



Healthcare professional-to-patient ratios and full time: the government shows their hand

For the first time since the beginning of the provincial negotiations on the healthcare professionals' working conditions, already a year ago, the government makes significant concessions on union demands.

The pressure from the mobilization of FIQ members forced the government to commit. In the last 10 days, the FIQ negotiating committee has made major progress in two essential areas in the negotiation draft: implementing healthcare professional-to-patient ratios in CHSLDs and offering stable and interesting full-time positions on a large scale.

Together, this progress will significantly reduce the work overload by:

- Stabilizing the work teams on full-time positions on one shift and one centre of activities
- Reducing overtime and eliminating mandatory overtime as a management tool
- Implementing safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios

Implementing healthcare professional-to-patient ratios

The government admits there should be a standard set up for establishing an adequate care team to provide all the appropriate patient care everyday in CHSLDs and private subsidized institutions.

Applying this standard will affect nurses, licensed practical nurses and respiratory therapists. Hence, a nurse would never again have 125 patients under her responsibility on nights, as we see in some CHSLDs in Québec. Discussions are still ongoing on the details of this standard.

In order to also gradually roll out ratios in non-merged institutions that do not have any CHSLDs under their responsibility, the FIQ believes that safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios must be implemented in emergency departments or medicine/surgery units, based on local needs.

Upgrading to full time: one shift, one centre of activities

The government has been repeating for months: they want more healthcare professionals working full time. To achieve this, they have agreed to upgrade all healthcare professionals working in centres of activities operating 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to full time, including in CHSLDs.

Stable positions, on their own centre of activities and own shift, will be offered to nurses, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists and clinical perfusionists.

This upgrade orchestrated at the provincial level will permanently stabilize the work teams and considerably reduce the work overload. All employers will have to comply.

HOWEVER, to succeed, full time has to be attractive

The government said it: they agree to implement healthcare professional-to-patient ratios in CHSLDs and are ready to offer all healthcare professionals an upgrade to full time. However, the key to healthcare professionals agreeing to hold full-time positions is to make these positions attractive. This condition is essential to the success of these negotiations.

The negotiation team will continue to promote the advantages of this proposal to the employer party over the next few days. There is room for negotiation!