Personal rate of return* widget to help assess their progress towards achieving retirement income readiness.

The latest enhancement to *GRS Access* – the company's secure, award-winning transactional website for retirement plan members – this new widget (a kind of "mini-app") provides plan members with a quick picture of their personal rate of return, from the date of their first contribution to their Great-West Life group retirement and savings plan(s), as well as one-, three-, five- and 10-year time periods.

Great-West Life calculates plan members' personal rate of return using the internal rate of return method (also referred to as the dollar-weighted return). The distinguishing characteristic of the calculation is that, rather than "estimating" a rate of return based on the starting and ending values and total deposits and withdrawals made, it takes into account the timing and amount of such deposits and withdrawals, factors that do have an effect on the rate of return. This provides members with a personal rate of return that reflects their actual investment behaviour.

"In addition to illustrating personal rates of return, this tool also gives plan members the ability to monitor their investments' performance and understand the impact of their investment decisions, which can help educate and guide them in setting, monitoring and achieving their individual retirement savings goals," says Jeff Aarssen, Great-West Life's Vice-President, Group Retirement Services Sales & Marketing.

Plan members who sign in to the *GRS Access* secure website can also get a quick picture of their investment portfolio balance, both by plan and by asset class. Additionally, they can review the types of investment options they've chosen and compare their investment performance over time, illustrated through charts and graphs. Other useful educational tools such as videos, calculators and articles are available to help increase plan members' financial literacy.

As always, plan members can personalize their home page to display the information most valuable to the individual member by moving, deleting or closing widgets.

The new *Personal rate of return* widget and the member home page are just two of the innovative services and tools Great-West provides to meet the needs of our group retirement and savings plan members.

About GRS Access

GRS Access is designed to be safe and secure. Each *GRS Access* user has their own ID and password allowing them to sign in from anywhere, at any time. For an overview of what the new *Personal rate of return* widget has to offer group retirement and savings plan members, view this [video](#).

About Great-West Life

Great-West Life administers over 17,000 group retirement plans and over 1.2 million member accounts, representing nearly 30 per cent of capital accumulation plans (CAPs) in Canada. In the United States, Great-West is the fourth-largest group retirement plan record keeper based on total participants and Putnam Investments adds to the organization's North American presence in this market.

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