

EN ACTION

VOL 22 – NO 2 – MAY 2009

FÉDÉRATION INTERPROFESSIONNELLE DE LA SANTÉ DU QUÉBEC

Special Federal Council
May 19, 20 and 21, 2009



Priorities for acting on the labour shortage

Lina Bonamie
President

PRIORITIES FOR ACTING ON THE LABOUR SHORTAGE



It was with emotion that Lina Bonamie opened her last Federal Council as the president of the Federation. Ms Bonamie reminded the delegates of the importance of the discussions of this Federal Council and that they would confirm the priorities of care professionals in the sectorial negotiations.

Negotiation

P.2

Sectorial draft collective agreement

SISP-Negotiation

P.4

Follow-up of the intersectorial negotiations
Election results

Ms Bonamie first recalled for the delegates the announcement of the creation of the Common Front between the *Secrétariat intersyndical des services publics* (SISP), the *Confédération des syndicats nationaux* (CSN) and the *Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec* (FTQ), made public on May 11th. "It's an historical common front and a union power in which nearly 500,000 employees in the public and parapublic sectors are being asked to invest", indicated the president.

She added that "this unprecedented alliance will certainly make the government react. The objective of this Common Front is to negotiate four matters at the same intersectorial table: salary, retirement, regional disparities and parental rights. A non-raiding agreement has also been signed in order that all energy is concentrated on the renewal of the collective agreements. Therefore, all the conditions are in place to develop sound solidarity among government workers and to insure that the government negotiates in good faith".

The priorities of the negotiations being at the heart of this Federal Council,

Ms Bonamie continued by specifying that these priorities – the recognition of inconveniences, the recognition of responsibilities, the recognition of additional training, the arrangement of work time – were determined by the Negotiating Committee to specifically meet the many major problems of a labour shortage, to encourage the reconciliation of work-personal-family life, to attract young people and retain the older ones and, lastly, to insure an efficient organization of work. "Care professionals have the right to practice in healthy conditions that insure a real quality of life. Quebecers have the right to receive quality, accessible care" she emphasized.

"The consultations on the negotiation priorities in the various local general assemblies have concluded and you will be called upon to decide on different motions, amendments and counter-motions passed by these local assemblies. A second consultation will be held to discuss all the motions of the sectorial draft collective agreement. I hope that care professionals will turn out in great numbers at these general assemblies. It is a crucial step for the future of their profession and for the

long-term survival of the Quebec healthcare system. The members need to support this draft, they must believe in it and collaborate in its development in order that the demands may correspond to their needs and, above all, be successful", explained the president.

Ms Bonamie concluded this Federal Council by announcing, with a heavy heart, that she is officially leaving her position as president on May 29th. She will pass the torch to the new president at the June Federal Council. She stated, "We have two very good candidates running and an experienced executive committee. I am confident that you will make your choice based on the person's qualities and that you will rally around the president who comes out on top. Having started and been an activist for a long time at Hôpital Maisonneuve-Rosemont, I will be a fraternal delegate from that institution at the next Federal Council".

In conclusion, she warmly thanked all the personnel at the Federation as well as the management personnel and the delegation for their considerable support and undeniable activism. ■

POSTE-PUBLICATION

Convention 40007983

(adresse de retour)

FIQ – Québec | 1260, boul. Lebourgneuf
Bur. 300, Québec (Québec) G2K 2G2

SECTORIAL DRAFT COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT



From left to right: Francine Savard, Sylvie Savard, Serge Prévost and Gino Pouliot

Within the framework of the work to define the FIQ sectorial draft, the first step was cleared with the consultation on the priorities of negotiations. At the last Federal Council in March, new motions, amendments and counter-motions were tabled, and following the consultations in the various general assemblies, others have been passed. At this Special Federal Council, the delegates were called upon to decide only on new motions and counter-motions concerning the priorities of negotiations.

Following a long debate, the majority of the delegates passed the four priorities of negotiations:

- the recognition of inconveniences;
- the recognition of responsibilities;
- the recognition of additional training;
- the arrangement of work time.

Then, Sylvie Savard, Executive Officer in charge of negotiations, and the other members of the negotiating coordination committee, Gino Pouliot, Serge Prévost and Francine Savard, presented the 2009 sectorial draft collective agreement to the delegates which will be submitted to FIQ members for consultation, debate and adoption.

On the one hand, this draft contains the priority demands which further explain the impact of the priorities of the negotiations. On the other hand, all the other more general demands are included in it. These have been drawn up based on the different problems raised by the consultants, union representatives or still to align the texts of some articles with changes brought about by different laws.

THE PRIORITY DEMANDS

It is imperative that the government recognize the labour shortage and the disastrous effects it has on care professionals: burnout, shortness of breadth, general dissatisfaction with working conditions, etc. It is imperative that imaginative solutions be found to counter the major problems of a labour shortage, whether qualitative or quantitative, to improve working conditions in

order to make the work environment more attractive, develop loyalty among young workers, to support the care professionals who have carried the healthcare network for many years and to find the means to keep the more experienced at work. These measures must not be considered a privilege, but a right to practice in safe conditions and an assurance of a real quality of life.

Changes are necessary in order to offer a work environment where the organization of work is efficient and to give care professionals the opportunity to accomplish their work adequately. Solutions must be found that allow the FIQ members to practice their profession in a context that measures up to their expectations and competencies with the objective of maintaining quality healthcare as well as access to services for the public.

Here is a summary of the demands aimed at clearly identifying the priorities of negotiation.

■ The recognition of inconveniences

This priority is aimed at recognizing the inconveniences that care professionals endure by working in the field of healthcare - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - and to adequately compensate them. Thus, twelve recommendations identify the conditions concerning the increases demanded for evening, night and weekend premiums, an increase in the number of statutory holidays paid at double time and the payment of overtime hours for the employee who holds a university degree. In addition, the draft introduces a scarcity premium for the job titles that are affected by the labour shortage.

■ The recognition of responsibilities

The evolution and the transformation of healthcare services as well as the clientele served requires changes in the collective agreement regarding the notions of more specialized care. Recommendations propose new definitions for critical care and for mental health care and the recognition of prosthetic units.

■ The recognition of additional training

These recommendations are aimed at getting recognition for all postgraduate training in healthcare or concerning the profession in order to receive the additional remuneration, whether required or not by the position held. They also cover the recognition of post university training and the classification in the nurse clinician job title for all nurses who have a baccalaureate degree. One recommendation specifies that the requirements to obtain a nurse clinician or care counsellor position be the same.

■ The arrangement of work time

The arrangement of work time model which includes a full-time position (4 days a week) for all care professionals includes about twenty recommendations on the reduction of the workweek, on remuneration, statutory holidays and sick leave days, on overtime and annual vacation. One recommendation also suggests a way to stop the use of independent labour from private agencies. Lastly, a final recommendation allows an institution to be excluded from the arrangement of work time process if they meet the pre-established criteria.

*The assemblies on
the consultation
are important.*

*Attend in great
numbers!*



THE OTHER DEMANDS

The second part of the draft that contains more general recommendations that are not necessarily linked to the adopted priorities, is aimed at aligning the content of some articles in the Decree in lieu of a collective agreement with that of various laws and to resolve some of the difficulties experienced in the application of the Decree. The demands affect the working conditions of care professionals in all types of institutions and modify many articles in the Decree. Here is a summary of the main demands.

- That the beneficiary attendant who becomes a nursing assistant receive the salary provided in the salary scale for this job title immediately superior to that she received in the job title she is leaving.
- That a nurse promoted to team leader, a respiratory therapist promoted to clinical instructor or technical coordinator and a nursing assistant promoted to nursing assistant team leader receive, in their respective new job titles, the salary provided in the echelon for this job title corresponding to the echelon that she had in the job title she is leaving.
- That the night premium be paid when the employee takes the retention days provided in the letter of Understanding N° 6.
- That the powers and functions of the Committee on Care be to study complaints on workload and any issue directly related to care.
- That the expenses and fees of the person who intervenes for the Committee on Care for problems concerning workload be assumed by the employer.
- That the employee who takes a part-time leave without pay to teach accumulates her seniority as a full-time employee for a maximum of 12 months and the employee who takes a part-time leave without pay to study accumulates her seniority as a full-time employee for the length of the leave.
- That the employee who must remain available in the institution during meal periods be paid at straight time for the complete meal period.
- That the employee may postpone a statutory or compensatory holiday scheduled during a period of disability.
- That the FIQ decide which insurers can make submissions for the insurance contract on the condition that they have a large enough office in Quebec.
- That the definition of disability be modified to include the notion of stable condition.
- That the employee may benefit from a rehabilitation period during a period of disability as long as the link of employment exists without extending the employer's payment of salary insurance benefits past the 104th week.
- That the medical arbitration clause be reviewed in order to bring the corrective actions required as well as a review and correction of the list of physicians acting as physician-arbitrators in cases of medical arbitration.
- That an employee may contest any decision of the employer under the medical arbitration procedure, even if a decision of a body or a tribunal constituted by law has ruled on her ability to return to work.
- That an absence caused by an employment injury not interrupt the accumulation of sick leave and annual vacation days.
- That a parking space be allocated to all employees and that it be free for all employees who must use their personal automobile in the performance of their duties.
- That an employee whose automobile is required and who drives more than 8,000 kilometers receive the same benefit as is granted for the first 8,000 kilometers.
- That every employee who takes family leave be allowed to maintain her participation in the pension plan.
- That no time limit be indicated when an employee is inscribed on the special team.
- That an employee who obtains a position under the special team provision in no case receive a lower salary than she received before the beginning of her absence due to her employment injury.
- That a letter of intent be introduced with the aim of taking the necessary steps to amend the Act respecting occupational health and safety in order to recognize the health and social services sector (Social Affairs sector) as a priority group.
- That the employee may be given leave from work, without loss of salary, during the hearing of her case by the review and appeal bodies provided for in the Act respecting industrial accidents and occupational diseases and in the Occupational Health and Safety Act. →



Lina Bonamie, President, marked the retirement of two employees of the Federation who, after working with local teams with pleasure and commitment for many years, will now take on new challenges. The employees are Simon Barrette, Union Consultant in the Union Organizing Service and Marjolaine Théberge, Union Consultant in the Labour Relations Sector. Congratulations on all the hard work and happy retirement!

(cont'd from page 3)

- That appropriate procedures for dealing with complaints of psychological harassment and violence be introduced in the collective agreement, including the following elements: complaints committee and impartial external resource person.
- That an employee who has filed a complaint in a situation of violence or harassment, through a local procedure for handling complaints, have the right to file a grievance if she is not satisfied with the handling of this complaint.
- That an employee who files a grievance in a situation of violence or harassment benefit from a 90-day time limit.
- That the definitions of the nurse, nursing assistant, respiratory therapist and perfusionist classes of personnel be reviewed to conform to the evolution of professional practices in relation to the legislative and regulatory changes.
- That the retention leaves provided for in Letter of Understanding N° 6 concerning the employees age 55 and over who are eligible for retirement be renewed while updating the conditions.
- That the professional training and guidance activities provided for any new employee with less than 5 years of practice be agreed to by the parties and also the conditions and type of activities to be established under the human resources development plans.
- Union leaves automatically granted when the request is made 10 days in advance.

THE NEXT STEPS

This sectorial draft collective agreement establishes a determining shift in offering the best solution to the current problems and in improving the working conditions of care professionals. The local general assemblies will be consulted at the beginning of June to debate and pass this draft. The results of the consultation are expected by June 29th. Then the demands will be compiled and the draft collective agreement will be presented at the Special Federal Council in September. ■

REPORT ON THE MEETING WITH MINISTER BOLDOC

At the meeting between the FIQ representatives and Yves Bolduc, Minister of Health and Social Services (MSSS), there was the issue of the unfairness created between the full-time and part-time care professionals by the payment of the summer premiums. The minister was in agreement with the FIQ on the fact that this money, at first released as a temporary measure, must remain in the healthcare network but must however, be attached to structured measures.

It was agreed that the deputy minister consult the FIQ on the terms of these measures. That being the case, the MSSS released a flier on May 20th which requires that care professionals give availability on evenings, nights and weekends over the summer period, among other things. The FIQ, who was not consulted on these conditions nor informed that the flier would be released, will follow up with the Minister in order that he be informed of the FIQ's disagreement. ■

ELECTION RESULTS

Two positions on statutory and permanent committees were up for election at this Federal Council. Marie-Claude Ouellet, from the CSSS Pierre-De Saurel (SPS Sorel-Tracy) and Sylvain Allard, from the CSSS Dorval-Lachine-Lasalle (PSSU), were elected by acclamation to the Election Committee and the Occupational Health and Safety Committee respectively. ■

FOLLOW-UP OF THE INTERSECTORIAL NEGOTIATIONS

The members of the Coordinating Committee for negotiations explained to the delegates that a meeting was held on May 11th between representatives from the SISP-N and the *Conseil du trésor* in order to set out the strategic framework of the intersectorial negotiations as well as the desired time frame.

Remember that four subjects – salaries, retirement, parental rights and regional disparities – will be dealt with at the intersectorial table SISP – CSN – FTQ and will affect all employees in the public and parapublic sectors.

The objective of the SISP is to table the demands as a common front at the end of October 2009, start the negotiation sessions with the *Conseil du trésor* in January 2010 in order to conclude a negotiated agreement by March 31, 2010, the date the Decree in lieu of a collective agreement ends. The *Conseil du trésor* will respond to the discussions of that meeting over the next few days. ■

The members of the Executive Committee and the delegation took a moment to wish the president, Lina Bonamie, a happy and lengthy retirement. She is leaving the position at the end of May. A festive evening will be held at the September Federal Council to honour her 20 years of activism and involvement.

