

UNWAVERING IN THE FACE OF TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

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TOGETHER

13TH CONVENTION OF THE FIQ
CENTRE DES CONGRÈS DE QUÉBEC
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INFORMATION

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Sectors and Services Activities Report



UNWAVERING IN THE FACE OF TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

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INTRODUCTION

The Federation has gone through major upheavals over the years and the last term was no exception. The organization's strength has always been its ability to rely on the solidarity of its affiliated unions and its capacity to take decisions that are always rooted in the collective interests of its members. Health crisis, major health network reform which threatens the organization's autonomy, two provincial negotiations; all priorities that have had to be addressed, sometimes at the same time.

When we look in the rear-view mirror, it's hard to believe how much has been achieved in such a short space of time. In 2021, at the last convention, in the midst of the pandemic, the fragility of the health network was on full display, and the anger of the members, powerless in the face of an employer incapable of listening to them, was palpable. Tensions were high and the pressure was on. It became essential to regain stability if we were to move forward.

The three lines from the last convention, progressive women, women of action, and women fighting against systemic racism were the key unifying elements that have guided the Executive Committee's decisions over the last four years. We faced major challenges in the wake of the pandemic: influencing decisions, building a mobilizing force to denounce the unacceptable in the network and, above all, demanding, through negotiation, decent working conditions that value expertise and the quality of care. Since our demands are rooted in the aspirations of our members, defending local unionism is demanding, because it is necessary to maintain a constant dialogue with them and to know how to adjust along the way.

Faced with challenges: taking action

The arrival of new members on the Executive Committee, including a new president in the middle of a term of office, marked a turning point. This change naturally led to a reaffirmation of priorities based on shared values and orientations: putting members at the heart of decision-making, increasing bargaining power, building strong union solidarity, valuing the expertise of healthcare professionals, defending our feminist convictions and obtaining concrete gains for members. These objectives were ambitious, at a time when the organization had to deal with a particularly difficult internal and external political context.

From the very first months after the Convention, our strategy was clear: to position ourselves as a militant union, mobilized and rooted in the reality in the field, with a view to preparing effectively for the next round of negotiations. Indeed, the pandemic had left deep scars, which marked the end of the 2021 negotiations: working conditions trampled, authoritarian management by ministerial orders, constant fear for health and life, work-life balance put to the test.

Rebuilding links within the Federation became a priority. The objective was clear: to re-establish links with union reps and strengthen our ties with the grassroots. As members of the Executive Committee, we opted for a frank approach: favouring open, honest and transparent communication. There was no question of embellishing reality or running away from difficult conversations.

Union democracy was at the centre of the organization's actions and there was a clear commitment to promote the active participation of members and union reps in the decision-making processes thanks to different mechanisms: regular consultations, in particular on the negotiation project, electronic referendum votes on the new work contract and involving union reps in various work groups. A new consultation structure for mobilization was also rolled out, enabling union reps to play a more active role in strategic discussions. In addition, the numerous special councils enabled the entire organization to play an active part in the debates, particularly in the context of provincial negotiations.

In a post-pandemic context, practices needed to be adapted to preserve a balance between union rep, family and personal life. Deploying the hybrid council pilot project responded to this need, despite the logistical challenges it caused. This initiative is part of a clear direction aimed at promoting more accessible, inclusive participation in decision-making bodies, adapted to the realities of the union reps.

The health crisis, a real human tragedy for many healthcare professionals, their patients and their families, highlighted the serious consequences of the lack of resources in the public network and the disregard for the precautionary principle. The government's inaction was strongly denounced. This period also served as a catalyst for strengthening the links between union teams, members and allies, particularly around the fight for safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios. This fight was backed by strong advocacy and supported by the recommendations of coroner Géhane Kamel in her report on deaths in CHSLDs during the pandemic.

Despite persistent polarization among members, a historic mobilization took shape during the fall 2023 strike, the first held by healthcare professionals in nearly 25 years. Driven by a vast social movement valuing the expertise of workers in health and education, this high point demonstrated the power of the collective. We were in the field day, evening and night, supporting the union team reps, members and employees. We were proud to witness this decisive commitment to achieving significant gains in the negotiations.

As part of the reform of the health network, the Executive Committee has adopted a strategic stance, making numerous representations to union partners and the government. Despite a climate of mistrust and confrontation, this perseverance made it possible to influence several issues. The FIQ's initiative to return respiratory therapists to Class 1, conducted in conjunction with medical federations and opposition parties, forced a review of the professional classes.

Whether to eliminate independent labour (IL), reduce mandatory overtime (MOT) or organize the healthcare professionals' work better, the Federation applies constant pressure on the government to advance union demands. Denunciations by the members, backed by careful monitoring in the field, made it possible to highlight the critical situations, inform the public and demand urgent changes. These constant efforts over nearly ten years have finally paid off with the adoption of measures aimed at gradually freeing the public network from IL.

Throughout our term, we were keen to acknowledge and make the most of the wealth of union reps in the delegation. This willingness to work together and to co-construct union policies has resulted in a number of structuring collaborations. Whether on federation committees, standing committees, work groups set up for the Dubé reform or the MOT committee, union reps were called on to actively contribute to the reflections, analyses and positions taken by the FIQ. Although some of the work was slowed down by the intensity of the negotiations, the commitment remained intact and each of these forums was designed as a place for dialogue, mutual respect and the pooling of collective intelligence. The aim of this open attitude was to strengthen union democracy, while respecting the knowledge of union reps and the diversity of experiences in the field.

Solidarity, the founding value of the FIQ, has remained the common thread running through all our actions. True to our feminist principles, we wanted to build a union vision based on collective strength and the politicization of social struggles. Understanding the impacts of neoliberal policies, in particular on women, immigrants who are marginalized or with a precarious status, was essential. Austerity once again is threatening public services, mostly affecting women, as workers and as users. It is therefore essential to strengthen links with community groups, First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups, women's groups and advocacy organizations, in order to monitor the effects of public policies and build a collective response.

Being strategic, also means forging lasting relationships and building solid alliances. These efforts, carried out with conviction, are now a source of pride. The non-raiding pact and the numerous inter-union collaborations in Québec and elsewhere in the world are concrete examples of this, enabling us to consolidate our solidarity and make our voice heard more loudly.

High points

"The only battles you lose in advance are the ones you don't fight." It is in this spirit that we have invested ourselves with determination, driven by a deep desire to improve the working conditions of the 80,000 healthcare professionals represented by the FIQ.

The last term has been marked by a number of milestones that will live forever in the collective memory of the Federation. Faced with the growing complexity of the issues and the scale of the challenges, we had to demonstrate adaptability, constancy and relentless dedication. The bargaining process is a striking illustration of this: it tested the resiliency of the entire organization, as well as that of the Executive Committee.

Facing these challenges has required great flexibility and creativity in a changing environment: sudden political changes, media pressure, polarization within the workplace itself, not to mention the ever-present after-effects of the health crisis. This resiliency is not just about grand gestures, but also about day-to-day efforts: listening, adjusting strategies, supporting teams and continuing to move forward, even in the face of uncertainty, thanks to the support of the Federation's staff.

Among the most significant events, the 2023 strike occupies a prominent place. This large-scale mobilization was managed in an exemplary manner, with a strong presence on the picket lines, rigorous respect for essential services and financial support for local unions and members in precarious situations. The three days of demonstration in front of the National Assembly also symbolized the strength of our movement.

These actions would never have been possible without the mobilization of the entire organization or without the unity around a common goal: to gain recognition for the value, expertise and rights of healthcare professionals. These high points are more than just highlights: they demonstrate the organization's ability to stand tall, to adapt, and to remain true to its values, even in the midst of turmoil.

At the heart of all these high points are the feminist values that have guided our choices, our actions and our commitments. Values rooted in solidarity, social justice, equity, and the recognition of the power of women to act in their communities. Being a feminist means rejecting the status quo, questioning power relationships and making demands that take account of the realities experienced by women in a health network that is still all too often unequal. It's also choosing to build an inclusive Federation where, when members or union reps speak, they are heard, valued and transformed into concrete actions by drawing on the expertise of employees. In all situations, it is this feminist vision, profoundly human and collective, that has enabled us to stay the course, and that will continue to inspire future struggles.

Over the next few pages, you will see these many accomplishments unfold before your eyes through the various mandates carried out by the FIQ Sectors and Services over the past four years. All this work couldn't have been done without the expertise of every employee in the organization. As political officers, we can only thank them wholeheartedly for their commitment.

- The FIQ Executive Committee

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STATUS OF WOMEN SECTOR REPORT

Since the Federation was founded, feminism has been at the heart of the organization's orientations, through its Statement of Principles and its founding principles. Feminism, whose main objective is to achieve equality between women and men, is deployed within the Federation in line with union activity, the evolution of ideas and socio-political circumstances.

As a result, the role of the Status of Women Sector has developed over time in line with the reality of the Federation's members, mainly women and caregivers, and by establishing a very strong link with civil society rights groups. The Status of Women Sector is therefore constantly adapting and finds itself at the crossroads of promoting the defence of rights, denouncing and calling for mobilization, in fields of action that are often not directly related to labour relations.

The 2021 FIQ Convention sent a strong signal to the sector because it focused on three lines: progressive women, women of action and women fighting against systemic racism. These strong political orientations were then integrated into the sector's various files. The team made constant efforts to fulfil new mandates, despite an unfavourable economic climate, marked by two negotiations and a reform of the health and social services network.

Gender analysis and intersectionality

To anchor its analyses in contemporary feminism, the Status of Women Sector must not only know the history of feminism but also understand feminist analytical grids in order to propose to the Federation a vision of the issues that meets the needs of members and contemporary issues. The sector attended training on gender analysis (ADS+), sexual diversity and gender plurality, along with the Sociopolitical Sector. These analysis grids should be proposed to all the FIQ sectors and services. The joint political officers, the coordination and consultants apply them, whenever possible, to all FIQ files, and demand that they are also applied to public policy, especially during representations on the government's pre-budget consultations.

Politicization and feminist action: with and for union reps

The Status of Women Sector stands out for its close relationship with union reps and plays a decisive role in their politicization. The sector aims to initiate feminist action and works to bring to light issues that may seem marginal to union activity, but which need to be addressed to defend the rights of women, racialized people and people from diverse backgrounds. The consultants and political officers collaborate with three committees in addition to regularly organizing networks and lunches for union reps.

Status of Women Committee

The Status of Women Committee aims is to raise awareness and influence the delegation and union teams and propose actions to put an end to the inequalities and discrimination experienced by healthcare professionals. After several turbulent times experienced by the Federation, including the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the latest rounds of negotiations and a new reform of the health and social services system, the Sector worked with union reps to develop an action plan to return to basics, i.e. to connect with local Status of Women officers to advance feminist struggles within the Federation, with a common vision: practising positive, committed and supportive feminism. A series of

working sessions was planned to identify the various needs of local status of women officers in order to create tools and enable networking, but this has been postponed until the next mandate due to the negotiations.

Ad hoc anti-racism committee

The goals of the ad hoc anti-racism committee are to educate and raise awareness in the members and delegation on the issues of racism and systemic discriminations. This committee was set up at the 2021 Convention, and with the sector, developed an action plan to learn about the racialized members and union reps and make union teams aware of racist situations in workplaces. To do this, the sector developed a self-identification questionnaire which rolled out during winter 2025. The sector also proposed several training courses to the Committee, including the one by Khaoula Zoghalmi, Assistant Professor in the Information and Communication Department at Université Laval, and a workshop on racist biases in March 2023.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring Committee (PIMC)

The sector assisted the PIMC in applying the Policy on the Fair Representation of Women in Positions of Power via an action plan. It provided training and involved the Committee members in developing tools for validating if the 75% target of women representatives was reached. It also assisted the Committee in carrying out the action plan. During this mandate, the sector and committee, with the Secretariat for meetings, developed a questionnaire to validate the union reps' support for the project on council schedules and the hybrid mode of participation at councils. The objective of this project was to improve union responsibilities, family and personal balance,

Women's Network

Over many years, the sector has developed expertise in organizing Women's Networks, which are places where women can come together, learn and debate. Developed in collaboration with the Status of Women Committee, these two-day networks discuss cutting-edge social issues with feminist speakers, while democratic bodies are concentrated around union decisions. They also help to develop feminist solidarity. During this mandate, the sector held three networks: "We are feminine, plural and equal!" (2021), "Women in action from yesterday to today, towards our struggles of tomorrow" (2023), and "Being a woman and an activist in the age of social networks: understanding them, using them and protecting yourself from them" (2024).

Network, allies or mixed lunches

The sector, still in collaboration with the Status of Women Committee takes advantage of every federal council to propose conferences and debates on social and feminist issues to the delegation. Very popular with union reps, the dinners address topics that highlight the biases, stereotypes and effects of patriarchal socialization on the rights of women, racialized people and people from diverse backgrounds, as well as political issues that have an impact on human rights. These meetings are intended as initiations in developing the critical thinking necessary in social movement unionism.

Politicization of members and political and social action

In collaboration with the Sociopolitical Sector, the sector also helped in developing election kits for the 2021 federal elections. It was also involved in organizing a debate with the health spokesperson candidates for the various parties in the 2022 provincial elections.

It also helped in developing the platform on the social determinants of health, which went online in 2024 on the FIQ website, and in designing and writing the factsheets on austerity, aimed at denouncing the increased impact of austerity policies on women.

Perinatalité

The sector was present for the consultation on the Plan d'action en périnatalité et en petite enfance (PAPPE) 2023-2028 to demand better workforce planning and better organization of work for healthcare professionals as well as improved training, particularly on domestic violence and obstetric violence.

Fight against violence

The sector collaborated in writing an opinion on Bill 42, *An Act to prevent and fight psychological harassment and sexual violence in the workplace*. In 2023, the Status of Women Sector collaborated with several sectors and services in updating the Violence Policy presented to the Federal Council. The preparation of the training on this subject is in progress in collaboration with the Education-Animation Service.

Pay equity

In collaboration with the Negotiation Sector, the Status of Women Sector wants to put the spotlight back on pay equity, by going beyond the audit exercise, so that this issue is seen as an ongoing struggle that illustrates the effects of political decisions on the healthcare professionals' living conditions.

Government relations

During this mandate, the sector met with the Deputy Minister responsible for the Status of Women Secretariat, the Minister for International Relations and La Francophonie and responsible for the Status of Women, the Minister of Labour, and the opposition MNAs. It also participated in the Forum des partenaires en égalité (Equality Partner Forum). The joint political officer for the Status of Women Sector sits on the board of directors of the Conseil du statut de la femme (Council on the Status of Women), which has a consultation role.

Civil society women's rights groups

The Status of Women Sector works with several community groups, organizations and coalitions that contribute to the sector's action plans and help develop feminist solidarity: the Fédération québécoise de planification des naissances (FQPN), Coordination du Québec pour la marche mondiale des femmes (CQMMF), Oxfam Québec, Médecins du monde, Femmes autochtones du Québec (FAQ) and the Coalition pour une conciliation famille-travail-études.

The sector actively participated in organizing the demonstration for the right to an abortion which took place in Quebec City in June 2024, in reaction to the demonstration by the pro-life groups behind the criminalization and banning of abortion in many American states.

The FIQ, being a member of Public Services International (PSI), the Status of Women Sector attends the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations (UNO).

Intersyndicale des femmes and Collectif 8 mars

The sector also attends the meetings of the Intersyndicale des femmes and actively participates in the annual day every spring, as an organizer and content producer. In 2024, the sector gave a conference called "Une posture syndicale féministe: l'exemple de la FIQ" (A feminist union stance: the example of the FIQ), which presented the historic commitment to zero tolerance in dealing with complaints of member violence.

The sector also participated in the demands to amend *An Act respecting labour standards* to integrate 10 days of leave for victims of domestic violence. An op-ed was published in the newspapers and a petition was symbolically deposited at a rally in front of the National Assembly on June 2, 2022.

Action and solidarity

The sector collaborated in the latest redesign of the FIQ Solidarity Policy, adopted at the Federal Council in May 2023. In this policy, new concepts were adopted by the delegation, intersectional and decolonial feminism, as well as a co-construction approach. This new approach now shapes the FIQ's solidarity actions.

The sector supported the Iranian nurses' fight by participating in a demonstration. In September 2024, an op-ed piece co-signed by Julie Bouchard, President, Françoise Ramel, Vice-President and Élahé Machouf, former FIQ union rep and feminist activist, was published in *Le Devoir*. The sector supported mobilization for access to care for pregnant women without medical coverage (RAMQ), orchestrated by Médecins du monde.

Outlook

The Status of Women Sector, in concert with the union reps, must act as a watchdog to identify and combat the current threats to the rights of women, racialized people and LGBTQ+ people. Whether in Europe, the Middle East or America, the threats now seem very real.

At the same time, collective bargaining rights, including the right to strike, are being called into question by the Québec government. A call to mobilize everyone is necessary, even within the ranks of the FIQ, whether with employees or union reps. The sector will therefore need to develop further collaboration and ensure that information is shared, in order to take concrete action. At a time when rights are being trampled underfoot elsewhere, it is the unions' responsibility to get involved and mobilize.

NEGOTIATION SECTOR REPORT

Thanks to the support of the Negotiation Sector, the FIQ can carry out its role of bargaining agent for its affiliated unions with the government. The Negotiation Sector coordinates all the activities linked to the bargaining process in order to reach the best possible settlement with the employer party. At the same time, it is also responsible for the work related to the list of job titles and the pay equity audit, while sitting on several internal and external committees.

From one negotiation to another

In 2021, the Federation concluded the provincial provisions of the 2021-2023 collective agreement. The effects of the global pandemic were still very much in evidence and influenced certain aspects of this settlement. Less than a year later, a new round of negotiations began.

The Negotiation Sector implemented the negotiation structure for the 2022-2024 round. In accordance with the priorities adopted at the 2021 Convention and the recommendations in the report on the previous round of negotiations, the proposed structure aimed to strengthen internal communication, add training to the bargaining process and give mobilization a prominent place in future negotiations.

The prep phase of the negotiations included consulting the members on the negotiation project. The Negotiation Sector led a consultation involving more than 43,500 members, in collaboration with local teams.

The active phase of the negotiations took place over nearly 2 years and happened at the same time as the prep work for a major reform in the health network, Bill 15 (Dubé reform), creating a virtually single employer in the network. This context put the theme of flexibility at the heart of the discussions.

Eight days of legal strike marked these negotiations. To accomplish this, the sector collaborated both in negotiating essential services with the essential services committee, which had an impact on the course of the strike and the strategies to be adopted, and in determining the strike schedule with the intersectoral strike committee.

At the same time, in line with the orientations of the FIQ 2021 Convention and the principles of the Labor Notes movement, mobilization and visibility actions marked the bargaining process. The sector sent weekly messages internally and gave progress reports in more than 24 Federal Councils.

Members were asked to vote during two major consultations (on building the negotiation project and the first employer offers) and in three referendum votes (on obtaining a strike mandate with 75% participation, on a first tentative agreement with 73% participation, and on the conciliator's recommendation with 75% participation). Each of these processes reached more than half of the FIQ members.

In April 2024, the sector noted the members' rejection of an initial tentative agreement. Then, a conciliator's intervention led to a recommendation of an agreement to the parties, which was accepted by the members in October 2024. It was a first for the FIQ, a conciliator using his power to recommend an agreement to the parties. The Negotiating Committee's work at the table influenced this issue. The Negotiation Sector consultants supported the committee throughout this process.

Lastly, in November and December 2024, the texts were written at lightening speed, and training on the new collective agreement was given until March 2025.

Major intersectoral collaborations

The Negotiation Sector consultants participated in various internal committees over the last few years. The sector sits on the Intersectoral Ratios Committee (IRC). A close link between this committee and the work at the bargaining table is necessary to continue the fight to obtain safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios. There are also links with the MOT-IL committee, and with occupational health and safety.

In collaboration with the Education-Animation Service, the sector developed a training program on the bargaining process, including aspects on rallying and mobilization, always with the aim of supporting the bargaining process.

The sector also made a valuable contribution to the Organization of Work and Professional Practice (OWPP) Sector to document the impact of de-professionalization on job evaluation.

The Negotiation Sector also contributed to the work on the Dubé reform (Bill 15), by analyzing the Bill, collaborating in writing the FIQ's brief and participating in the inter-union work on this subject. From time to time, the sector was also asked for an opinion on various budget projections and bills, in particular those on the Québec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP), the *Act to modernize the occupational health and safety regime* (LMRSST), the pension plan or nursing care (home care, seniors' care, etc.).

Standing and inter-round committees

For several collective agreements, inter-round committees¹ have been set up at the end of the bargaining process. The purpose of these committees is to continue the discussions started at the bargaining table, to prepare the way for the next round of negotiations or to resolve specific issues raised during negotiations.

To facilitate monitoring the inter-round work, the Negotiation Sector ensures overall monitoring of the various committees, because each letter of understanding is supported by the sector concerned (for example: the pension plan committee (RREGOP) is supported by the Social Security Sector). This coordination makes it possible to centralize and share information and to prepare for the next round of negotiations. In other words, the consultants ensure that all the elements negotiated are discussed by these committees and ensure a follow-up with the rest of the organization.

These include committees dealing with task and organization of work (Letters of Understanding Nos. 17, 20 and 23), parental rights (Letter of Understanding No. 25), occupational health and safety (Letters of Understanding Nos. 21 and 22), the financing of the RREGOP participants' fund (Letter of Understanding No. 26), the job titles (Article 37) and the provincial labour relations committee (Article 36).

¹ In the 2021-2023 inter-round committees, the Negotiation Sector sat on the provincial labour relations committee (Article 36) and on different inter-round committees: stability of teams (LU #3), pilot projects linked to work schedules (LU #9), revision of the mechanism for modifying the list of job titles (LU #20), updating the collective agreement (LU #18), ranking of SNPs (LU #17), forum on overall health (LU #21), labour shortage in remote regions (LU #22), parental rights (LU #25), RREGOP (LU #26), settlement of COVID grievances (Agreement - D), implementation of care hours (Appendix 1 of the tentative agreement) and the pay equity audit.

Comité national des emplois (Provincial Jobs Committee)

In the provincial jobs committee, the employer and union parties evaluated several jobs in the health sector, including a predominantly female job represented by the FIQ, the nurse clinician specialist in infection control and prevention (NCSIP). An arbitration on the valuation of this job is pending.

An inter-union victory was also won in Superior Court over the job evaluation of biomedical engineering technical coordinators. Moreover, the inter-union convinced the employer party not to abolish the graduate laboratory technician job title.

Implementation of the letters of understanding on the list of job titles

Following the signature of the 2021-2023 collective agreement, the Negotiation Sector started work on the various letters of understanding. Among these, there were two specifically on the job titles and the valuation of jobs: Letter of Understanding No. 17 regarding the ranking applicable to the specialized nurse practitioner job title, and Letter of Understanding No. 20 on the creation of a provincial inter-union committee to review the mechanism for modifying the list of job titles, job descriptions, salary rates and scales in the health and social services network. These two letters of understanding required many inter-union meetings and with the employer party. The Negotiation Sector also took part in the work on the agreement outside the 2024-2028 collective agreement on the clinical perfusionist assistant to the immediate superior job title. Several internal work meetings as well as a meeting with the employer party were held at the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025.

Work on the job titles mainly represented by the FIQ

Nurse first surgical assistant (NFSA): The sector led the government representations with the Ministry of Health on the education needed to practice as a nurse first surgical assistant (NFSA). It also organized support for certain members having difficulties with their respective employers and the OIIQ in having their education recognized.

Mobilization of specialized nurse practitioners (SNP): Listening and information meetings were organized with SNP members, including a first one with the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean SNPs and a second one with those in the Capitale-Nationale. The purpose of these meetings was to stimulate union involvement among members with this job title.

De-professionalization: The Negotiation Sector was consulted by the OWPP Sector on the de-professionalization of jobs file in the health field, notably on the dangers that this could cause for the valuation of jobs.

Motion under Bill 30: In collaboration with the Legal Team and the inter-union, steps were taken to amend the appendices set out in *An Act respecting bargaining units in the social affairs sector*, so they comply with the current job titles in the health and social services network.

2010 pay equity audit and the action before the Administrative Labour Tribunal (TAT) on sub-factor 10 and the academic path of SNPs

From 2022 to 2024, the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) issued three advance notices of decision concerning pay equity complaints in the parapublic sector, to which the FIQ belongs. The Negotiation Sector submitted observations concerning the various notices affecting the jobs represented by the FIQ. After the labour organizations issued these observations, the CNESST rendered three decisions, the first of which specifically concerned the job valuation tool used in the FIQ program. The Federation decided to contest this decision before the TAT. The inter-union also contested this decision. This file is commonly referred to as "the sub-factor 10 file for SNPs".

On July 11, 2022, the FIQ brought an action before the TAT to obtain recognition of the specific educational path of SNPs, which could not be taken into account in the current version of the job valuation tool used in the parapublic sector program. A positive decision was rendered on November 4, 2024, but it was contested by the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor.

2015 pay equity audit

Although the FIQ settled all the pay equity complaints from the 2015 audit several years ago, it inherited five complaints from other labour organizations during the voting period following the Barrette reform. After analysis and verification, the FIQ decided to close the remaining complaints in December 2023 and February 2024. To date, the FIQ and the inter-union are still waiting for an advance notice of decision and a CNESST decision on the 2015 complaints that remain for the parapublic sector program.

2020 pay equity audit

The 2020 pay equity audit is a complex file, which has kept the Negotiation Sector busy during the current mandate. Despite the Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor (SCT) (Secretariat of the Treasury Board) being behind in its work and its various moves to save time, the FIQ has managed to come out on top, in particular by thwarting the government's plans to set up a joint committee, the composition of which would not even have met the criteria set out in the *Pay Equity Act*. The FIQ also drafted comments as part of the participation process. After a three-year delay, in December 2023, the SCT finally submitted its 2020 audit posting. In response to the conclusions presented, the FIQ submitted 59 complaints, to contest the incorrect results of this posting. As set out in the Act, a conciliation process followed, and despite several sessions with a CNESST mediator, it seems that the employer and union parties are unable to reach an agreement, and that the inquiry process will begin in 2025.

Ad hoc pay equity audit committee

At the Provincial Council in December 2019, the following recommendation was adopted: *“To appoint a pay equity committee composed of five representatives from the following job titles: nurses, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists, clinical perfusionists and specialty nurse practitioners with a mandate to participate in the various work regarding pay equity.”* In March 2020, a representative of the nurse clinicians was added.

Since this recommendation was adopted, 11 meetings have been held, mainly to deal with the 2020 pay equity audit. Training on concepts related to pay equity was offered to committee members, and several work meetings, notably in collaboration with the OWPP Sector and Communication Service consultants, focused on identifying events that may have led to changes in the practice of healthcare professionals during the period covered by this audit.

To keep the delegation and members informed about the work linked to the pay equity file, two presentations were made at councils, in March 2022 and in June 2024. At the end of spring 2022, a Web page was created, accompanied by an advertising campaign on social media. A video and quizzes were also presented at different councils to increase the delegation’s knowledge on the subject.

Preparing for the 2025 pay equity audit

In November 2024, the union and employer parties were in contact to discuss the pay equity audit for 2025. The Negotiation and OWPP Sectors consultants are actively working on this file.

The contestation of the *Pay Equity Act* following the 2019 amendment

In 2019, the government amended the *Pay Equity Act*. This amendment caused changes, notably in the way in which salary adjustments are paid (from a salary adjustment to a lump sum) to employees when pay equity audit exercises are done. In accordance with the lines from the last Convention, the FIQ, as a feminist labour organization, contested these changes. The file is currently at Superior Court, in collaboration with all the inter-union labour organizations.

Outlook

The president of the Treasury Board and minister responsible for Government Administration, Sonia LeBel, announced a reform of the public sector negotiation system. This perspective of a legislative amendment encourages the sector to prepare well for the next round of negotiations and protect the Federation’s bargaining power during this process that could take place within a new legal framework. The coordination of the work linked to deploying the collective agreement, with the new employer, Santé Québec, continues. The monitoring, analysis and style of labour relations adopted by Santé Québec will be decisive for the next round of negotiations.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE SECTOR REPORT

The Organization of Work and Professional Practice (OWPP) Sector's main areas of activity are strategic analysis and advising the Federation's Executive Committee. It also has a role in influencing external players, in particular professional orders, and the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS). In addition, the OWPP Sector has adopted an intervention line in research and development in organization of work and professional practice as well as supporting the labour relations (RLT) consultants in local interventions in OWPP.

On the strength of the orientations adopted at the last Convention, the OWPP Sector structured its main actions from 2021 to 2025 with the objective of ensuring that FIQ members, union reps and employees are progressive women, women of action and who fight against systemic racism.

Progressive women

At the 2021 Convention, the FIQ decided that the fight to have a law on safe ratios passed would be the cornerstone of the efforts to politicize its members. The sector played an active role in the work following this recommendation. First, the sector participated in the Intersectoral Ratios Committee (IRC), in the development and implementation of its action plan. More specifically, the sector participated in the research on ratios, including preparing the content of the three webinars. The sector also participated in updating and giving the "Advocacy ratios" training session. Moreover, the sector rallied Québec stakeholders to its mandate and contacted labour organizations waging the same battle elsewhere in the world. Lastly, the sector monitored the latest news on safe ratios.

Alongside the IRC's actions and work, the sector promoted ratios at various events such as conventions, symposiums and meetings with members and union reps. What's more, the OWPP Sector developed models of minimum numerical ratios specific to various centres of activities. To obtain these ratios, the sector based itself on a consultation of experienced members, existing ratios elsewhere in the world, on the experience of the pilot projects from the 2016-2020 collective agreement and on the available evidence. These numerical ratios will eventually be promoted by the FIQ.

Being progressive women also implies the need to be able to exert influence and integrate political analysis into the Federation's various files. With this in mind, the OWPP sector held a second OWPP Network in January 2023, with the theme "OWPP, a leverage for union action within our reach: an opportunity for collective actions and member mobilization". The OWPP affiliated union officers were able to learn, network and debate at this event. As the title of this network indicates, its aim was to arouse the interest of union reps in organization of work and its recognition as a mobilizing issue in the health network. Participants were also made aware of the pertinence of denouncing events which limit professional practice. In addition, they were informed about the reality of advanced nursing practice. Lastly, at this network, the sector focused on the importance of mobilization as part of interventions at a Committee on Care. It should be pointed out that, had it not been for the negotiations these past few years, a third network would have taken place before the end of this strategic planning period. However, it is scheduled for fall 2025.

The OWPP Sector also helped to politicize the union reps by participating in the writing of various briefs and opinions on draft bills or regulations. The latter were on front-line services provided by doctors, medical assistance in dying, the framework for independent labour, the reform of network governance to make the health and social services system more effective, and the broadening of professional practices. The sector also actively participated in other types of consultations over the last few years, such as: Estates General of the Nursing Profession, the inquiry into the OIIQ examination by the Professions Admission Commissioner, the consultations on the Report on the implementation of An *Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings related to public bodies*, the pre-budget consultations, the ministerial consultation on the future home support policy, etc. Lastly, the sector prepared speeches for political officers for panels and symposiums. On all these occasions, the OWPP sector has called for adequate working and practice conditions for healthcare professionals. In filing an opinion with the Admission to the Professions Commissioner, the sector also called for practice conditions and work-study balance conducive to passing the nursing entrance examination.

The sector also denounced the “de-professionalization” observed over the last few years in the health and social services network (RSSS). “De-professionalization” is manifested in the tendency of government and managers to transfer certain professional activities to non-professional staff, whether they are an employee in the RSSS or not. These people are not adequately trained for providing safe care and services to the population or for facilitating the healthcare professionals’ work. The current reform of the professional system (of which Bill 67 is a part) is part of this trend in several respects. The sector tabled a brief to bring this problem to the attention of the commission members examining this bill.

In connection with the Dubé reform, the Sector mainly denounced the limited place of care in the Santé Québec structure, the scant attention paid to workforce planning, the exclusion of licensed practical nurses from certain aspects of the reform, the risks of staff mobility, the shortcomings in risk management, the valuing of the ‘patient experience’ to the detriment of the clinical judgment of FIQ members, as well as the breakdown of Class 1 and the creation of new job classes. At a time when the reform imposed a reorganization of union certifications, the OWPP sector documented and analyzed the professional practice of Class 6. The sector then shared its analysis internally, contributing to the reflection on the future of the Federation.

And finally, the OWPP Sector collaborated with the team responsible for provincial negotiations in demanding decent working conditions for FIQ members. The sector’s work in research and analysis was on ratios and safe staffing, advanced nursing practice and strengthening the committee on care procedure. The sector’s legislative and regulatory monitoring of OWPP issues has also made it possible to support the 2020 and 2025 pay equity audits, as well as efforts to resolve past complaints about fair pay for predominantly female jobs.

Women of action

Intervening in OWPP is basically a collective action aimed at establishing union bargaining power. To do this, the OWPP Sector assists and supports the RLT consultants involved in local OWPP interventions. This assistance can take several forms. It may be answering questions on professional practice, giving advice on the committee on care approach or providing information for intervening with the media. The sector focused on member involvement and on mobilizing various allies in its strategies and advice. They are extremely important assets for introducing local union solutions into members’ daily lives.

Always with a view to collective action in organization of work, the OWPP Sector analyzed various local projects (e.g.: contingency plans, pilot projects, etc.) or at the provincial level (e.g.: assessments carried out by CHSLD nurses remotely via teleconsultation, valuing clinical activities in home care (SAD), government initiative to broaden professional practices, Plan Santé, seniors and alternative homes, report from the working group on nurse staffing). The goal was to equip the RLT consultants and union reps, provide them with information and talking points to denounce poor management practices and demand better working and practice conditions. For example, the OWPP Sector designed and disseminated various tools within the Federation, including workload indices and an update of the Safe Staffing Form. Members can use this form to alert local union teams to situations compromising safe, quality professional practice. This facilitates mobilizing members on their practice. The OWPP Sector also published an information sheet for the RLT consultants and members on teleconsultation by nurses in a CHSLD. The sector also wrote a pamphlet on the orientation and training by licensed practical nurses for their peers, an explanatory leaflet for union reps and a letter to be sent to local directors of nursing (DON) to support collective union actions. The sector also designed a checklist for members for nursing externs' practice. In a different vein, the OWPP Sector carried out an analysis to better understand labour data and to deconstruct the notion of shortage used by employers to justify their inaction in the face of the labour crisis affecting the network.

What's more, collective actions can be fuelled by convincing results. This is why the sector analyzed and collaborated on various research projects in support of union action. The sector also circulated the results to the different levels of the FIQ. Over the last few years, the sector has, among other things, collaborated on studies into staff retention and the confidence of professionals in the RSSS.

Finally, the sector takes local union concerns about OWPP to the provincial level with various stakeholders. Professional orders, with which the sector holds statutory meetings, political decision-makers, and clinical and human resources representatives from the MSSS are among the stakeholders involved, depending on needs and situations. For example, the place of care in the reform that led to the creation of Santé Québec, respecting specialized nurse practitioners' (SNP) working and practice conditions in deploying SNP clinics and in implementing patient registrations, the debate on the initial training of healthcare professionals, as well as the reform of the professional system are some of the many subjects discussed over the last few years. When candidates to the practice of the nursing profession (CPNP) failed the entrance exam in record numbers in September 2022, the sector also questioned the MSSS and OIIQ to make them aware of the importance of practice conditions and study-work balance to promote passing the entrance exam for the nursing profession. In addition, the preparations already initiated by the OWPP Sector for the various inter-round committees in which it participates will allow for rapid implementation of the new collective agreement.

Women fighting against systemic racism

The OWPP Sector tried to integrate the fight against the various manifestations of racism into its thinking in its files. In more concrete terms, it collaborated with the Status of Women Sector on the analysis of the issues and the process surrounding the recognition of diplomas, prior learning and skills of future FIQ members trained abroad, including the plan for welcoming and integrating these professionals. An analysis has been undertaken and data has been collected to properly identify the places and actions in which the Federation could eventually become involved. Furthermore, the sector is currently exploring the links between the fight against systemic racism and safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios.

Outlook

Lastly, the next few years will be full of challenges for the Federation and the OWPP Sector will be no exception. It's no surprise, that the arrival of Santé Québec will not only lead to changes in the way we intervene in OWPP at the local level but will also most certainly be linked to transformations in our organization, to which the sector will actively contribute, notably by the involvement of some of its members on the working committee on the offer of service.

As part of deploying the new collective agreement, the sector's active participation will be ensured on various provincial joint committees that involve OWPP more specifically (Task and organization of Work Committee, including the work planned for the specialized nurse practitioners, the committee on the orientation and training issues for licensed practical nurses and licensed practical nurse team leaders, committee on the safe, quality delivery of care for the care team). The latest developments in the RSSS will also lead the sector to reflect more deeply on digital transformations in healthcare, to broaden its service offering and to find new ways of informing RLT consultants and exchanging with them on current events and issues in OWPP. Lastly, support of the demand for safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios will continue to mobilize the sector, which will put all its energy into making this society project a reality for the people of Québec.

LABOUR RELATIONS SECTOR REPORT

The Labour Relations Sector (RLT) is the largest of the Federation. It includes, two vice-presidents, 85 consultants, 19 secretaries, five coordinators and one administrative assistant all hard at work every day to support the local teams, reinforce the FIQ's bargaining power and ensure the defence of the rights of the more than 80,000 members. This large team is committed every day to providing services in line with the FIQ's strategic orientations and the needs of the members and affiliated unions.

Since 2021, in addition to the regular activities set out in the basic plan for this sector, a number of special projects were completed.

Supporting the provincial negotiations

After contributing to implementing the provincial provisions of the 2021-2023 collective agreement (Letters of Understanding No. 3, No. 9, No. 22, etc.), all resources allocated to RLT were actively involved in the efforts to support the provincial negotiations that followed. As of 2022, and until the new provincial provisions of the 2024-2028 collective agreement were adopted, numerous general assemblies were organized during each phase of the bargaining process.

Employees in the sector also supported the union teams' work by ensuring essential services were determined, by developing and providing the training on exercising the strike as well as by preparing the strike schedules. In addition, they provided ongoing support for local, regional and provincial visibility and mobilization actions throughout the negotiations. The labour relations consultants also played a key role in the organizing and running of picket lines during the eight days of strike action. The entire RLT team is now supporting the affiliated unions in rolling out the provincial provisions of the collective agreement, in order to maximize the gains.

Dubé reform

Consultants, coordinators and a political officer, all from the RLT Sector, participated in the work on various working committees and groups set up following the imposition of the Dubé reform. This work, begun in 2023, is still ongoing. The main impact for the Labour Relations Sector remains the creation of a single employer. This unprecedented situation has required adjustments in our practices to reinforce our bargaining power and guarantee consistency in our actions. Among the measures put in place are:

- The creation of a group of RLT consultants, composed of one consultant per institution affected by the single employer;
- The organization of short, frequent TEAMS meetings addressing specific issues related to the creation of the single employer, involving all the province's RLT consultants, to define coherent guidelines to propose to the union teams;
- The strengthening of organizational links between the RLT Legal Team, Research Team, RLT and Negotiation to ensure consistency in our actions.

RLT provincial vision

The Provincial Vision Team created in 2020 is composed of two RLT consultants, one coordinator and is under the responsibility of the two RLT political officers. Its main mandate is to define, prioritize, analyze and identify problems in order to propose solutions to sector-specific issues that are provincial in scope or have a major impact on its functioning. This mandate includes the following objectives:

- To ensure consistency and cohesion between the teams of labour relations consultants;
- To develop a provincial vision of complex labour relations issues, in line with the mandate;
- To strengthen the Labour Relations Sector's bargaining power with employers.

Over the years, this team's role has become clearer, more intense and strengthened in particular as part of the creation of Santé Québec, given the need to ensure consistency both internally and between the affiliated unions. Note that the consultants on the RLT Provincial Vision Team represent the FIQ at the provincial CRT. There have been 18 official meetings of this forum for exchange and negotiations with the CPNSSS since the last Convention, not including occasional telephone meetings.

RLT support committee

This working committee is composed of the two RLT political officers, coordinators and union consultants from the Legal and Research Teams and the Labour Relations Sector. Its main mandate is to:

- Determine the FIQ positions in labour relations on the issues with a major collective or political impact, particularly on the application of the collective agreement in effect or following the amendment of a law affecting its application;
- Identify the grievances with a provincial scope in accordance with clause 11.19 of the provincial provisions of the collective agreement and ensure the handling and follow-up of these grievances.

This committee was formed at the same time as the Provincial Vision Team was implemented. More necessary than ever, it plays a central role in harmonizing guidelines between the RLT, Legal and Research Teams.

MOT/IL Committee

In winter 2022, the Regroupement des FIQ decided to set up an intersectoral committee on IL and MOT to draw up the history of the organization's struggles and reflect on the political and legal strategies to adopt to make significant gains. This committee is composed of consultants from the RLT and Sociopolitical Sectors and the Research Team and is under the responsibility of one of the RLT vice-presidents. Moreover, the delegation also set up an ad hoc committee on MOT, composed of union reps who will enrich the work by bringing their knowledge.

The MOT/IL Committee has fulfilled several mandates since its creation:

- Completing the residual actions in the 2021 action plan to counter MOT, including conducting a provincial survey;

- Supporting the provincial negotiations;
- Designing and providing tools for union reps;
- Leading an internal day of reflection with RLT on the notion of seniority and IL.
- Coordinating the conditions of the global settlement of the MOT grievances and distributing the 7 million dollars;
- Contributing to the reflections and work during about a dozen meetings of the ad hoc committee on MOT, non-replacement and substitution of job titles.

Sustained collaboration in fulfilling all the FIQ sectors and services mandates

Because of their daily work with affiliated unions and Federation members, the labour relations consultants' perspective on the many internal mandates carried out by the sectors and services is invaluable. Whether as part of the development of various consultation activities, new training courses or overhauling existing courses, the work of the Intersectoral Ratios Committee and many others, over the last few years, a number of resources in the RLT Sector have provided insight into the issues experienced in the field in carrying out these various mandates.

RLT vice-presidents meetings

After meetings were held in June 2024 and November 2024 on specific issues, the delegation at the December 2024 council decided to formalize this exchange forum between the affiliated unions' RLT vice-presidents with a meeting scheduled every month until June 2025.

Conclusion

The RLT Sector, essential to the Federation, is a dedicated team of vice-presidents, consultants, coordinators and secretaries who actively support more than 80,000 members. Since 2021, this sector has supported key files such as the provincial negotiations and the Dubé reform, helping to develop tools for the union reps and organizing picket lines.

It has also played a major role in representing the FIQ at the provincial labour relations committee and in defining union positions on collective issues. Through committees such as the Provincial Vision Committee and the MOT/IL Committee, the sector has strengthened the consistency in actions and bargaining power with employers. A new initiative of monthly meetings of RLT vice-presidents, started in 2024, has consolidated the exchanges and will better respond to future challenges.

LEGAL TEAM REPORT

Presentation of the team

The Legal Team is composed of twelve union consultants at the head office in Montréal and five union consultants in the office in Quebec City, supported by three paralegals and six legal secretaries. As such the Legal Team provides its services to the entire province.

The union consultants on the Legal Team are responsible for representing members and affiliated unions in disputed situations between them and the Employer, from the outset of the dispute. Through their advisory role, they help to resolve a significant number of potential disputes at an early stage. When an amicable settlement is impossible, they intervene in numerous grievance arbitration cases, as well as before the disciplinary committees of professional orders, the Administrative Labour Tribunal (TAT), the Superior Court and the Quebec Court of Appeal, as required. In addition to its role of representation, the team is called upon to share its expertise and advise different sectors of the Federation. Growing demand for their advisory role has led to the appointment of dedicated lawyers for certain sectors, as well as close collaboration on special mandates and provincial committees. The attorneys also take part, on an ad hoc basis, in presentations to various decision-making bodies.

The Legal Team also participates in the Federation inquiry committees on violence by writing recommendations for the FIQ Executive Committee regarding the application of A Policy to Fight Violence, updated and re-adopted in April 2024.

Given the growth in the number of arbitration and other cases, coupled with their complexity, nature and particularities, it has been essential to focus on developing and maintaining the expertise of the attorneys within our organization.

The subtlety of some of the issues at stake and our in-depth knowledge of our organizational values have necessitated a gradual review of the way in which all the cases handled by the Legal Team operate and are executed.

On the strength of a consensus within the team, a tremendous amount of work has been undertaken and carried out by the lawyers over the last five years to achieve the above-mentioned objective. Whether by honing their expertise through training, repeatedly carrying out specific mandates, or by multiplying collaborations with different sectors and services, this developed expertise has made it possible to significantly reduce the number of cases sent to attorneys from outside our organization.

More specifically, this approach and mobilization of the Legal Team has reduced by more than half the professional fees paid to external attorneys, generating a substantial savings estimated at more than one hundred thousand dollars. These savings have enabled us to hire internal resources, in perfect correlation with the objective of maintaining and developing the expertise of the attorneys within our organization.

Although there will be a backlash following the introduction of Santé Québec, which will clearly have an impact on the handling of arbitrations and other legal issues, the transformation and expertise developed over the last five years will ensure that the Legal Team is efficient enough to meet the new challenges facing the Federation.

Collaboration with the Federation's sectors and services and special mandates

As part of their collaboration with the Union Organizing Service, the Legal Team attorneys looked at a number of issues, including the dissolution of the FIQ | Secteur privé and Regroupement des FIQ, the overhaul of the FIQ Constitution and Bylaws, various certification problems and internal issues for the unions. They have also drafted formal notices and produced legal opinions on a variety of subjects.

With the Sociopolitical Sector, the attorneys mainly worked on analyzing eight different draft bills and regulations, including the Dubé reform and creation of Santé Québec. They also helped in developing strategies, writing opinions, letters and briefs for parliamentary committees and took part in inter-union meetings.

Some special mandates also required input from the Legal Team. Hence, in collaboration with the Organization of Work and Professional Practice Sector, the attorneys were called upon on an ad hoc basis for the specialized nurse practitioners (SNP), to support the sector's demands with the Direction nationale des soins et services infirmiers (DNSSI) (Provincial Nursing Directorate) of the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

Attorneys also analyzed a bill and various briefs, which led to tabling an opinion with the Commission des finances publiques (Public Finance Committee) on certain legislative provisions related to protecting whistleblowers.

Legal Team attorneys also represented the Federation, as an interested party, in the coroner's inquest into the death of Joyce Echaquan.

In the context of the provincial negotiations and exercising the right to strike in 2023, the Legal Team was asked to assist in drawing up the list of essential services. It also ensured the affiliated unions' representation before the TAT on strike-related incidents.

Attorneys were also needed to support the Negotiations Sector throughout the negotiations, until the texts of the collective agreement were finalized. For example, they actively took part in the work on the mandatory overtime (MOT) agreement, including submitting a complaint to the International Labour Office as well as the representation at the joint mediation committee handling the grievances linked to COVID-19.

Representation and major decisions

Over the last four years, the Legal Team represented the FIQ affiliated unions in 76 complaints submitted under Section 47.2 of the *Labour Code*, marking a clear increase on the previous period. It won the majority of these cases.

The Legal Team union consultants have also assisted members in 267 disciplinary or complaint cases.

The Federation has distinguished itself with a number of winning decisions in recent years. Attorneys on the Legal Team have pleaded and won the following important decisions:

In 2021, an arbitrator concluded that an employee on union leave must be paid as if she was at work. This decision established that hours of union leave must be taken into account for the accumulation of experience for the purposes of advancement in the salary scales, with remuneration including not only salary but also echelon progression. This is a major step forward for the union movement and recognition of union commitment.

In 2022, the TAT ruled that the Québec government had obstructed union activities and breached its obligation to bargain in good faith by unilaterally imposing premiums and new working conditions on employees in the health network. The government had passed a ministerial decree without consulting the accredited associations. The TAT also recognized that the disparaging remarks of the Minister of Health reinforced this obstruction. This file was initiated by the Federation attorneys, before many other labour organizations joined in.

In 2023, the TAT, in another obstruction case, concluded that the Comité patronal de négociation du secteur de la santé et des services sociaux (CPNSSS), the employers that it represents, as well as the Ministry of Health and Social Services and its minister, obstructed union activities by unilaterally modifying the working conditions of employees in the health and social services network (RSSS) during the COVID-19 pandemic. While they should have come to the bargaining table with good intentions and engaged in genuine dialogue, they instead announced, at a side meeting, a unilateral change in working conditions. As a result of this intentional infringement of freedom of association, they were ordered to pay \$315,000 in punitive damages to the plaintiff union associations.

In an arbitral award rendered in 2023, the arbitrator concluded that salary insurance, intended to protect employees on sick leave, must be calculated by including the overtime worked over the last twelve weeks of work. This award guarantees that the benefits more accurately reflect employees' income before they went off sick leave. This victory by the Federation benefits all employees facing periods of disability.

As part of the appeal contesting the constitutionality of ministerial decree 2020-007, initiated by the Federation in the middle of the pandemic and joined by several other labour organizations, the attorneys represented the Federation in Superior Court on a motion to dismiss filed by the Attorney General of Québec (PGQ). The judge ruled that the union appeal was not exclusively a matter for grievance arbitration and that the remedies sought were neither theoretical nor abusive. The motion by the PGQ for dismissal was therefore refused, and the case is still proceeding.

More recently, in 2024, the TAT determined that the employer suspending the accumulation of seniority for employees who took part in a strike constituted a reprisal. By acting in this way, the employer sent a clear message aimed at discouraging union members from exercising their right to strike. Such behaviour could only undermine the balance of power at a pivotal time, when the parties were in the middle of negotiations for the renewal of the collective agreement. This decision, which supports the right to strike, is of great importance in keeping FIQ members mobilized.

The same year, the TAT concluded that a centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) could not have been unaware that the restrictions it had imposed on exercising the right to strike, by reducing its duration or prohibiting it altogether, constituted obstruction within the meaning of the *Labour Code*. An infringement of the right to strike, which is a fundamental right, cannot be considered minor. The CISSS was ordered to pay \$5,000 in non-pecuniary damages and \$10,000 in punitive damages for obstructing the union's activities. This victory is an important symbol for the labour movement as a whole.

RESEARCH TEAM REPORT

Role and involvement

The FIQ Research Team's role is primarily to support the union consultants in studying and analyzing often complex labour relations issues faced by the affiliated unions.

The team ensures that its recommendations always respect the legal, strategic, political and historical perspectives of the FIQ and the defence of the collective rights of the employees it represents.

Over the years, the team has developed an expertise and carries out its work with attention to detail. It is a small team composed of four union consultants. They are currently all attorneys and collectively have 80 years of experience.

Supporting and informing

The Research Team union consultants are consulted daily by their fellow consultants on questions of interpretation relating to the local and provincial provisions of the collective agreement, labour laws, charters of rights and legislation on the governance of personal information.

The consultants answer questions about the members' working conditions. They make recommendations to support the most appropriate interpretation for achieving the Federation's objectives in the short, medium and long term. They also take part in meetings of various strategic committees, including the RLT Support Committee.

The Research Team also prepares and updates interpretation tools for the consultants. Among these tools are the Guide on the provincial provisions, which consists of several dozen sections totalling more than 3,000 pages. This guide is updated twice a year, which is reflected in the addition of around a hundred arbitral awards each year.

The Guide on the provincial provisions also undergoes a complete revision when a collective agreement expires. Since the 2021 Convention, this complex exercise has been carried out twice.

Supporting the sectors and services

The Research Team also collaborated on several important files, including:

- Developing training and interpretation tools linked to Bill 25;
- Updating the guide on local matters including a history of the union and employer demands, examples of current articles, FIQ positions on the interpretation of these articles and case law related to the 26 local matters. This guide served as a reference document for the consultants appointed to the local negotiations in 2018 and continues to serve them as an interpretation tool for the local provisions;

- Updating the guide on the Charter and obligation to accommodate (2021);
- Collaborating in the update of the “Logbook, 11th edition” (Social Security);
- Collaborating on developing an interpretation tool on the effects of the strike on working conditions;
- Updating the training on the interpretation tools for new FIQ consultants and the updating of these tools;
- Updating the COVID-19 Guide which includes reference documents produced by the COVID Committee, the government decrees and CPNSSS press releases;
- Analyzing Bill 51 on the improvements to *An Act respecting parental insurance*;
- Collaborating in the work of various committees under the collective agreement (parental rights committee in LU No. 25; committee on settling the COVID-19 grievances, etc.).

Support during the provincial negotiations

The team also collaborated with other sectors and services, including the Negotiation Sector:

- By developing the training tools needed to adopt the provincial provisions of the 2021-2023 and 2024-2028 collective agreements, the Research Team members developed a union interpretation of the new collective agreement texts and proposed orientations to adopt in relation to these;
- By providing a list of improvements to make to existing provisions in the collective agreement, in anticipation of the 2020 and 2023 negotiations;
- By analyzing the scope of the demands and proposals during the 2020 and 2023 negotiations.

Support during the pandemic

During the declaration of a health emergency, the Research Team supported the COVID Committee set up during the pandemic. This committee carried out work, such as:

- Analyzing the different problems linked to the pandemic;
- Interpreting the many decrees passed by the government;
- Producing reference documents linked to the application of the decrees and the local and provincial collective agreements in the context of the pandemic;
- Holding training meetings for the consultants on the application of the decrees;
- Holding meetings with the local presidents on the application of certain decrees;
- Writing interpretation sheets in line with the problems submitted by the consultants;
- Supporting the Provincial RLT COVID Committee in its meetings with the CPNSSS.

Supporting the application of the collective agreement

Lastly, two members of the team are part of the RLT Support Committee. This committee analyzes and recommends positions for interpreting the collective agreement and ensures uniform application in line with the FIQ's orientations and values.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM REPORT

As in the past, in occupational health and safety (OHS), the team ensured the protection of the Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec–FIQ members’ right to compensation by adopting positions and orientations on key OHS issues.

It also ensured support for members and local teams by defending their rights, notably:

- as part of the many disputes linked to compensation, by involving local officers in order to develop a common strategic vision;
- when there were problems with a preventive withdrawal of pregnant workers;
- when there were several contestations related to prevention, after the Commission des normes, de l’équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) issued inspection reports.

The Administrative Labour Tribunal (TAT) changed the way it operates in 2023 by including a conciliation stage in the process. Unfortunately, this new feature appears to make the process more cumbersome, as some employers prefer to wait until this stage before entering into discussions, rather than settling disputes beforehand. This situation further complicates the OHS team’s work.

To limit the costs caused by using medical experts in the disputed cases, the team continued its efforts to diversify its network. This approach has enabled us to maintain a high level of competence among the experts we call on, while optimizing the cost of expert opinions.

Collaboration in writing a brief

The OHS team worked in collaboration with the OHS and Status of Women Sectors in drafting a FIQ brief. This document presented the FIQ’s comments and recommendations during the legislative process leading up to the passing of *An Act to prevent and fight psychological harassment and sexual violence in the workplace*.

Training local teams on their members’ occupational health and safety rights

The OHS team has pursued its commitment to equipping and training local OHS officers on a daily basis, so that they can be proactive in defending their members’ occupational health and safety rights.

In collaboration with the Education-Animation Service (EAS), it also helped to overhaul the FIQ training called Occupational Health and Safety, Compensation. Then, some members of the team participated in giving this new training to local officers.

Also in partnership with the EAS team, the OHS team also took part in designing and giving a virtual workshop on *A safe maternity experience* (RPTE-RPTA) program.

The team also worked on overhauling the anti-violence policy to adapt it to new realities. The objective is to better protect the members by reinforcing the prevention of sexism, racism, discrimination and violence based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

Continued work on pandemic-related files

Work on the prevention and representation of healthcare professionals in the context of the pandemic has continued in recent years.

At the height of the crisis and faced with protective measures deemed inadequate, the number of inspection requests at the CNESST sky-rocketed. The resulting inspection reports were subject to many contestations before the courts, procedures that are still continuing today.

As such, the OHS team was called upon to make representations in several files, including:

- An inspection file on obtaining adequate protective equipment to ensure the safety of healthcare professionals, including access to N95 masks and to dedicated zones. On March 23, 2021, the TAT rendered a favourable decision on this appeal, which ruled that the precautionary principle is implicitly enshrined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and that employers had neglected this principle by not recognizing the risk of aerosol transmission. An application for judicial review was filed, and the Superior Court partially upheld the decision. The file was then appealed by both the union and employer parties. The Court of Appeals has granted the application for leave to appeal and is expected to hear the parties in the coming months.
- Inspection files on psychosocial risks and fatigue at work that occurred during the health emergency were also opened. Hearings at the TAT began in 2024, and several days of hearings are scheduled in 2025.
- An inspection file on the protection of the health and safety of members from risks related to violence, including racism. Hearings at the TAT started in 2024 and should continue in 2025.
- The collective defence of the rights of FIQ members also continued in the context of some one hundred complaints under section 32 of *An Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases* (AIAOD), on the right to the COVID-19 premiums during a preventive withdrawal of a pregnant or breastfeeding worker or related to an employment injury. Other labour organizations have joined the FIQ's actions. On October 30, 2024, the TAT issued favourable decisions on sample cases. However, these decisions were contested by the employer party in Superior Court, which will hear the judicial review in the near future.
- There was a representation at the TAT on the refusal of the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) to compensate a FIQ member who died as a result of COVID-19, which she contracted at work, as well as the refusal to recognize the diagnosis of long COVID for certain members of the Federation.

Finally, the OHS Team participated in the inquiry conducted by the coroner, Géhane Kamel, on the circumstances surrounding the death of certain patients in residential and long-term care centres (CHSLD) during the pandemic and presented a brief, in collaboration with the OWPP Sector.

In her report, the coroner endorsed the FIQ's two main recommendations of:

- Introducing the precautionary principle at the centre of all evaluation procedures and risk management in occupational health and safety;
- Implementing safe healthcare professional-to-resident ratios in CHSLDs.

Participation in the strike

The members of the OHS team supported the mobilization linked to the negotiation of the collective agreement and actively participated in the strike days in fall 2023.

Conclusion

The OHS Team played a key role over the past four years and continues to actively defend the rights and safety of FIQ members. Through concrete action and constant mobilization, it is committed to protecting the health and safety of healthcare professionals, particularly in the face of the challenges posed by the pandemic and its consequences. Representations at the TAT and participation in the work of coroner Kamel highlighted the critical issues, including recognizing the rights linked to COVID-19 and workplace violence. Moreover, the team helped with the training of the local teams and in developing briefs to positively influence public policies. Lastly, it took an active part in union mobilization and the strike days, underlining its commitment to defending members' rights during the ongoing negotiations.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTOR REPORT

On the strength of its mandate in prevention, the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Sector has been actively pursuing this objective since the last Convention. Through its many actions at different levels, it has helped to promote the Federation's OHS demands, with a particular emphasis on prevention.

The FIQ was in action. It demanded changes in prevention and fought to have a genuine culture of prevention established. The first part of the mandate, still marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, only strengthened and made this need more visible in the health and social services network (RSSS). For this reason, the second part of the mandate was dedicated to the legislative developments in OHS, including the deployment of the interim regime of *An Act to modernize the occupational health and safety system* (LMRSST).

Raising members' awareness of the different issues related to OHS

In collaboration with the OHS Committee, the sector directly contributed to raising awareness among FIQ members about various issues related to their health and safety, through the themes chosen for annual OHS Weeks, inspired by those of the Convention.

The importance of mobilization and collective action in OHS was in the forefront in 2021 and 2022, in a context marked by the implementation of the LMRSST. These elements were directly linked to union action, designed to establish a real collective balance of power and to give members back control of their union action, in line with the women of action line. In 2023, the theme of the need to set limits provided an opportunity to address psychosocial risks (PSR) in the negotiations. Lastly, in 2024, the Dubé reform and its impacts on PSR grabbed the sector's attention. All these subjects were chosen based on the lines from the 2021 Convention, particularly those affecting excessive workload, long hours and individual protection. One of the sector's objectives was also to politicize our members as progressive women.

The OHS Sector regularly contributes to informing and raising awareness among members on issues related, directly or indirectly, to their health and safety at work. It does this by political interventions and supporting the affiliated unions, local teams and union consultants at the Federation.

For example, the Federation regularly updates its website to inform its members on the various health and safety issues that directly concern them.

Supporting, training and informing local OHS officers

One of the OHS Sector's main activities in recent years has been to support, train and inform local OHS officers about OHS. A great deal of effort has been made to get closer to those who are responsible for the prevention file in their institutions.

The OHS Network, an annual event, plays a key role in this. It provides an opportunity to forge ties with local officers, to share their concerns and experiences, acquire knowledge and tools, and collectively reflect on possible solutions to the problems encountered in the field.

Among the actions set up to maintain close contact with the local OHS officers, was the Rendez-vous prevention (Prevention meetings). These meetings provide a place to exchange information and support for various topical prevention issues. It also makes it possible for the OHS Sector to stay connected to the reality in the field.

Supporting the sectors and services

The OHS Sector also fulfilled its mandate by supporting other sectors and services of the Federation, notably Labour Relations. There was also support for the forum on overall health (Letter of Understanding No. 21 in the collective agreement). Inter-union relations and interventions were maintained to ensure that concerted action continued and was strengthened.

The sector was appointed spokesperson with the Comité patronal de négociation du secteur de la santé et des services sociaux (CPNSSS) to negotiate the implementation of structural OHS projects. It also provided expertise to support interventions in the field requiring more in-depth research. At the end of its mandate, its role evolved with the support of labour relations in the conclusion of agreements related to the interim LMRST regime.

Moreover, the OHS Sector takes part in preparing and producing grant applications to the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST), and in writing the annual report on the use of the allocated funds.

Developing knowledge in OHS

To keep its members' knowledge of occupational health and safety up to date, the OHS Sector participates on a regular basis in various conventions, symposiums, conferences and training.

Intervening in various forums to highlight the healthcare professionals' OHS concerns

In recent years, the OHS Sector has focused its efforts on interventions highlighting the concerns of healthcare professionals regarding occupational health and safety.

While they normally take place, meetings and questioning of heads of government bodies and political leaders continued at the beginning of the mandate, in a context still marked by the pandemic. During the second part of the mandate, it was the *Regulation on prevention and participation mechanisms* (RPPM) that required ministers and the CNESST to be involved. This was done both by the OHS Sector and through inter-union OHS interventions, in addition to participation in various briefs, including the one on Bill 42.

This bill is aimed at preventing and fighting psychological harassment and sexual violence in the workplace. Given that the healthcare professionals work in at-risk environments, particularly when it comes to violence in the workplace, the FIQ has taken a firm stand and urged legislators to introduce a genuine culture of prevention, accompanied by support measures for victims, in line with changes in the law on gender-based and sexual violence.

With a view to making OHS considerations cross-cutting and bringing the concerns of healthcare professionals to the fore, the OHS Sector has sat on several provincial committees, such as:

- the provincial COVID committee, to address the specific issues health workers face in the context of the pandemic;
- the FIQ-CPNSSS provincial COVID labour relations committee, to ensure effective transmission of information, exchange and attempt to alleviate the particular problems of labour relations during a pandemic;
- the provincial OHS inter-union committee, to monitor the mechanisms of prevention and participation stipulated in the LMRST in the RSSS institutions.

Lastly, it should be noted that the OHS Sector is actively involved in the activities of the Association paritaire pour la santé et la sécurité du travail du secteur affaires sociales (ASSTSAS). The FIQ holds three directors positions on the board of directors, including one on the executive committee, a position occupied by the vice-president for the OHS Sector.

SOCIAL SECURITY SECTOR REPORT

Here are the main accomplishments of the Social Security Sector in insurance and retirement since the last Convention. The Social Security Sector's mandates aim to promote member rights and interests with regard to the group insurance contract and the Government and Public Employees Retirement Plan (RREGOP). The consultants provide support throughout the structure, whether it's training consultants and union reps on current situations, assisting them with their files, or directly providing healthcare professionals with information on the value of their pension, buy-backs or the end of the employment relationship due to disability.

Group insurance

The annual renewals of the group insurance contract required several meetings to negotiate with the insurer. The difficult renewal conditions, mainly due to the reduced rates (premiums) from the last call for tenders, combined with an increase in disability cases and the introduction of expensive new drugs, required research and in-depth analyses in these areas. The same is true for certain legislative amendments which required contract adjustments. Despite these challenges, the FIQ has established a relationship of trust and strengthened its credibility with Beneva.

After the change of insurer in April 2019, the deployment of the group insurance contract with La Capitale (became Beneva in 2022) continued with the arrival of the first insured who had reached 104 weeks of disability in April 2021. Numerous meetings were held with the insurer to facilitate this transition.

Moreover, the going into effect of changes to *An Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information* resulted in changes in practices for collecting and monitoring disability files. As such, the programme d'assistance aux professionnelles en soins en période d'invalidité (PRODASI), which consisted of sending a follow-up questionnaire on an insured's health condition, had to be abolished. A replacement project for PRODASI was developed and should be presented and rolled out over the coming year.

Finally, the *Logbook*, a reference document intended for members on disability and union representatives, was also updated and is on the Federation website.

Provincial negotiations

The sector was called upon during the pre-negotiation consultations, during the employer's demands, and during the negotiations when provisions affecting group insurance or the pension plan were being discussed. As in every negotiation, the government wanted to recover funds from RREGOP aiming to make substantial savings. Thanks to the healthcare professionals' pressure tactics, RREGOP was not only maintained, but it was improved. The entire team of consultants actively contributed during the different pressure tactics, demonstrations and strike.

Retirement

Giving RREGOP training sessions online was started, with 15 presentations given in 2022-2023. After a break to focus on the negotiations and the strike, training sessions resumed in fall 2024. Since then, six new sessions were given, including one in English, with more than 1,500 union reps participating. Other training sessions will be organized on a quarterly basis. The *Starting retirement off on the right foot* pamphlet was created and our RREGOP brochure, Our group pension plan is periodically updated; both are on our website. Online training on specific subjects has also been developed to equip union reps to answer the most frequently asked questions by members.

The sector sits on the RREGOP retirement committee, whose mandate includes establishing an investment policy for the funds generated by member contributions, ensuring good governance of the pension plan, approving the financial statements and receiving actuarial valuation reports. In 2024, the conditional indexation of retirees' pensions for years worked between 1982 and 1999 was carried out, as the regime's capitalization exceeded 120%. Thanks to the representations made with the government, they paid their contribution for the first time.

The FIQ being one of the rare organizations to benefit from this measure, there is close monitoring of the difficulties encountered by certain employers in applying the exemption to the pension plan after three years. Representations are made as needed to correct these situations.

Lastly, the FIQ is a partner in the Observatoire de la retraite, an initiative of the Institut de recherche en économie contemporaine (IRÉC), which helps to broaden the debate on the future of retirement in Quebec. The FIQ was also appointed to the retirement expertise table at Retraite Québec.

Member car and home insurance plan

The FIQ's partnership with the insurer The Personal will continue until 2026. The group rate and savings are negotiated annually with the sector. In 2022, a rebate of \$45 was obtained for members with an automobile insurance policy and \$45 for those with a home policy. The number of policies taken out by our group continues to grow.

SOCIOPOLITICAL SECTOR REPORT

Since the Sociopolitical Sector was created, its consultants and political officers have always been committed to building bridges between political issues and the realities experienced by our members as healthcare professionals, union reps, citizens and women. The sector also plays a key role in articulating members' demands and those of the Federation's various sectors and services within the framework of transpartisan government relations. The objective: to advance their interests and promote the progressive principles defended by the FIQ. The lines of the 2021 Convention have strengthened these ties, giving the necessary impetus for bold initiatives.

Fuelling and strengthening the FIQ's progressive political stance

Defending the public health network

In its drive to defend the public nature of the health network, the Sociopolitical Sector supported, equipped and accompanied the FIQ elected officers in the many representations aimed at influencing decision-makers to legislate against independent labour (IL). Ministers, cabinet members, senior civil servants and elected opposition MNAs were met to make this point: IL harms the public health network and healthcare professionals. Consultants contributed to the work of the Intersectoral Committee on IL and MOT, pooling the expertise of each sector. The Sociopolitical Sector also stepped up the FIQ's actions on IL through various public events, including the Association of Progressive Lawyers conference in 2023 and the annual meeting of members of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) the same year. Our approach has paid off: in 2023, the government passed a bill and regulations on eliminating IL from the network by 2026. A major victory for the FIQ, which has been fighting this scourge for years.

The sector provides ongoing strategic monitoring of the privatization and financing of the public network, enabling the organization's spokespeople to react quickly with accurate and relevant information. Since Minister Dubé launched the Health Plan in 2022, the FIQ has also strengthened its action by collaborating with the Groupe de travail intersyndical en santé et services sociaux (GTISSS) joining union efforts in defending the public network. To date, this collaboration continues and remains a valuable source of shared knowledge and concerted actions. This was particularly evident during the "Tout sauf santé" campaign, which organized actions against the privatization of the health network. In addition, the FIQ, via the Sociopolitical Sector is an active member of the Coalition solidarité santé, whose mission is to defend the right to health for all Québec people. The labour and community organizations in this coalition work together every week designing campaigns, developing action plans and organizing mobilizations aimed at guaranteeing fair access to the health network.

The 2023-2024 period saw profound changes in the health network with the creation of Santé Québec and a single employer. The Sociopolitical Sector played a key role in the intersectoral analyses, debates at councils and government relations on *An Act respecting the governance of the health and social services system*. This piece of major legislation was a key file for the sector. The consultants and their political officers are pleased to have contributed to positioning the FIQ strategically in the public debate and to promoting transparent and enriching discussions with union reps at the relevant bodies.

Launching of the health platform

In June 2024, the FIQ put the health platform² online, a conceptual framework putting forward 12 social determinants. This tool allows healthcare professionals to establish links between their work and the impacts of the socioeconomic inequalities experienced by their patients on their health. To strengthen their interest and develop their political reflexes, it is essential to reach our members through what drives them on a daily basis. Moreover, since 2021, the FIQ strives to take account of the impact of social determinants of health in its policy analyses, by incorporating them into its briefs, opinions and public statements. This was particularly visible in the briefs on Bill 15³, Bill 32⁴ and Bill 11⁵, as well as in all the pre-budget briefs submitted by the organization. True to its orientations and values, the Federation also took part in the consultation on developing the fourth government action plan on poverty and social exclusion.

At the heart of the 2021-2023 campaign for a law on safe ratios

For the organization, 2021 marked a turning point in the fight to introduce safe ratios. The Sociopolitical Sector benefited from the addition of an extra consultant to carry out the action plan's orientations. While the ultimate aim was to pass a law on ratios, the challenge was first and foremost to make this demand a fundamental part of our members' DNA, to bring it closer to the realities in the field and to increase interaction with healthcare professionals so that they take full ownership of this issue.

Furthermore, remember that ratios were a priority demand for 95% of the 43,000 members who took part in the consultation, which guided the choices in the negotiation demands. The Sociopolitical Sector actively contributed to developing an action plan and carrying out several initiatives, such as: dialogue with a coalition of 12 allied organizations and associations, research for three webinars for members, the political approach to all of Quebec's political parties in favour of ratios and developing the 2022 election kit focusing on safe ratios, producing four newsletters for union teams and allied groups, as well as the sector consultants taking part in consultation meetings with union reps responsible for the file for their union team. The Sociopolitical Sector is proud of this intersectoral work which mobilized the members, raised public awareness and, in 2024, took a major step forward including a letter of understanding on ratios in the new collective agreement.

Equipping teams to take ownership of their sociopolitical context

One of the objectives of the last Convention was to equip the union teams so they can better understand and analyze the sociopolitical context which directly affects them. In this respect, a specific workshop was proposed at the Provincial Council in March 2023, aimed at the union team deepening its reflection on this. Moreover, the Sociopolitical Sector team introduced practical changes to the presentations of the context at regular councils, to encourage more dynamic and political exchanges with delegates, making the content more accessible and stimulating. The consultants and their political officer have concluded from the comments gathered and notable increase in participation in these debates that this initiative represents significant progress in the process of politicizing members.

2 To view the FIQ health platform: <https://www.fiqsante.qc.ca/determinants/>

3 On the creation of Santé Québec

4 On cultural safety

5 On access to front-line care in Québec

Unfortunately, one of the sector's major projects did not materialize. The sociopolitical training, very useful and greatly appreciated by union reps, could not be updated or given in its complete form. The consultants were not able to complete this mandate before the 2025 Convention, because of the major changes needed to modernize the training, in collaboration with the Education-Animation Service, and organizational priorities which required difficult choices. However, the sector would like to complete this update as soon as possible. It's a key, popular educational tool in its politicization kit. These last few years, the sector has also developed an offer of sociopolitical conferences on various subjects, such as the privatization of health care, climate change, activity-based funding (focused on the patient), the rise of populism or an abbreviated version of sociopolitical training. The union consultants had the pleasure of giving more than twenty of them to different affiliated unions. In addition, the Sociopolitical Sector consultants led a conference on the political issues in negotiations with the members of the Negotiating Committee and co-organized a visit to the National Assembly with the latter, to demystify legislative procedures.

The Sociopolitical Sector's presentations at regular decision-making bodies are also an important opportunity to engage in discussions on topical issues. Although it was not possible to achieve the objectives set in the strategic plan and the Solidarity Policy, i.e. hold at least two conferences per year (two of a sociopolitical nature and one on solidarity), the sector did offer delegates a conference on the privatization of health care in December 2022 and another on climate change in March 2023. In addition, the consultants and their political officer broke new ground with lunchtime talks on the documentaries *Le dernier placard*, which looks at heteronormativity in care settings, and *Ma cité évincée*, which looks at the housing crisis and homelessness.

Building a vision from the ground up

The sector is proud to have developed several major political files on the basis of consultations with members. As part of the overhaul of the Solidarity Policy, it surveyed members who had already participated in FIQ international internships to discuss the successes and the challenges they had encountered. And, during the Special Committee on the evolution of the law concerning end-of-life care in 2021, the Sociopolitical and OWPP Sectors consulted more than 80 FIQ healthcare professionals. This approach was intended to gauge members' views on developments in medically assisted dying and draft a brief that accurately reflected their position. Involved in a number of public policies relating to residential housing and care for the elderly, the sector worked with the Communication Service to publish a special report on the subject. Distributed in December 2022, this publication highlights the healthcare professionals' essential role in long-term residential care, thanks to statements from members working in these settings, enriched by feature articles.

Clearly position the FIQ as a progressive organization

The Federation has taken a proactive stance by getting involved in various progressive struggles. It took part in the "Pour la suite du monde" movement and the march on September 27, 2024 beside environmental, community, labour and civic organizations, as well as in demonstrations supporting the people of Gaza and Palestine, demanding a permanent ceasefire and lasting peace in the region.

It also mobilized for regularization of the status of undocumented and precarious workers. The FIQ has also been actively involved in providing support, both public and financial, to several progressive groups, including the Campagne québécoise pour la régularisation et la justice migrante, the Centre international de solidarité ouvrière (CISO), Public Services International (PSI), the Fondation Émergence, Femmes autochtones du Québec and Fierté Montréal.

Taking political action with members

One of the strong points of this report is without a doubt the orientation by the Sociopolitical Sector to get closer to its colleagues in the Labour Relations Sector and, by the same token, to the union teams. This collaboration has enabled us to move from words to deeds through concrete political action. In 2022, the Sociopolitical Sector, alongside RLT colleagues, took part in meetings with members of the Centre mère-enfant de l'Hôpital Pierre-Boucher on all three shifts. The objective: to support them in their mobilization against the work overload and mandatory overtime (MOT). Considering the political nature of their demands, the members, supported by the sector, wrote a letter to Minister Lionel Carmant, responsible for the file and MNA for the region. With help from the sector, about thirty members then met with the minister to present their demands directly to him and demand concrete changes. This mobilization was successful: measures were put in place by the MNA to improve the situation in the field. The following year, certain union reps were even invited by Mr. Carmant to participate in a symposium on natality and early childhood care, organized by his ministry. An exemplary political path, directly inspired by the teachings of Labor Notes!

In light of the mergers of centres of activities starting in 2023 in the Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec region, the Sociopolitical team provided major support for the RLT consultants and the Syndicat des professionnelles en soins de la Mauricie et Centre-du-Québec (FIQ—SPSMCQ) in their fight. It also provided input to the opposition parties in the National Assembly to encourage them to question the government on the impact of these management decisions on care safety and on premature resignations. And the sector assisted a delegation of about ten union reps from the FIQ—SPSMCQ at the National Assembly, so they could make political representations directly with the MNAs.

Moreover, consultants and political officers from the sector supported respiratory therapist union reps in contesting the changes to the professional classes in Bill 15. Their mobilization led to the submission of a petition at the National Assembly in November 2023. In December of the same year, the consultants were beside other union reps during the imposition of the gag order for the forced passage of this same bill, in order to mark the FIQ's political presence at this antidemocratic procedure.

In addition, the sector helped create links between the political sphere and the field by submitting a petition to the National Assembly. The aim of this initiative, carried out with the support of healthcare professional union reps, was to integrate cross-cutting content on LGBTQIAS2+ and other marginalized communities into the basic and continuing training of healthcare professionals.

In 2024, the political officer for the sector and one consultant took part for the first time, in a “Lobby Day” in Ottawa, alongside the Canadian Health Coalition. Their objective was to raise awareness among elected officials of the benefits of universal public drug insurance. Following the day's events, the political officer had the opportunity to discuss the working conditions of healthcare professionals, and in particular safe ratios, with the Chief Nurse of Canada, Leigh Chapman. The idea of setting up a similar initiative in Québec, involving FIQ members, was already part of the sector's projects and is currently being developed.

The Sociopolitical Sector consultants also contributed to the strategies for the negotiations, both at the level of government relations and supporting the Negotiating Committee, in research and content, notably in the files on IL and safe ratios. They were also in the field, alongside the members and colleagues from other sectors during the strike days.

Systemic racism: going beyond principles

Since the last Convention, when the organization adopted Joyce's Principle, the sector has forged links with a number of indigenous groups, including Québec Native Women, the First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (CSSSPNQL) and the Joyce's Principle Office. Their collaboration was invaluable in writing FIQ briefs on Bill 32 on cultural safety in 2023, and Bill 67 on broadening professional practices in 2024. Furthermore, the FIQ took part in the Veillée à la mémoire de Joyce Echaquan, in September 2023 and September 2024. This solemn gathering was an opportunity to pay tribute and offer the FIQ's support to the family and community of Manawan, while reaffirming the Federation's commitment in the fight against systemic racism.

Outlook

The Sociopolitical Sector is proud to present this successful report. The actions taken over the last few years have advanced the political process initiated at the 2021 Convention. However, in the current context, where democratic institutions and traditional political figures are being called into question, the Sociopolitical Sector's outlook must more than ever be rooted in reality, in the lived experience of its members. In this sense, the challenges are many. First, innovative formal and informal structures will be needed to provide a forum for communication between the Federation and its affiliated unions, in order to develop sociopolitical issues and feel out the field. Secondly, it is essential to make the issues of systemic racism and climate change cross-cutting lines for the organization. These topics affect and mobilize FIQ members, in both their professional and personal lives. It's an excellent way to politicize young people and introduce them to new areas of union action. Focusing the sector's efforts on the Federation's members and union reps, while developing two-way channels of communication with them, is the best way to understand and grasp the situation ahead.

COMMUNICATION SERVICE REPORT

During the last mandate, the Communication Service continued with its priority mandates: to raise the profile of the organization, to support the president in her public appearances, to inform and mobilize members through popularized and bilingual tools, to equip and support affiliated unions and finally, to communicate the orientations and decisions taken by the Executive Committee to ensure cohesion within the organization.

The service's activities over the last four years were carried out in an exceptional context. Two provincial bargaining rounds followed one another, one of which led to a strike, something that had not happened in almost 25 years. Moreover, major structural changes – the creation of Santé Québec – caused a high degree of uncertainty for healthcare professionals, when they had barely had time to recover from the exhaustion of the pandemic. These sources of stress without a doubt contributed to creating a certain polarization of members, which was seen during the last provincial negotiations.

In the light of these observations, and thanks to feedback from the field, the Communication Service, together with its colleagues in other services and sectors, has been considering new ways of communicating that will enable it to better respond to the needs of members and union reps in terms of circulating information. The service is based on the premise that information is the crux of the matter, keeping members and union reps mobilized and, if necessary, galvanizing them to go to the front.

Changes were implemented and supported by the Communication Service, including the creation of the Communication Committee, whose work will lead to the holding of the first Communication Network and the launch of a new union information magazine, the first edition of which will be published in fall 2025.

Through media monitoring and analysis of the sociopolitical and union contexts, carried out in collaboration with internal teams such as the Sociopolitical Sector, the Communication Service provided the Executive Committee with guidance and information on which to base informed decisions.

Over the last four years, the service ensured that the president's vision and that of the Executive Committee members are reflected in the organization's communications. The team relied on the qualities and values of its president to position the FIQ on the various files: basing itself on facts, anchoring its thinking in the reality in the field and directing its actions for the benefit of the greatest number of people, and doing so with authenticity, tenacity, humanism and in a language that is in tune with the people.

Campaigns, ads, events

- *Paid a woman's wage* (2021)
- *How much is that worth?* radio ad (May-June 2021)
- *MOT is a death sentence for the healthcare profession* (October 2021)
- *Mobilized to be paid* campaign (February 2022)
- *Launching of a Petition for a law on ratios* (April 2022)

- Election debate as part of the provincial elections (September 2022)
- Production of three Webinars on ratios (2022-2023)
- Special Report: *Residential care for people with loss of autonomy* (February 2023)
- *There's a limit!* signature (February 2023)
- *United, determined, mobilized* signature (January 2022)
- *If the government managed business in the same way it manages the negotiations* radio ad (July-August 2023)
- *Our working conditions are your care conditions* (September 2023)
- *What's important is you!* TV campaign (fall 2023)
- *My department, my expertise* campaign (June 2024)
- Web page devoted to the Dubé reform (July 2024);
- Radio ad on mobility (September 2024).

Supported by the resolutely feminist stance of the Executive Committee and driven by the orientations of the last Convention, the organization's communication campaigns were orchestrated on the basis of the progressive values promoted by the FIQ, whether in terms of the representation of marginalized groups, the fight against sexist stereotypes or against systemic racism.

At all times, the communication strategies developed by the Communication Service make it possible to define messages adapted to the target audiences – the media, decision-makers, union reps, members and the public – while identifying the means of dissemination to be favoured in order to increase the FIQ's impact on the major issues related to health and to put forward the organization's priorities. In the same vein, the union consultants in the Communication Service offer support to the union consultants in the FIQ's other sectors and services, as well as to affiliated unions. This support is aimed at maximizing the visibility and scope of their action plans in various areas.

Media relations

Media relations are a major part of the service's activities. The post-convention period of 2021 was a particularly busy one for the union consultants, given the sudden departure of the president elected at the June Convention and the arrival of the current president in December 2021. The team quickly began the process of positioning the new president in the media, who became the FIQ's new public image. The team's objective was for all target audiences, journalists, the general public and government representatives, to associate her with health issues and the working conditions of healthcare professionals.

Provincial negotiations

The negotiations to renew the members' collective agreement is one of the files that kept the Federation's Communication Service busy. Throughout the various phases of the bargaining process, the Communication Service actively supported the negotiation strategy.

Whether for the consultations, councils, mobilization, demonstrations, ad campaigns, the strike or referendum votes, the service deployed several strategies to inform and mobilize the members of the Federation, until the negotiations concluded.

The last round of negotiations was not without some stumbling blocks. Given the organization's decision to opt for a member-focused communications strategy, it has sometimes been difficult to reconcile the expectations of all parties with regard to the appropriate moments to occupy media space.

Some disgraceful remarks and comments on social media have also given the Communication Service a hard time. Members' intense eagerness to obtain information often came up against the time it took to produce the tools and popularize the content, which fuelled a climate of suspicion that had to be countered. The Web consultants deployed colossal moderation efforts on the platforms, navigating between the principles of freedom of opinion and non-violence.

Current mandates of the Communication Service

- Media relations
- Supporting local teams
- Writing speeches
- Producing the journal En action
- Making videos, International Workers' Day (May 1)
- Healthcare Professional Month (May)
- OHS Week (fall)
- Organization and logistics of decision-making bodies
- Holiday campaign
- Writing and producing the "Info-négo" newsletter
- Annual planner and calendar
- Promotional items
- Advertisements and sponsorships
- Managing the Web platforms (website, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, Bluesky, LinkedIn and YouTube)
- Managing the application FIQ (closed in February 2025)
- Professional improvement training & workshops (traditional and digital communication, media relations)
- Revising and translating all documents for union reps and members.

Web and social media

The Communication Service constantly reviews its practices on the Web and social media to get the most out of these platforms. A pioneer in this field, the Federation continues to stand out among labour organizations with its large community on its various platforms. Already on Facebook, Instagram,

Twitter (X), LinkedIn and YouTube, it was on the first day of the healthcare professionals' strike, in November 2023, that the Federation made its debut on TikTok, thus strengthening its proximity to its members, many of whom use this platform. Since November 2024, the FIQ has also been on Bluesky and joined Threads and Mastodon a few months later.

In 2024, a complete overhaul of the Federation's website was undertaken to provide a more dynamic, user-friendly and comprehensive source of information. However, the migration of content from the previous website proved to be much longer and more complex than expected, resulting in significant delays. The work will therefore have to be completed over the coming months.

Inspiring projects and challenges met

Every year, the Communication Service is given new mandates, several of which involve a collaboration with other sectors and services at the Federation. Some projects have been particularly inspiring and rewarding for the organization, while others have posed their share of challenges.

The Healthcare Professional Month theme for 2024 was a real hit with healthcare professionals. "Standing strong against all odds" proved to be an accurate and timely message in the circumstances. Moreover, the "Our working conditions are your care conditions" campaign, developed for the negotiations, is among the campaigns that have left their mark on the imagination of the public and members. Rarely do we see a slogan resonate so much in the context of a negotiation. This campaign set the scene and prepared the public for the healthcare professionals' strike in December 2023.

It would be hard to overlook the successful communications surrounding the Quebec government's subsidy to the Los Angeles Kings during their visit to Quebec City. The night-time projections at the Bell Centre in Montreal and the Centre Vidéotron in Quebec City were widely reported in Quebec media.

The major rally in Quebec City organized as part of the negotiations, was a major challenge for the Communication Service. Selling such a festive event, at a time when negotiations were dragging on, was risky. The risks to the organization's image were not insignificant, and the service had to redouble its efforts to ensure that public communications helped serve the organization's interests at the bargaining table.

Another challenge was to ensure messages were consistent between the Federation and affiliated unions. Being proactive and reactive to current events is a constant challenge for the organization, and it will have to pay particular attention to this from the perspective of a single employer in the health network.

Conclusion

All the Communication Service's activities were obviously deployed in line with the organization's strategic planning. In many respects, the service has made a significant and sustained contribution to the implementation and rollout of a number of initiatives designed to mobilize members and union reps and make their voices heard.

While some tools and projects had to be postponed because of the provincial negotiations and Bill 15 (Dubé reform), several were completed. An "MOT" tool intended for members was also produced. The deployment of the health platform is complete and a page devoted to pay equity was put online

on the Federation's website. Whether through internal or external communications, the service uses all the relevant forums and means to achieve and implement the strategic orientations stemming from the convention lines.

At a time when traditional media is being transformed and social media is being swept up in major changes of guard – and increasingly free from fact-checking – the organization will be called upon to continue its reflection and analysis on the use of the various platforms available. Virtual forums for discussion and exchange are increasingly polarizing and polarized. The Federation must be able to make judicious and strategic choices to achieve its communication objectives. Ultimately, this will benefit healthcare professionals and the public.

EDUCATION-ANIMATION SERVICE REPORT

The Education-Animation Service (EAS) is a collaborative service which works in concert with the other FIQ sectors and services. Over the last four years, these many and varied collaborations have helped to successfully accomplish several mandates. Whether it is leading a training session, consultations, developing and giving training sessions or webinars, the service is regularly solicited to help achieve the objectives linked to files handled by the organization.

In addition to the support given to the FIQ sectors and services, the Education-Animation Service is responsible for the training offer. The main mission of the EAS is to equip and assist union reps in their unionism, so they can, in turn, support and assist the members they represent. To this end, the training course content, as well as the political aspect, are made more widely available. Regular training provides union reps, who are healthcare professionals first, with the tools they need to carry out their role and responsibilities as part of their union duties. Other, more specific training sessions are designed and given based on the context and needs of the organization, always with the objective of offering the necessary support to FIQ union reps on specific subjects.

The training offered by the EAS makes it possible to meet the union reps, discuss the values that drive them, the issues that concern them and the solutions they want to put forward. Training in itself is a way to mobilize the healthcare professionals, while being a preferred time to discuss their vision and certain more political aspects with them.

In summary, the delivery of training sessions over the last four years has resulted in:

- 220 training sessions, training a total of 4,758 union reps across Québec:
 - 33 virtual training sessions, for a total of 592 union reps;
 - 187 in-person training sessions, for a total of 4,166 union reps.
- 1,202 participants in self-directed training sessions via the AGORA platform.
- Training sessions for instructors and new FIQ employees.
- 921 members participated in the “Advocacy – Safe ratios training”.
- Training sessions given in English, as well as tools and educational material translated.

Moreover, two major files have marked the last few years: provincial negotiations and the restructuring of the health network with the Dubé reform and the advent of Santé Québec. It goes without saying that these two major files have had a significant impact on the service’s activities, reducing the space available for implementing the lines from the last Convention. Nevertheless, the service’s actions, as well as the tools developed, remained consistent with the three following lines: progressive women, women of action and women fighting against systemic racism.

Progressive women

This line from the Convention has politicized FIQ union reps and members more. The EAS actions in this respect were:

Collaborating in the consultation on political action areas

In November 2021, the EAS worked on this consultation with the objective of reflecting on the creation of a political action area and identifying the union teams' needs for its implementation and operation.

Collaborating in making the “History in action, the FIQ, then and now” video

This video, produced for the “Introduction to union life” training session, is an educational tool that traces the Federation’s evolution through the testimonies of union reps who have lived through various key moments in the organization. It addresses themes such as democracy, social justice, solidarity and feminist values.

Reflecting on the revision of the mandate of the Education-Animation Committee (EAC)

Aware that education is the key to politicizing union reps and members, the members of the EAC have revised their mandate so that it better reflects current social realities. Given that the mandate had not been changed since 1987, such a re-evaluation seemed necessary. In this context, the committee wanted to remove the animation component to make room for the Education Committee, with the main objectives of making union reps and members aware of social, environmental, political and democratic issues.

Collaborating in organizing the FIQ Networks

The EAS consultants collaborate with those from the various sectors and services to organize and animate the six Networks that are held once a year. These meetings are an opportunity to nurture union reps on specific subjects politicize them and enable them to express themselves and exchange ideas with each other.

Participating in the Intersectoral Ratios Committee (IRC) work

The EAS helped to develop and deploy the ratios action plan, by designing and leading three webinars on safe ratios in June 2022, February and September 2023. Almost 700 people participated live, and more than 1,100 watched the recording on the FIQ website and YouTube channel.

Continuing the digital shift

To continue offering union reps with varied and independent content, the EAS acquired a new software, Articulate, and ensured that all team members received the training needed to use it. This tool is part of the service’s drive to broaden its training offer in order to reach union reps in a different way on important issues and to make them more political. Self-training on the Dubé reform and complementary modules on the new collective agreement are concrete examples.

Women of action

This line from the Convention emphasized the collective aspect and the strength in numbers to provoke change and take collective steps rather than individual ones. The EAS actions which contributed to this line are:

Collaborating in giving the “Better organizing to win” training session

This training, which aims to win support for a new way of increasing the balance of power by involving and mobilizing members, was given to all FIQ union reps and consultants in April 2022. Ten groups and 321 participants simultaneously attended this two-day training. Union rep involvement, participation and mobilization are at the heart of unionism and the approach adopted by Labor Notes opens the way to new ways of doing things.

Continuum of training courses on the collective bargaining process

Collective bargaining remains a key file, with the ultimate objective of improving the healthcare professionals working conditions. By designing a series of training courses, the EAS has helped to educate and equip union reps to better understand the issues inherent in this long and complex process. As such, the EAS has undertaken to support union reps by explaining and popularizing the collective bargaining process, particularly in a context where the employer is also the legislator. In addition to collaborating on the design and recording of a webinar on the bargaining process in the public and parapublic sector with Professor Jean-Noël Grenier, this training continuum was divided into five parts:

- 1st part: Training on the collective bargaining process

The objective of this training was to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for actively and effectively participating in the bargaining process for the provincial provisions of the collective agreement. Six in-person training sessions of one day were organized in October 2022, with a total of 340 union reps trained.

- 2nd part: Interactive conference on the active negotiation phase

Presented during a special provincial council – negotiations in January 2023, the purpose of this conference was to better understand the Negotiating Committee’s role during the active negotiation phase. It also aims to equip union reps so they can fully carry out their role during this critical phase.

- 3rd part: Strike and heavy pressure tactics, and panel on the 1989 and 1999 strikes

This presentation took place at a special provincial council – negotiations in May 2023. Its aim was to present the issues linked to the use of heavy pressure tactics, including a strike, in the context of provincial negotiations. The theory was then illustrated through the FIQ experience during the strikes of 1989 and 1999, enabling union reps to better understand the impact and lessons learned from these historic events.

- 4th part: Strike training

Over summer and fall 2023, the context of the provincial negotiations led to an escalation of pressure tactics, suggesting that healthcare professionals would exercise their right to strike, an event not seen for almost 25 years. A one-day training session was designed so affiliated union reps could manage the planning and organization of the strike, exercise their leadership in order to get the members to support the mobilization actions, and demonstrate to the employer party

that the healthcare professionals were prepared and determined to use this ultimate pressure tactic. In all, 26 in-person training sessions were given, for a total of 645 union reps trained during September 2023.

Furthermore, in fall 2023, all the EAS resources were mobilized in the field to support the union teams in their organization and mobilization efforts for exercising the strike.

- 5th part: Training on the new provisions of the 2024-2028 collective agreement

At the time this was written, 25 in-person training sessions of two days, for a total of 472 union reps trained, are scheduled for January and February 2025. With this training union reps will be able to explain and apply the new provisions of the FIQ 2024-2028 collective agreement. And, seven complementary modules are on the AGORA platform, giving union reps the opportunity to consolidate what they have learnt and to integrate some of the concepts covered during the course with additional examples and explanations.

Supporting and collaborating in different activities linked to the Dubé reform

The transformations imposed by the Dubé reform caused many changes, requiring FIQ union reps to be assisted, informed and consulted. The EAS collaborated on various aspects, particularly in designing an online training course to explain the impacts of this reform, as well as preparing workshops and implementing a major consultation on the FIQ structures.

Women fighting against systemic racism

In the design of all new training courses and, more broadly, in all its actions and activities, the EAS takes into account the feminist aspect and the fight against systemic racism.

Collaborating in designing and giving a workshop on systemic racism

As part of the theme workshops linked to the Convention orientations, a workshop on systemic racism was held at the provincial council in March 2023. This workshop's objective was to encourage a reflection on unconscious biases and stereotypes, while addressing racism as an issue of social justice.

Collaborating in developing a training session on anti-racist practices

In collaboration with the Status of Women Sector and the Ad hoc anti-racism committee the EAS helped in developing a two-part training session. The first part consists of designing and recording a video on racism and systemic racism. The second part is on creating a training session on anti-racist practices. This project is currently in the planning stage. The recording of the video is scheduled for winter 2025 and it will be made available on the AGORA platform. The second part is due to be given in spring 2025.

Outlook

Over the next few years the service will continue to carry out its mission of education and politicization. A dynamic team, the EAS will remain aligned with the orientations of the next Convention and will be able to adapt its practices to meet the diversified needs of FIQ union reps. The service will also remain ready to collaborate, adapt and meet new challenges in order to give valuable support to union teams.

At present, a new Labour Notes training tour is planned for spring 2025, and online training is one of the projects under development.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY-DOCUMENTATION SERVICE REPORT

The FIQ Information Technology-Documentation Service went through a dynamic and productive period from 2021 to 2025. This report highlights the main activities, achievements and challenges we faced focused on three major areas: the services offered internally to the Federation, IT development and data security.

Providing internal services to the FIQ in support of the organization's mission

During this period, the Information Technology-Documentation Service continued to provide essential support to various internal activities of the FIQ, including:

- Maintaining and updating existing IT systems to ensure they are running smoothly;
- Technical support for employees and union reps, including rapid resolution of incidents and breakdowns;
- Continually improving information technology (IT) infrastructures to meet growing needs and new technologies;
- Ongoing training for users to optimize the use of IT tools;
- Renewing videoconferencing equipment in all FIQ offices, accessible to affiliated unions;
- Implementing an IT governance plan to ensure efficient management of electronic documents.

IT development

IT development is essential for providing affiliated unions with tools and maximizing their effectiveness in their actions with members. The main projects were:

- Union leaves
Tools for facilitating the management of union leaves were designed and implemented, while optimizing the process and ensuring smooth coordination.
- Online grievance
The online grievance platform was developed for union reps to submit and follow their grievances effectively and transparently. This initiative has considerably reduced the delays in handling and improved union team satisfaction.
- MaCarte
The digital map, MaCarte was introduced to simplify access to the benefits and services provided to members. It also enables streamlined management of memberships and renewals, particularly when changes require new signatures.

- Referendum vote platform

A secure and reliable voting platform has been developed for referendums, guaranteeing the democratic participation of FIQ members..

- Registration for hybrid decision-making bodies

A solution for registering for decision-making bodies has been put in place, facilitating the management of expense accounts and the logistics associated with the meetings.

Security of FIQ members' data and personal information

Security of data has always been an absolute priority for the FIQ and its affiliated unions, all the more so since *An Act to modernize legislative provisions respecting the protection of personal information* (Bill 25) went into effect. As a result, the Information Technology and Documentation Service focused its efforts on:

- Implementing robust security measures to protect members' sensitive information;
- Continuing training of employees and union reps on best practices in cybersecurity;
- Carrying out regular audits to identify and correct potential vulnerabilities;
- Implementing strict access and permissions management policies, in response to the organization's legal obligations;
- A rapid and efficient response to security incidents to minimize the impacts.

Conclusion

From 2021 to 2025, the FIQ Information Technology-Documentation Service showed its commitment to supporting the organization's mission by offering efficient internal services, by developing innovative IT solutions and implementing strict security measures.

UNION ORGANIZING SERVICE REPORT

After the 2021 Convention, when the provincial negotiations were ending and a tentative agreement was taking place, the Union Organizing Service implemented the alignments adopted by the delegation on local union action and member involvement. The service was in great demand to organize the last mobilization actions of the negotiations and support the local teams.

Over the last four years, the importance of organizing to rebalance union action, establish a balance of power and give members back control of union action was at the heart of the service's mandates and orientations. During this period, the consultants' work was also influenced by different factors: a difficult post-pandemic context, a collective agreement of short duration and a forthcoming change of union allegiance period.

In line with the orientations of the Convention, the union rep mobilization structure pilot project was adopted in June 2022. The responsibility for this project was given to the Union Organizing Service which worked to carry out the five associated mandates (to consult, train, equip, network and collaborate), in addition to structuring and putting into operation the action plans of the 2022-2024 provincial negotiations.

In addition to implementing these major orientations, other organizational needs emerged. In 2023, the context resulted in the delegation adopting a recommendation to unite the forces of all its affiliated unions by dissolving the FIQ | Secteur privé and consequently the Regroupement des FIQ. As a result, The United Healthcare Professionals, Alliance Interprofessionnelle de Montréal, Syndicat des Professionnelles en soins de Québec, Syndicat régional des professionnelles en soins du Québec and the Syndicat des infirmières et infirmières auxiliaires du Centre Champlain de Gatineau regained their status as FIQ affiliated unions. Consultants from the service were involved in this project to harmonize and revise the FIQ Constitution and Bylaws.

Union life

The Union Organizing Service continued its collaboration with the Labour Relations Sector in supporting the affiliated unions in boosting union life and developing their local structure.

The consultants provided services to new elected treasurers, and the executive committee and intermediate council members, in connection with determining the role and functions of elected union reps. Supporting the union teams in holding local general assemblies and organizing elections in virtual or hybrid modes kept the service busy over the last few years.

Several affiliated unions also asked the service to assist them in amending their constitution and bylaws and internal policies.

And the Union Organizing Service was entrusted with the responsibility of applying and respecting the *Guidelines for a healthy union environment*, adopted by the delegation in March 2021. In this respect, the service's consultants ensured that the principles of the Guidelines were understood by all the local teams and integrated into their practices. They also organized the training for presidents offered by the Ministry of Labour. Individual support for union reps in applying the Guidelines was also offered.

In collaboration with the Education-Animation Service, the Union Organizing Service completely reviewed the content of the “Introduction to union life” training, which was given as of January 2022. This training includes a new video made in collaboration with the Communication Service.

Recruitment and consolidation

Preparing for the 2022 raiding period

Having signed a three-year collective agreement in 2021, the various labour organizations in health had to quickly begin preparing for raiding. Several actions were conducted by the service to properly prepare the organization for the change of allegiance period, initially scheduled for summer 2022: evaluation of the union life of the affiliated unions concerned, updating and dissemination of the various training courses for union reps, union consultants, members of the coordination and elected members of the Executive Committee.

As in every raiding period, the service was also entrusted with the overall preparation of a plan and the various actions related to the recruitment of all healthcare professionals in Québec. Moreover, the service ensured support of the Labour Relations Sector consultants in developing consolidation plans adapted to certain unions that are more at risk.

Because the health emergency was still in effect in Québec during this period, the service also laid the foundations for the use of various IT tools, such as platforms for signing virtual membership cards and electronic payment, to facilitate recruitment and consolidation work within the organization.

In April 2022, the signature of a solidarity protocol by the various labour organizations ended these preparations.

Union action

The “Better organizing to win” training designed by Labor Notes was given to all French-speaking union reps on April 7 and 8, 2022 and English-speaking union reps on May 18 and 19, 2022. Consultants from the Union Organizing Service, from the Labour Relations and Occupational Health and Safety Sectors and the Education-Animation Service were asked to be trainers for this major event.

As of spring 2022, the service was solicited to support the provincial negotiations. This mandate continued for the next two years. One consultant was assigned to work linked to mobilization, while her colleagues supported her in organizing and deploying mobilization actions. A number of large-scale actions were orchestrated, including posting of banners, a demonstration in fall 2023 in the health minister’s riding, the major rally on March 16, 2024, and the occupation in front of the Québec National Assembly in early fall 2024.

Lastly, we should also mention the FIQ’s annual participation in the activities for celebrating International Workers’ Day on May 1, which is also part of the service’s mandates.

Other mandates

Youth Committee

For many years, the service has supported the work of the Youth Committee. This support includes organizing committee meetings, following up the work given to union reps and organizing the Youth Networks. Despite the pandemic and the significant resources devoted to mobilization during the negotiations, two Youth Networks were organized.

The first was held in November 2022 with the theme: “Youth who are united, determined and mobilized!”. This network discussed issues that directly affect young healthcare professionals, preparing the next generation of union reps and demonstrated the importance of mobilization in building bargaining power and making gains in the provincial negotiations.

A second network with the theme “But... what barriers?” is scheduled in April 2025.

Strike Committee

During the negotiations, a wide-ranging discussion on the possibility of strike action was quickly called for. The last FIQ strike goes back to 1999, so a number of updates were required. As of spring 2023, intensive work was undertaken and several of the service’s consultants joined the strike organization and deployment team. In fall 2023, training was developed and given to all union reps in order to equip the union teams on organizing, financing and best practices to adopt for holding several strike days in their workplaces.

Solidarity pact

After the strike, one consultant from the service worked on developing a solidarity pact in collaboration with the Labour Relations and Negotiation Sectors. For the first time in almost 25 years, the FIQ affiliated unions then adopted these conditions, which aimed to fairly distribute the salary losses from going on strike.

Work group on the Constitution and Bylaws and operating structure as a result of the Dubé reform

With the passing of *An Act to make the health and social services system more effective* and announcement of an imminent union allegiance vote, the FIQ had to reflect on the consequences of this reform, particularly on union structures, and devise the best way to establish a balance of power with this new single employer. A work group composed of elected union reps, union consultants, including two from the Union Organizing Service, political officers and members of the coordination was created.

Estates General on Unionism

The FIQ is actively involved in the inter-union approach for the Estates general on Unionism. As such, one consultant from the Union Organizing Service takes part in the work of the coordination committee for the nine major labour organizations in Québec, in collaboration with one consultant from the Sociopolitical Sector. Holding the Estates General is a two-year process involving various phases, the main aim of which is to consolidate union bargaining power.

Electronic referendum votes

For the first time in its history, the Federation obtained a mandate from the delegation in August 2021 to hold an electronic referendum vote on adopting the tentative agreement. Once this mission was accomplished, three other referendum events enabled members to vote electronically: obtaining a strike mandate in 2023, rejecting the tentative agreement, in spring 2024, and accepting the conciliator's recommendation a few months later. The service also collaborated, with the Education-Animation Service in designing and giving the training associated with using the new voting platforms.

Outlook

Very involved in deploying the women of action orientation from the last convention, the vehicle for a variety of mobilization mandates and a constant source of support for affiliated unions, the Union Organizing Service is proud of its role in union organizing, in the broadest sense of the term. Organizing, mobilizing, supporting, advising, educating, all promising mandates for the Federation.

Over the next few years, the Union Organizing Service must continue working to strengthen the FIQ's position on the Québec labour landscape. This will involve the ongoing development and consolidation of the organization's alliances and collaborations with social and community coalitions.

HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICE REPORT

The Human Resources Service is responsible for all the events that mark the career path of FIQ employees. This begins with recruiting and hiring new employees. From January 2021 to December 2024, 98 new employees joined the ranks of the Federation, which implies significant logistics in terms of staffing, as well as receiving, integrating and training on the various work teams.

The beginning of 2024 marked the finalizing of the pay equity audit, set out in the *Pay Equity Act* for the period ending in 2020. Since then, an ongoing pay equity process has been put in place to ensure compliance as events unfold.

In labour relations, the renewal of the collective agreement for the Union des salarié(e)s de la FIQ (USFIQ) was finalized on March 29, 2021. In addition, the collective agreements of the two internal union units, the Syndicat des employées de la FIQ (SEFIQ) and USFIQ, expired on December 31, 2024. Therefore, 2025 will in part be devoted to renewing them.

The service is also responsible for monitoring employee benefits, including disability, maternity and paternity leave, and retirements. With this in mind, over the last few years the service has been working to improve disability monitoring to ensure a smooth and sustainable return to work. And, considering the amendments to *An Act respecting occupational health and safety*, a joint OHS committee has been identifying psychosocial risks since the beginning of 2024 in order to ensure a safe and healthy workplace.

The pandemic led to the introduction of a pilot project on teleworking. Its conditions, introduced in 2022, are still in effect today.

The reflection process begun on the human resources function and its role in achieving the FIQ's objectives and mandates is still underway and will continue in the coming years. The service strengthened its support of the management team and continued to update and create analysis and monitoring tools to effectively support the organization which has seen major growth in recent years.

Lastly, to raise its profile, the service took part in a number of inter-union meetings to discuss human resources management issues and share best practice in this area.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT REPORT

The General Secretariat plays a key role in coordinating all the Federation's activities as well as its activist and democratic life. Managing decision-making bodies, logistics for the networks and training sessions to only name these events are under its responsibility. In this respect, the last mandate was particularly busy, with the conclusion of two provincial negotiations and several mobilization actions, as well as the intensification of the work of the statutory and ad hoc committees and those linked to the reform of the health network. The logistical success of all these events would not have been possible without close collaboration with the sectors and services involved, including the Administration, Communication and Information-Documentation Services, as well as with the many suppliers.

Managing decision-making bodies: a major challenge

In order to bring the two provincial negotiations that took place during the last mandate to a successful conclusion and to take the necessary decisions in relation to the reform of the health network, 35 regular and special federal councils (provincial until June 2023) were held. Added to this, a special convention in June 2023 for the reintegration of the FIQ | Secteur privé affiliated unions into the FIQ. Organizing each body is a major undertaking in itself, as it requires perfect coordination both in terms of logistics and the coordination of the production, revision and translation of documents.

Nearly 500 official and fraternal delegates travel to the meeting. The General Secretariat ensures the management of transportation, accommodation, meals, reserving rooms and guarantees the meeting can be in hybrid mode. This involves complex logistics, sometimes carried out with very tight deadlines, which sometimes mean having to adapt to unforeseen circumstances, as was the case when health measures were announced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Deploying the hybrid council pilot project also profoundly changed how a deliberative assembly was held for the Federation. Encouraging a better balance between union rep life and family or personal life is a priority for the organization, and this is reflected in the possibility of participating in bodies in virtual or in-person mode. However, adjustments have been made in response to the significant rise in requests for last-minute changes to registrations for all types of events. We also had to adapt to the requirements imposed by suppliers during major events, such as the obligation to close accommodation lists almost a month before an event, with no possibility of cancellation free of charge, for example.

In collaboration with the Information-Technology Documentation Service, adjustments were deployed to facilitate reservations for events, in particular concerning the information needed to register union reps. Adding an employee was therefore necessary to meet the union reps' needs and keep up with the pace imposed by the responsibilities inherent in organizing this type of event.

Access to a reliable internet connection during meetings has become a real issue. Some suppliers are no longer able to guarantee the reliability required to ensure the distribution of the organization's work. An emergency procedure to deal with internet connection failures has been drawn up in collaboration with certain suppliers.

Training, events and various meetings

The logistics event team has supported the holding of:

- More than 125 training sessions
- 40 meetings of work groups stemming from Bill 15
- 50 meetings of statutory and ad hoc committees
- 10 networks
- 9 major demonstrations
- More than 300 other events

Strategic planning and follow-up of the priority actions

Strategic planning is a tool essential for any organization, because it gives clear and coherent direction to its actions, mobilizes resources in the best possible way and maximizes the impact of its efforts to defend members' interests, based on an ambitious and well-defined roadmap. On the basis of the three major orientations adopted at the 2021 Convention (women of action, progressive women and women fighting systemic racism), the organization carried out all or part of nearly 95% of all the actions planned, despite a difficult context, with provincial negotiations dragging on and a major network reform disrupting the achievement of objectives.

In this respect, the General Secretary, along with internal resources, ensured the coordination and strict monitoring of the commitments and orientations resulting from the strategic planning. An evaluation of all actions in the strategic planning was presented to the delegation three times since 2021.

The same is true for the Federation's priority actions, adopted every year by the delegation after a presentation by the General Secretary and the Sociopolitical Sector. These are part of an internal and external context and reflect members' priorities and the progress of their working conditions. In this respect, the fight to achieve safe healthcare professional-to-patient ratios has been a recurring priority in recent years. We must stay the course as long as this objective has not been achieved!

- **2022 priority actions**
 - Update the period for changing union allegiance;
 - Prepare for the next provincial negotiations;
 - Healthcare professionals-to-patient ratios.

- **2023 priority actions**

The way in which the priority actions for 2023 were conceived was revised to reflect more closely the three lines of the 2022-2025 strategic planning, at the heart of which are:

- Provincial negotiations;
- Fight to obtain a law on safe ratios;
- Demand a more inclusive, accessible health network exempt from systemic discrimination.

- **2024 priority actions**

- Conclude the negotiation of the new collective agreement and deploy the new work contract;
- Bill 15: an imposed priority;
- Ratios: knowing how to impose your priorities.

- **2025 priority actions**

- Deployment of the new collective agreement: reaping the benefits of last year's collective efforts;
- The Convention: affirming the FIQ's role and identity;
- The union allegiance vote in health care: positioning the FIQ as the top choice;
- Implementing safe ratios: a project that provides structure for the quality of care in Québec;
- The impact of budget cuts in health care;
- Mobilization.

Outlook

The General Secretariat is responsible for ensuring that decision-making bodies run smoothly and that the FIQ's major orientations and decisions adopted by the delegation are implemented fairly and meticulously. Its work, often in the background, enables the organization to operate efficiently and strategically. Moreover, the mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of its actions under the responsibility of the General Secretariat are regular and well established.

The next major mandate for the General Secretariat is certainly the organization of the 2025 Convention, which will determine the orientations that will guide the Federation's actions for the next four years. They are inspired by a clear vision of the objectives and gains to be achieved, as well as the context in which the organization must navigate, particularly with the deployment of Santé Québec. The long-term objectives thus defined will enable the FIQ to increase its clout and rely on the mobilization and solidarity of its members and union reps to put its issues on the public agenda and achieve concrete gains.

APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF EMPLOYEES BY SECTOR AND SERVICE

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Julie Côté
Marie-Josée Côté
Mélanie Crevier
Léonie Cyr
Mélanie D'Amours
Benoît Dandurand
Simon De Carufel
Laurence Désaulniers
Naomi Deschambault
Pierre Desnoyers
Myriam Desrochers
Malone Docteur
Amélie Dolbec
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Joint Officer: Labour Relations Sector, Research Team

Natalie Levesque, Licensed Practical Nurse Vice-President

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Officer: Negotiation Sector, Organization of Work and Professional Practice Sector

Roberto Bomba, Treasurer

Officer: Treasury, Union Defence Fund (FDS), Information Technology-Documentation Service, Social Security Sector – Retirement, Internal and Administrative Services, Joint Officer: Social Security Sector – Insurance

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Officer: General Secretariat, Organization and follow-up of meetings, action plan and priority actions

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