



Negotiating now for better conditions after the crisis

After several weeks of working on exceptional measures related to the COVID-19 crisis, the FIQ and the government resumed their provincial negotiation meetings in mid-April.

Given that members' working conditions aren't sustainable and that the COVID-19 crisis is shedding light on how heavy and slow the health and social services network is, the FIQ is ready to negotiate **NOW**. Healthcare professionals need to see their working conditions improved fast.

Adapting to the health and economic crisis

Even though Quebec is beginning to gradually ease restrictions, the economic situation is getting worse every day. Quebec's exceptional economic growth, only a few weeks into the pandemic, already seems like a distant memory. Due to this new context, the FIQ had to update the strategic framework for negotiations.

These three principles will guide negotiations from here on out:

- Prioritize negotiating members' daily working conditions;
- Adapt the FIQ's demands while taking into account the current context;
- Mobilize members and the public around issues related to the health and safety of healthcare professionals and their patients.

Two visions of negotiations

The government wants to quickly reach an agreement with union organizations and made a proposal, of which the FIQ disapproves: **discuss salaries now and postpone negotiations on working conditions, retirement and parental rights** by setting up joint committees, whose work could take several months to complete.

The FIQ finds this proposal unacceptable. It is imperative that we re-focus discussions on working conditions because our members are suffering. We must **IMMEDIATELY** resolve problems related to the organization of work, which have been going on for years and are exacerbated by the pandemic.

Subsequently, the APTS-FIQ alliance proposed to duly negotiate working conditions at a steady pace, as well as priority elements regarding retirement and parental rights.

The alliance also insists on talking about regional disparities—measures that are essential to maintaining health services in the Far North— which the employer party had completely disregarded.

Negotiating better working conditions: the FIQ's priorities

The employer party must negotiate the following points in good faith with the FIQ's representatives:

- Stabilizing teams and reducing overtime by:
 - ✓ Hiring healthcare professionals in the network;
 - ✓ Implementing structural measures, like safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios;
 - ✓ Implementing measures to make full-time positions attractive;
 - ✓ Reducing the use of overtime and mandatory overtime;
 - ✓ Restructuring the organization of work.

- Recruiting and retaining staff in the health network by:
 - ✓ Improving working conditions;
 - ✓ Recognizing and appreciating healthcare professionals' work;
 - ✓ Implementing measures to promote family-work balance.