



# ENACTION

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## PROVINCIAL NEGOTIATION MOBILIZATION PLAN

There are often many obstacles when negotiating a new collective agreement. And the COVID-19 pandemic showed healthcare professionals one thing for certain: the government isn't going to do its "guardian angels" any favours.

The status quo is simply intolerable. The people who have been keeping the health network afloat for years have a right to expect improved working conditions in their next provincial collective agreement.

To achieve this, FIQ and FIQP members will need to make themselves seen and heard over the next few months. By putting pressure on their managers and employers, they are putting pressure on the government. This domino effect, along with the public's support, is a strong driver of change.

It was with this principle in mind that FIQ and FIQP delegates adopted the provincial negotiation mobilization plan. The Federation now has one more card in its hand to make the government understand that urgent action is required.

### EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, EXCEPTIONAL MOBILIZATION

Developed in close collaboration by the local information and mobilization officers (one officer per affiliated union) and the provincial information and mobilization team, the main goal of the plan is to fight against apathy and channel members' anger into actions tailored to affiliated unions' and members' realities. It features the FIQ's two negotiation priorities:

- Health and safety at every level of the health network: a key condition for healthcare professionals
- Attraction-retention: obtaining favourable conditions for healthcare professionals

One of the plan's main principles focuses on provincial consistency in the rhythm and intensity of actions, as well as the need to adapt to current events and the context, which are constantly evolving. What's more, the actions, which are mostly outdoors,

can easily be adapted to increased social distancing measures in the event of a second COVID-19 wave. They will also be organized so as to make them enjoyable events. They will be announced ahead of time so that everyone can mobilize, while maintaining a family-work-study balance.

It is clear that to properly roll out this plan, local teams will have to set up a structure that allows them to send out information about negotiations and members' actions. They will also be in charge of rolling out provincial actions in their institutions.

All of the FIQ's sectors and services will get involved as it is essential that these negotiations be seized as an opportunity to build a public health system that patients, nurses, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists and clinical perfusionists in Quebec deserve. ■

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Convention 40007983

(adresse de retour)  
FIQ Québec | 1260, rue du Blizzard  
Québec (Qc) G2K 0J1



1. Joëlle Naud, Union Consultant 2. Marie-Philippe Gagnon-Hamelin, Union Consultant 3. Roberto Bomba, Treasurer, and Jérôme Rousseau, Vice-President, Joint Political Officers for negotiations

**WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT**

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**2020 NEGOTIATIONS: THE STATUS QUO IS NOT AN OPTION**

At the special provincial council, we carried on our work with strength and energy to gain important leverage and focus on our top priority: the current provincial negotiations.

We adopted the essential services policy, the union solidarity pact and the mobilization plan. The context of these negotiations is unprecedented and constantly changing. When will the second wave happen and on what scale? No one really knows. What we do know is that we have to continue adapting our strategy and refocusing on negotiations.

Faced with a government that chose to operate with ministerial orders that violate workers' rights, we turned up the dial on our indignation. It seems as though our welcome committees and court appearances have caused a little upset. The way that the Legault government treated healthcare professionals created even more

distress, discouragement and anger, which we will also tap into to gather strength for mobilizing.

With mobilization comes pressure tactics. Striking is the ultimate pressure tactic, which we must include in our options: we therefore need to determine the list of essential services. The super hospitals do make things a bit more complicated, but the right to strike is leverage that is absolutely essential to our bargaining power, leverage that the government wants to restrict. It was impossible to agree on provincial parameters, so our essential services policy will determine our frame of reference for reaching an agreement with the employer.

This pandemic has brought to light what we have been denouncing for so many years... No one can deny any longer that healthcare professionals keep the health network afloat, and in overwhelming working conditions that, at times, are flat-out dangerous, for them and their patients. We need to focus on these certainties so that this fall will be our time, so that we forge ahead with these negotiations with our characteristic fighting spirit, for the well-being of healthcare professionals and patients. These negotiations have to happen and the status quo is not an option! ■

**UNION SOLIDARITY PACT**

The great solidarity of our members has always shaped the Federation's battles. Just think of the withdrawal of availability, adopted in 1989, and the strikes in 1989 and 1999. It was with this in mind that we raised awareness among delegates about the importance of equitably sharing salary losses between FIQ and FIQP members in the event of a strike during the current negotiations.

The delegates adopted a solidarity pact by a majority. The pact covers equitable compensation of salary losses in the event of a strike. We will determine the conditions of application at a future provincial council, as needed. ■



1. Serge Prévost, Union Consultant 2. Marie-Hélène Verge, Union Consultant 3. Louis Guertin, Union Consultant

**INESTIMABLE BARGAINING POWER: THE LIST OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

Striking is the ultimate pressure tactic for resolving a disagreement between employees and an employer. If they come to an impasse, deliberately ceasing work is an essential tactic for forcing the employer to negotiate in good faith.

However, everyone knows that the health and safety of the population should not be put at risk during negotiations. It has always been the FIQ and FIQP's priority to provide safe, quality public care. Consequently, before employees can start a legal strike, the unions and institutions must reach an agreement on essential services.

To this end, the FIQ and FIQP delegates created an essential services policy. At this stage of provincial negotiations, it was important for the Federations to collectively agree on the foundations and principles for determining essential services and submit the list, as needed, to the Administrative Labour Tribunal.

Determining essential services will allow us to build bargaining power at the bargaining table by going one step further towards acquiring the right to strike.

