



Salary, retirement, parental rights and regional disparities The delegates reject (again) the same offer as 10 months ago!

One year after the public and parapublic sectors employees' collective agreements expired, one year after the health emergency started, the government proves that it still has not understood anything. On March 31, at the same time as all the labour organizations joined together to sound the alarm for public services, **the government presented an offer to the APTS-FIQ Alliance like the one made 10 months ago, that was rejected outright.**

If reaching a tentative agreement with the government on the working conditions at the end of 2020 is good news for the healthcare professionals, it's clear that **the negotiations are far from over.** Settling the intersectoral matters is essential for enhancing the value of the caregiving professions, attracting and retaining healthcare professionals in the public network.

The FIQ and FIQP members will vote on a **global agreement** (working conditions, salary, retirement, parental rights and regional disparities).

As long as the government does not offer a salary catch-up and there are no major gains on retirement, parental rights and regional disparities, the APTS-FIQ Alliance cannot reach an agreement that will be satisfactory for the 131,000 healthcare professionals, professionals and technicians of the health and social services network. Their expectations are high, with reason, and the government must make a real shift in direction.

The government's offer was rejected by the FIQ and FIQP delegates meeting virtually in a Special Provincial Council – Negotiations on April 6.

The APTS delegates also rejected the employer offer at the same time.

What to retain from the government's global offer:

Like last May, the government is proposing a collective agreement of three years, which would end on March 31, 2023. The sectoral agreement on the working conditions concluded by the FIQ and ratified by the delegates on December 8 last is an integral part of the government's global offer.

SALARIES

The government is once again offering a **5% salary increase over three years**, with lump sums for some, under certain conditions.

Year 1: 1.75% increase + a lump sum of \$0.55 per hour paid for April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 for employees who have been in the last echelon for more than a year.

Year 2: 1.75% increase + a lump sum of \$0.66 per hour paid for April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021* for all healthcare professionals.

Year 3: 1.5% increase for job titles covered by rankings 12 to 28, which are those of FIQ and FIQP members.

* If we compare to the offer of last May, the government is doubling the lump sum amount offered in recognition of the work done during the pandemic and allocated to everyone, which goes from \$0.33 per paid hour to \$0.66.

The government is also adding an economic clause to its salary offer: a maximum of 1% additional increase on March 31, 2023 **if** Québec's economy is doing well and **if** inflation is higher than expected. In summary, with these two conditions, the government is not taking any risks.

However, the APTS-FIQ Alliance's salary demand is clear: **12.4% over 3 years, including 7.4% in salary catch-up** to

- Protect the members' purchasing power by keeping up with inflation.
- Catch up on the historical backlog of compensation for employees in the health and social services network compared with all the other activity sectors in Québec (private sector, municipal administration, public companies, universities and federal administration), the other public companies (Hydro-Québec, SAQ, Loto-Québec) or even the other Canadian provinces.

The government must recognize the work of the professionals and technicians and healthcare professionals in the health and social services network by significant salary increases if it wants to reinforce the public network. As a society, we can no longer tolerate women being paid less than men. The government must make this a priority if it wants to attract the younger generation, maintain the expertise in place and counter the competition with the private sector. Women in the public health network want their fair share and the offers must make up for years of under-investment so that wages become decent.

RETIREMENT

Since the beginning of the negotiations nearly 18 months ago, **the government insists on proposing the creation of a joint inter-union committee on pensions.** The only change from the initial proposal is that the government accepts to include the union issues among the subjects the committee will address.

The idea of a career salary – not favourable for the Alliance members – has been removed from the bargaining table but will be part of the subjects that the working committee will address. Beware, beware, beware.

The APTS-FIQ Alliance wants to negotiate measures now to encourage the healthcare professionals and technicians in the health and social services network to work longer with good conditions and reduce the cost of early retirement.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Once again, the government is proposing to **postpone** discussions on parental rights by using the same model of joint committee as the one proposed for pensions. There is nothing in this proposal to suggest that real progress can be made on parental rights during the life of the collective agreement, which is unacceptable for the APTS-FIQ Alliance, which wants to make taking the leaves more flexible for parents and improve leaves linked to pregnancy.

REGIONAL DISPARITIES

The government **has proposed nothing**, once again. The words “regional disparities” do not even appear in the government proposal.

For the employer party, anything not covered in this offer will have to remain the status quo. Therefore, this means **there is nothing planned** for regional disparities, despite the many demands of the APTS-FIQ Alliance on this subject. This is a disaster for the regions affected by these provisions!

The government is therefore once again failing Quebecers and members of the First Nations who live far from urban centres. However, they should be entitled to the same services as the others.

FORUM ON OVERALL HEALTH

Unfortunately, the government refuses to understand the message and returns for the third time (!) with its idea of a forum which aims to ensure the well-being of employees, but above all reduce absences for disability and foster a return to work. Labour organizations **unanimously refused to participate** in this idea in December 2019 and May 2020. Moreover, the one-time budget allotted to the FIQ is still \$5.2 M for two years, which is **clearly insufficient**.

The government is not meeting the APTS-FIQ expectations, and we will respond with mobilization!

Members are invited to show that they reject this latest government offer in Quebec City on April 12 and demand a salary catch-up loud and clear.

For details on this action, check the various FIQ platforms and speak to your union team.

Suivez-nous    