



EN ACTION

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Special Provincial Council - Negotiations
on October 20 and November 2

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OUR MOBILIZATION MADE THE GOVERNMENT MOVE

We can say that the ambitious action plan executed in the last few days succeeded in making the government move. The healthcare professionals made a lot of noise in the public arena and the message was heard.

On October 19, about 300 of them disrupted traffic on the Jacques-Cartier Bridge in Montréal and Québec Bridge in Québec City, launching a distress call to the government: the unbearable working conditions must change. All eyes were riveted on the FIQ, who had the opportunity to explain its solutions for eliminating the work overload.

Combined with the release of the list of worst ranked ratios in CHSLDs two days later and announcement of the 48 hours without mandatory overtime scheduled on October 24 and 25, these actions put enormous pressure on the government.

The response came from the president of the Treasury Board, Sonia Lebel, who addressed the media to tell the healthcare professionals that she had heard their message and she wanted to find solutions quickly for improving their working conditions.

After spirited discussions, the delegates decided to accept the olive branch from their counterpart at the bargaining table and cancel their 48 hours without MOT action.

PROGRESS, BUT...

The FIQ has been negotiating relentlessly and seen progress in two essential areas of the negotiation draft: implementing healthcare professional-to-patient ratios in CHSLDs and wide-scale offering of stable and interesting full-time positions.

The government admits that, in CHSLDs and private subsidized institutions, there needs to be a standard for establishing an adequate care team for providing all the appropriate patient care everyday. The application of this standard will affect nurses, licensed practical nurses and respiratory therapists.

The employer party also agrees to upgrade nurses, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists and clinical perfusionists who work 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 would be offered, permanently stabilizing the work teams and considerably reducing the work overload.

However, for the healthcare professionals to accept full-time positions, the key is to make these positions attractive. This condition is essential to the success of these negotiations and the negotiation team will hammer the message home to the employer party over the coming days.

THE APTS-FIQ ALLIANCE IS READY

The last few months have focused on negotiating the healthcare professionals' working conditions at the sectoral table. The government has not addressed salary, retirement, parental rights and regional disparities since their filing in June, with a 5% salary increase over three years that was unanimously rejected.

The employer party has had the APTS-FIQ Alliance intersectoral demands for months now. When the time comes, the two organizations, who represent 131,000 members in the health and social services network, will mobilize together to remind the government that the economic value of the work of women must not be ignored and that they are demanding a salary catch-up worthy of the name. ■



WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

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THE VOICE OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS FINALLY HEARD?

Dany Béland

Over the last few weeks, the healthcare professionals were mobilized like never before. In all corners of Québec, their distress and their determination to make the government listen to reason in these negotiations for the renewal of their collective agreement were discussed. Is the voice of healthcare professionals finally being heard?

The work at the sectoral table these last few days is sending positive signals in this respect. After more than a year of negotiations, the government finally agreed with our arguments that the status quo is unsustainable. The nurses, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists and clinical perfusionists' current working conditions should be a thing of the past. The very survival of the public healthcare system is at stake.

The olive branch from the president of the Treasury Board, Sonia Lebel, is not unrelated to the strong mobilization of members. Whether at the local or provincial level, our collective efforts and hard work of our negotiating committee and its coordination have pushed the employer party to change their attitude towards our demands.

Lastly, the issues at the heart of the healthcare professionals' demands were the focus of the discussions. Major breakthroughs on the work overload and healthcare professional-to-patient ratios, especially in CHSLDs were made. The work at the bargaining table will continue in this respect!

Despite these long-awaited developments, we must continue to seize every opportunity day after day to remind this government and the population of the healthcare professionals' strong motivation. They only want to be respected, recognized and be able to practice their profession in optimal conditions. Nothing more, nothing less!

And if the government wants to be able to attract the next generation and see more healthcare professionals working full time, they will have to put forward concrete

measures to convince them to do it. How? First, they must be guaranteed a position on a stable and complete work team, will know their schedule in advance, can have time off and no longer be taken hostage by mandatory overtime.

The battle isn't won and there is still work to do. For anyone who might think that healthcare professionals might be out of breath, think again! Our oxygen tank contains an ample supply of oxygen to pursue the fight for as long as necessary.

The government has an obligation of result and we will remind them every day. Stay determined, united and have eyes firmly fixed on our common goals, and together, we will succeed in obtaining better working conditions for the healthcare professionals in Québec. ■



ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RATIOS

To support the negotiation of the collective agreement and respond to the government's resistance to implementing safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios (in CHSLDs in particular), the FIQ held a provincial mobilization action. The action was intended to speed up discussions at the bargaining table to reduce the work overload and thus guarantee safe, quality care for the population.

On October 21, 2020, outside of the Centre d'hébergement René-Lévesque in Montérégie-Est, the action portrayed a situation that healthcare professionals face on a daily basis: having too many patients in their care. 125 coroplast cut-outs of patients were set up to show what it's like for one professional to take care of that many patients! Affiliated unions then used the patient cut-outs to set up the same action in other Quebec regions.

WORST RANKED RATIOS

The last provincial action was a great launching pad for releasing the list of the worst ranked ratios. The rankings were based on CHSLD ratios between September 1 and 18, 2020. For each of the 306 public and private Quebec CHSLDs where FIQ and FIQP members work, we calculated the average healthcare professional-to-patient ratios over day, evening and night shifts.

Click on the following link to view the rankings:
<http://www.fiqsante.qc.ca/ratios/en/palmares/>