

## SPECIAL NEGOTIATIONS

**On September 16 and 17, the delegates from the FIQ affiliated unions met in Montreal for a Special Federal Council to have an in-depth discussion on one of the four priorities of negotiations.**

As a reminder, the four priorities adopted by the delegates at the May Federal Council are:

- the recognition of the inconveniences linked to work in the health-care field;
- the recognition of responsibilities;
- the recognition of additional training and;
- the arrangement of work time.

These four basic principles were the starting point for the development of the sectorial draft collective agreement.



Of these four priorities, it is arrangement of work time that represents the biggest change for the future of the conditions of practice of nursing and cardio-respiratory professionals. Considering the importance of the proposed changes, the members of the executive committee, negotiating committee as well as the coordination committee for negotiations agreed that a full federal council was needed to discuss it. Concerned with taking into consideration the concerns expressed by the members during the June consultation process, the FIQ representatives submitted a recommendation for discussion that integrates the spirit of all the comments received.

This federal council allowed a discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of putting forth a demand for four day a week full-time positions for all employees in the health-care network. Taking into consid-

eration the disadvantages raised by the members, a mechanism which would insure a gradual transition to all positions being full-time positions has been provided. Thus, the employer and the local union could agree, if they both want to, to maintain a maximum of 10% of employees with part-time status and to replace them with full-time employees as these positions would become vacant.

Because it is clear:

- that the government cannot disregard the current staff shortage;
- that it cannot be allowed to put the services and the care given to the public in jeopardy nor to weaken the network;
- that it must also recognize that this shortage has disastrous effects on care professionals: burnout, running out of steam, general dissatisfaction with working conditions, etc.;

the adopted recommendation therefore, offers a means to act on the staff shortage and the workload by:

- the stabilization of the care teams;
- the quality of life at work;
- the reconciliation of family/personal/work life;



- the quality of care and;
- the recognition of care professionals.

It is true that this is a determinant shift. This change offers the best solution to the current problems and it also contributes to improving working conditions with the objective of:

- making the field more attractive;
- developing loyalty among young members;
- supporting care professionals who have been holding up the health-care network for many years and;
- finding the means to keep the more experienced staff working.

Care professionals have the right to practice in healthy conditions that insure a real quality of life. Changes are inevitable in order to offer a workplace with efficient organization of work. We must have the audacity to meet this big challenge which surely represents an investment for the future.

