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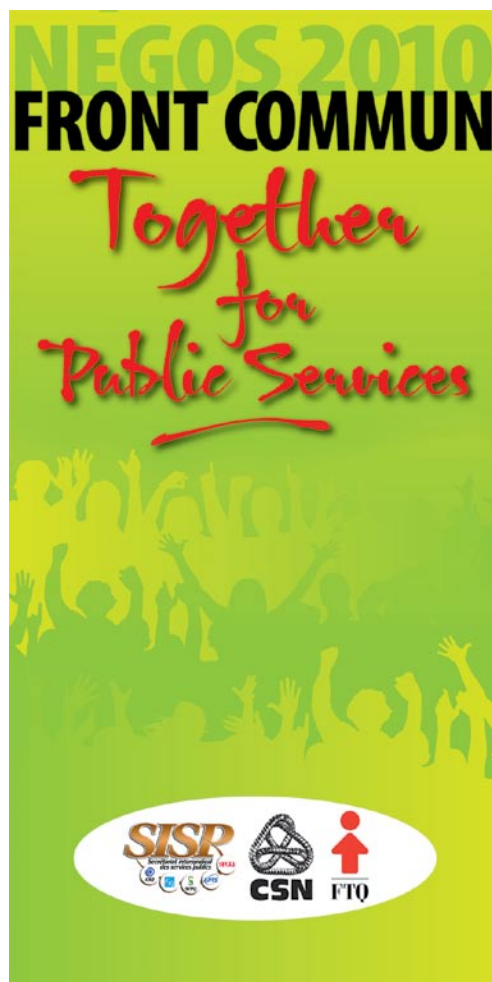
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DECEPTIVE OFFERS

On October 30th, the Common Front (SISP-CSN-FTQ) filed its demands on retirement, regional disparities, parental rights and salaries. A month later, on November 30, 2009, the representatives from the Conseil du trésor (C.T.) tabled their offers on the four matters negotiated at the Common Front central table.



Intersectorial filing in Quebec City on October 30, 2009
Photo by Clément Allard



That meeting essentially consisted of a brief presentation of the offers by the spokesperson for the C.T. to the member organizations of the Common Front. The next meeting is scheduled for December 11th.

Here is a summary of the C.T. offers:

SALARY OFFERS

A maximum increase of 7%, over five years, including all labour costs, that is, all the demands of all the labour organizations representing the employees in the public and parapublic sectors;

For the last two years, the possibility of participating in enrichment on the basis of economic growth if, and only if, the objective of a balanced budget is reached.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The government suggests that the amounts generated by the improvement in productivity and efficiency or by a revision of organization of work may be used to resolve some sectorial problems agreed between to the parties.

FRAMEWORK LAW ON RECONCILIATION OF FAMILY-WORK

One of the Common Front's demands is the setting up of a working committee whose mandate would be to develop a framework law to encourage reconciliation of family-work in the workplaces. The C.T. has no intention of negotiating such a law.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

The demand of the Common Front on parental rights is to standardize

the contents of different laws with that of the collective agreements. The government favours setting up a parity committee to analyze the possible matches with some laws such as the Act respecting Labour Standards. This committee will make a report to the central negotiating table.

OTHERS

The government also shared its interest in two other subjects, salary relativity and the pursuit of discussions on the system of negotiations. This last item would of course be done after an agreement is reached.

The web site of the Federation <www.fiqsante.qc.ca> remains an excellent source of information on the subject. ■

Merry
Christmas!



**WORD FROM
THE PRESIDENT**

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**ARE THE GOVERNMENT
OFFERS A SALARY
FREEZE IN DISGUISE?**

Régine Daurand

On November 30th, the Quebec government tabled its offers to the Common Front and, in light of the deceptive offers from the *Conseil du trésor*, no one doubts that the upcoming months of negotiations will be difficult.

It has to be said that Minister Monique Gagnon-Tremblay easily manoeuvred around getting the public to believe that she resisted a salary freeze. But in reality, is she really offering salary increases to the 475,000 government employees? Nothing is less certain.

It is good to recall that the Common Front is asking for a salary increase of 11.25%, over three years, including a salary catch-up. The government claims they are offering an increase limited to 7% over five years, including the costs related to maintaining pay equity, to salary relativity, to the pension plans, and to the corrections made to the sectorial problems, if applicable. In short, this actually means an increase of 1.4% per year to cover all labour costs. The difference between the Common Front demands and the government offers is considerable. The *Conseil du trésor* Minister has maybe stated her wish to negotiate by tabling her offers 30 days after the Common Front demands were filed, but that is not enough. Again the offers need to be at a level that the government employees deserve.

The game is not won and, over the upcoming months, solidarity and determination must be demonstrated to make this government see reason. The public sector is losing more and more ground. On November 26th, the *Institut de la statistique du Québec* (ISQ) confirmed the Common Front's contentions: the salaries paid to the civil service and to the health and education networks are 8.7% lower than those paid for comparable jobs in other sectors of the economy. The government must make an effort. The quality of public services is conditional upon the improvement of working and salary conditions for government employees.

The Quebec government claims on all fronts that public finances are in bad shape and everyone needs to buckle down. However, what they are not saying is that the thousands of women and men providing public services can no longer continue to be depleted year after year. In 2005, this same government put an abrupt end to the negotiations by freezing salaries for the first two years and

only offering a 2% increase for the following four years. Yet, at the time the Quebec economic situation was much better.

When will be the best time to meet the well-founded demands of the 475,000 government employees? The government has to make some political choices. The problems of attraction and retention of personnel are alarming and these labour shortages cannot be curtailed without the government offering its employees decent salary and working conditions.

The filing of these management offers is only the beginning of negotiations. They do not meet the government employees' demands, but we must have hope. The members of the Common Front organizations, including those of the FIQ, must be united and mobilized in order to maintain pressure on the government with the goal of making them see reason. ■

THE SISP-N SPOKESPERSON AT THE FEDERAL COUNCIL



Brent Tweddell, SISP-N spokesperson

When the time came to choose the spokesperson for the next negotiations in the public sector, the members of the *Secrétariat intersyndical des services publics* (SISP) gave the mandate to Brent Tweddell, Director of the Quebec negotiations and social security for the CSQ. The *SISP-Négociation* spokesperson, within the scope of his duties, must, in collaboration with the coordinators from each of the SISP member organizations, develop a general strategy for the salary, parental rights, retirement and regional disparities clauses.

Mr. Tweddell came to the Federal Council to talk with the FIQ delegates and to give an update on the headway made in the SISP-N files. He, in particular, made sure the delegates knew that all the groups filed their demands at the sectorial and intersectorial levels at the end of October. However, he specified that each organization is the master of its own demands at the sectorial level. The intersectorial management offers were received on November 30th. Mr. Tweddell concluded with "The challenge is enormous and the hardest is yet to come, but up to now, the plan is unfolding as planned". ■

RREGOP: THE ANSWER FROM THE *CONSEIL DU TRÉSOR*

On November 18th, the *Conseil du trésor* (C.T.) tabled its offers on retirement. Generally, its concerns meet those of the Common Front, but there is still some discrepancies on certain positions. Here are the highlights of what was discussed:



THE FUNDING OF THE PLAN AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE CONTRIBUTION RATE

In order to insure the protection of the benefits and to maintain the most stable contribution rate possible for the 475,000 government employees, it is urgent to change the funding of RREGOP. The C.T. says it is ready to change the current actuarial method and to move to a single rate method. Although some of the parameters in this new method are identical, there remain significant distinctions that the Common Front needs to negotiate.

The contribution formula

The current RREGOP contribution formula is:

Contribution rate X (salary - 35% MPE).

The Common Front's demands for the modification of the formula and to replace the 35% exemption by a 25% MPE exemption, while determining a new contribution rate. With this modification, the contribution of the highest paid employee will be lower and that of the lower paid employee will be increased. The Common Front demands that the government incur this increase.

The government accepts that the contribution rate for RREGOP be changed as of January 1, 2011, providing that the funding is assumed by the employees and managed by the CARRA.

Indexation

When the solvency conditions permit, the indexation formula applied to the contribution years between July 1, 1982 and December 31, 1999 (CPI - 3%) would be replaced by the following CPI-3%, with a minimum of 50% of the CPI. The application of this measure is a prerequisite for any use of all or a part of a surplus which exceeds 20% of the actuarial liability.

Thus, any active or retired participant who has contribution years during this period would benefit from this change. The government has been silent on this demand.

Uncapping

The maximum of 35 years of service recognized for pension calculation would be abolished. Thus, a participant would continue to contribute to the plan after 35 years of service and would accumulate her retirement benefits.

The government proposes that the maximum of 35 years of service for the calculation be increased to 38 years as of January 1, 2011. A participant in RREGOP could accumulate an annuity up to 76% of her salary for the best five years.

THE GOVERNMENT WANTS THE FOLLOWING CHANGES, AS OF JANUARY 1, 2011:

Minimum age for retirement: 55

Presently, a person is eligible for retirement if she is 55 years of age or if she has 35 years of service for purposes of eligibility. Consequently, in the event she has accumulated 35 years of service, a person may retire before age 55. With the demand of the C.T., she would have to wait until she is age 55 to retire.

Increase in the actuarial reduction which is presently at 4%

At RREGOP, a person may retire, without actuarial reduction, when she is 60 years of age or when she has 35 years of service for purposes of eligibility. When a participant is eligible for retirement, but one of these criteria is not met, a reduction of 4% per year of anticipation is applied to the pension annuity. The government suggests an increase in this reduction for those who retire before reaching 60 years of age or 35 years of service for purposes of eligibility.

Tighter rules for returning to work

The government wants to impose a delay for retirees before they can return to work for an employer covered by RREGOP.

Rate setting for buy-backs

An updating of the grids serving the rate setting for buy-backs of leaves without pay is demanded. This new rate setting would be based on the hypotheses serving the assessments on December 31, 2008 and would be updated with each actuarial assessment.

In the meantime, the C.T. suggests that the cost of buy-backs be at least equal to a buy-back made within 6 months of returning from a leave without pay.

Pension credits

The government suggests ending the possibility of acquiring service prior to RREGOP (pension credits).

Bank of 90 days

The government wants to put an end to the bank of 90 days. This bank is automatically added by the CARRA at the time of retirement and serves to cover the periods of absence without pay that occur during the participant's career.

Clarification of the notions of eligible employee(s) and employer(s)

The government suggests the setting up of a committee in order to clarify these notions. ■

Other meetings are foreseen soon in order to discuss the government's demands and to reach a negotiated agreement.



At the CEPSUM, October 29, 2009
Photo by Clément Allard

MOBILIZATION: FIQ MEMBERS PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR!

Over the last few weeks, the first mobilization events linked to the Quebec negotiations took place and there was no doubt that the members of the Federation responded positively to the call. The assessment of the activity for the sectorial filing as well as that of the grand tour of the Common Front was presented at the Federal Council.

AN UNPRECEDENTED TOUR

The success of the Common Front's grand tour is unequivocal. More than 9,500 people, members of different organizations, participated in the activities organized in the 13 visited regions. Whether at public assemblies, visits to workplaces, large rallies at the Sports Complex at the Université de Montréal (CEPSUM) or at the filing of the demands in Quebec City, several hundred members of the Federation were present. In addition, a great majority of local unions affiliated with the Federation, proceeded to do a local filing with their employer, in collaboration with their local union partners in the Common Front.

AN HISTORICAL SECTORIAL FILING

This is a historical Common Front: the demonstration at the filing of the sectorial demands was also a first. Indeed, On October 29th, hundreds of FIQ delegates supported the Negotiating Committee for the minutes prior to the Committee meeting the management Negotiating Committee for health and social services. This was the first time that the Federation had organized such an event for the filing of a draft collective agreement. ■

A FILING: COMMON CONCERNS



Francine Savard, Union Consultant,
spokesperson at the sectorial table

On October 29, 2009, the team made up of the coordination and the members of the FIQ Negotiating Committee filed all their demands, except those related to job titles, with the management negotiating committee for the health and social services sector.

Francine Savard, the spokesperson for the Federation, shared the care professionals concerns about the current context and the future of the health network with the management representatives. Thus, shortness of breath, burnout, mandatory overtime, lack of personnel and the deterioration of working conditions and quality of life at work are the lot of care professionals.

All the demands filed by the negotiating team are imaginative: they represent an important and necessary change in addition to encouraging the attraction and retention of care professionals. One of the pursued objectives is to change the image of the healthcare field in order to attract the next generation of professionals and to retain experienced labour. The management party insists they have the same concerns of making the network attractive and retaining the existing expertise.

The filing of the demands on the job titles was done on December 7, 2009. At the time the *FIQ en Action* went to press, the tabling of the management offers was scheduled before the holidays. ■



FIQ sectorial filing in Montreal on October 29,
2009

PAY EQUITY ACT: 13th ANNIVERSARY

The Pay Equity Act came into effect on November 21, 1996 in Quebec. So, it has been 13 years since Quebec companies with 10 or more employees must insure that the remuneration they pay is free of gender bias.

A report on the implementation of the Pay Equity Act was presented by the Minister of Labour in November 2006, that is, 10 years after its passing. According to the data in this report, about 47% of companies subject to the Act had completed their pay equity process and the average percentage of adjustment was 6.5%.

Without being intentional, systematic discrimination is nevertheless quite often invisible. It is therefore imperative to insure that this pay equity, acquired after a specific programme was installed, be applied and maintained. According to information taken from a survey carried out by the *Commission de l'équité salariale (CÉS)* in 2004, only 14% of companies stated they had completed their pay equity process declaring having made modifications in order to maintain this equity. However, nearly 80% of companies stated they had made no modifications but nevertheless did make some changes.

EQUITY AND THE EMPLOYEES IN HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION

The work in the pay equity programme started in 1998, but an agreement was only reached in 2006. This work included the evaluation of 354 job titles and covered 407,000 people.

The *Conseil du trésor* must now insure that pay equity is maintained in its domain. More than once during 2008, the Federation intervened with the government in order to jointly evaluate the maintenance.

On January 12, 2009, having received no satisfactory answer, Sylvie Savard, Executive Officer in charge of the Negotiations Sector, sent a letter to the *Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor* and the Minister of Health and Social Services explicitly asking that the parties proceed to carry out the evaluation of the maintenance.

On April 24, 2009, the FIQ filed a complaint with the CÉS (Pay Equity Commission) after having realized that, in some situations experienced in the network, pay equity could not be maintained. A similar process was also undertaken by a care professional.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2009?

On March 12, 2009, the government tabled Bill 25 aimed at bringing several changes to the Pay Equity Act. This Bill was eventually passed in May.

WHAT IS EVALUATION OF PAY EQUITY MAINTENANCE?

This exercise is essentially aimed at insuring that job titles that are predominantly female in a firm always be paid a salary of equivalent value as that for job titles that are predominantly male.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

It is the employer's responsibility to evaluate the tasks and duties in order to insure the maintenance of the pay equity programme. However, he can do this evaluation alone or as a committee, that is with the various groups of employees in his firm or jointly with the certified association, if this association benefitted from a separate programme.

WHAT EVENTS CAN GENERATE ADJUSTMENTS?

This can be the creation or disappearance of a job title, either female or male, and a modification in the tasks influencing the value of a job title.

WHAT ARE THE DELAYS FOR EVALUATING PAY EQUITY MAINTENANCE AND THE PAYMENT OF SALARY ADJUSTMENTS, IF APPLICABLE?

Every five years, after the posting of the completed pay equity exercise, or as of the date when the exercise should have been completed.

An employer who breaches his obligation to carry out a maintenance evaluation on December 31, 2010 would be subject to pay adjustments retroactive to December 31, 2010, as well as interest calculated at the legal rate. No deferment of the corrective action is authorized.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE OCCURRED IN THE DOMAIN THAT AFFECT THE JOB TITLES REPRESENTED BY THE FEDERATION?

After 2001, several job titles that were predominantly female were created, such as the care counsellor nurse, nurse first surgical assistant and specialty nurse practitioner. These three job titles might have been evaluated in 2001 at the time

the pay equity programme should have been completed.

Even if it was passed in 2002, Bill 90, modifying certain roles, task, duties or responsibilities of several job titles was late in being implemented and required several more adjustments. It is time however, to consider its effects on the job titles of nurses and licensed practical nurses, among others.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TWO COMPLAINTS FILED ON APRIL 24, 2009?

According to the transitional and final measures adopted by the government, the study of any complaint filed after March 11, 2009, that is the day prior to the tabling of the Bill, is suspended until January 1, 2011. The complaints in question will be studied by the CÉS according to the criteria of Bill 25 which modifies the Pay Equity Act. The complaints filed before March 11, 2009 will be studied according to the Pay Equity Act, prior to the present modifications, which do not indicate any delay.

Faced with this fact, the Federation is currently preparing a motion for a court challenge which would cover, in particular, the retroactive effect of a law before it is passed by the National Assembly.

In conclusion, the Federation salutes the government's initiative to maintain the Pay Equity Act which some deem to be useless because, supposedly, pay equity has been reached in Quebec. It must be stated that there is still some road to cover for many women. Also, some care professionals will be solicited during 2010 in order to initiate the work of evaluating some of the job titles represented by the Federation. Their collaboration will be imperative in order that all predominantly female job titles be evaluated based on today's reality. ■



INFLUENZA A(H1N1): THE MEETINGS WITH THE MSSS



Régine Laurent, President of the FIQ, has, on many occasions, denounced the attitude of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS) and that of its minister in the Influenza A(H1N1) file. For the Federation, it is unacceptable that all care professionals are not treated in the same manner. Therefore, it is essential for the Negotiation and OHS Sectors to make the voices of care professionals heard and to negotiate working conditions around the vaccinations and a possible pandemic.

After several meetings with the ministry, the Federation initiated an interunion group (FIQ, APTS, CSN, CSQ, FTQ) in order that all the labour organizations in healthcare apply pressure on the ministry. Discussions have taken place since the last Federal Council for the purpose of agreeing on the working conditions and, thus, to avoid that the government unilaterally impose them.

THE SUBJECTS DISCUSSED WITH THE MSSS

Respect for the working conditions

The only local agreements possible are those which are subject to the provisions negotiated locally and these should not be necessary unless the pandemic becomes worse. It is therefore the responsibility of the employer to evaluate the situation and to negotiate an agreement with the union party that best meets the needs of the urgent situation.

Hiring of alternate resources

In the event that the number of hospitalizations would significantly increase and it would be necessary

to resort to additional resources, the Federation believes that they should have the same conditions as the others, without, however, holding a permanent position because they would only be there for a short period of time.

Shifting of some activities

The objective is that there be enough employees in the centre of activities most affected by the hospitalized cases, for example, in intensive care.

Protective reassignment

The demand of the interunion group is to immediately remove a pregnant employee. However, the government is maintaining its position: the normal procedure for a protective reassignment of a pregnant employee must be followed. The FIQ reminds everyone that if there is still a risk following a reassignment, that the employee must never hesitate to make a new request for protective reassignment.

Family-work reconciliation

The Federation informed the ministry of the problem of daycare

closures during a pandemic. An answer is expected at a later meeting.

Employee who contracts the virus

The FIQ's position is clear: the employee in contact with the virus or who is infected by it must not suffer any loss of salary. The MSSS is not open to this subject, its position being that influenza can be contracted outside the workplace. If an employee suffers a loss of salary, she must contact her local team and contest this loss, if necessary.

Independent manpower

In a context of health urgency, the FIQ believes that all care professionals should have the same rights and the same working conditions. The MSSS must give an answer to this question at a future meeting.

At the last meeting, the interunion and the ministry agreed to meet regularly in order to settle the various problems that exist in the institutions. So, several answers are to come. ■

OUR PROFESSIONAL DIVERSITY: A COLLECTIVE ENDOWMENT



In 2002, the Quebec government passed Bill 90, which, in particular, forced the merger of bargaining units, which brought about the presence of licensed practical nurses and respiratory therapists in the FIQ ranks.

Since then, the attitude of some employers causes the impression of inequity among some members of the Federation: improvised restructuring of organization of work, lack of willingness to clarify roles, tasks and responsibilities of the members of the care team, ministerial directives, like the retention weeks or the attraction and retention premiums, maintaining pay equity which is not sorted out, etc., that favour certain professions.

URGENCY TO ACT

COUNTERACT THE PRESENCE OF PRIVATE HEALTHCARE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES



OUR PROFESSIONAL DIVERSITY: A COLLECTIVE ENDOWMENT (CONT'D)

Thus, this situation brings about a feeling of isolation for some members who have the impression that the concerns, interventions, and services from the FIQ are more oriented towards the nursing profession, to the detriment of other professionals.

Therefore, the Executive Committee has decided to undertake an approach in 2010 that will lead to the identification of the specific needs of the professionals in the different job titles as well as the problems experienced and their causes. This approach will start with a consultation tour which will serve to determine the adjustments to make and the tools to develop in order to fully deploy the collective endowment which represents the professional diversity of the FIQ.

Daniel Gilbert, Carole Grant and Éline Trottier, members of the Executive Committee representing, respectively the nurses, licensed practical nurses and respiratory therapists, will lead the approach and will keep the affiliated unions informed of the tour calendar and the subsequent steps. ■

COUNTERACT THE PRESENCE OF PRIVATE HEALTHCARE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES URGENCY TO ACT

Recourse to personnel from private, for profit, healthcare employment agencies by the employers in the public health-care network is not a new phenomenon. However, it has taken on a whole new dimension over the last several years.

This is the reason that the FIQ set up the Ad Hoc Working Committee on independent labour in January 2009. This Committee was made up of union consultants from the different sectors and services of the Federation and from the different regions of Quebec and members of the coordination. The Committee's mandate was to draw up a portrait of the use of personnel from private healthcare employment agencies in Quebec, to identify the main problems and issues associated with their presence and, lastly, to come up with avenues of action to counteract the privatization of nursing and cardio-respiratory care in Quebec.

Daniel Gilbert, 2nd Vice-President, accompanied by Jean Villeneuve and Lucie Mercier, Union Consultants, presented the delegates with the

Plan of action to counteract the presence of private healthcare employment agencies in the public network. The main objectives of this plan of action, which was adopted unanimously, are:

- Make the union reps, members and the upcoming professionals aware of and inform them of the harmful consequences of the mushrooming of private employment agencies in the public health-care network;
- Expose the government's, the regional agencies' and the employers' inertia in the private healthcare employment agencies in the health-care network file;
- Expose the perils associated with the recourse to private health-

care employment agencies in the health-care network in order that the professional corporations take a position;

- Fight against the disparities in the working and salary conditions of care professionals working in the health-care network;
- Inform the public of the harmful consequences of the mushrooming of the private healthcare employment agencies in the health-care network;
- Expose the recourse to private healthcare employment agencies and the inertia of the decision-makers. ■



Roberto Bomba and Julie Ouellet, members of the UDF Committee and Lise Martel, Treasurer of the FIQ

NECESSARY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Executive Committee submitted a request for financial support from the Union Defence Fund (UDF) Committee to cover the carrying out of the Plan of action to counteract the presence of private healthcare employment agencies in the public network.

The UDF Committee considers that this file has significant general interest and that the growth of the private healthcare employment agencies causes prejudice to the members represented by the FIQ. The difficulties and inequities caused by this situation have many consequences for the care professionals. The FIQ must, by whatever means, try to correct what the care professionals are experiencing, and the UDF Committee is convinced that the plan of action proposed by the Executive Committee is a step towards the solution.

This request for financial support was adopted by a large majority of the delegates.

**THE FEDERATION
IN 2010**

PRIORITY ACTIONS

PRIORITY ACTIONS 2010



In order to confront the major issues imposed by the current context, the FIQ is called upon to pursue the renewal of its action strategies to remain the key contributor that it has always been in the field of union, social and political battles. The next year will be an opportunity to reaffirm the values that motivate the FIQ by orienting its collective leadership towards the pursuit of the fundamental objectives: improvement of the working conditions of care professionals as well as the defence and promotion of public services.

Suzanne Lavoie, FIQ Executive Committee Secretary, accompanied by Lucille Auger, Julie Bouchard and Danielle Couture, Coordinators, presented the 2010 priority actions to the delegation. These actions are grouped under three large priorities, the Quebec negotiations, the fight against the privatization of health-care and the renewal of its activism and its capacity for mobilization.

QUEBEC NEGOTIATIONS

The Federation has not hesitated to develop new alliances in order to, together, defend the files on improvement of working conditions for care professionals and the defence of public services. Thus, in order to give all the necessary weight and support to the next round of negotiations, the FIQ created the first alliance for the negotiations with the Secrétariat intersyndical des services publics (SISP) then with two union confederations, the CSN and the FTQ, to form a common union front.

Here are some of the actions adopted by the delegates:

- Analysis of the evolution of the context in order to develop union strategies aimed at developing bargaining leverage favourable to attaining the objectives of the Federation, the SISP-Négotiation and the Common Front.

- Counsel and support for union representatives for the distribution of information, mobilization, consolidation and for interunion relations within the framework of a negotiation as the SISP and as a Common Front.

FIGHT AGAINST THE PRIVATIZATION OF HEALTHCARE

Whether it concerns the private healthcare worker employment agencies, intermediate resources, specialized medical centres, public-private partnerships or the de-insurance of healthcare services, the FIQ intends to be vigilant at all times concerning the possible transformations of the health and social services network.

In the wake of the changes to the legislation to increase the presence of the private sector in the health field, the Federation hopes to maintain the cap and to strengthen its actions of denunciation, information and education by developing the tools which will enable its representatives and its member to mobilize around this key issue for the years to come.

Here are some of the actions adopted by the delegates:

- Implementation of the action plan to counteract the use of independent manpower in the public health network.

- Setting up of a network to watch the progression of privatization by identifying a lookout per institution and a lookout per TRAC.

RENEWAL OF ACTIVISM AND THE CAPACITY FOR MOBILIZATION AT THE FIQ

The challenges that the FIQ will have to meet in 2010 bring into question more than ever its capacity to renew its union activism which, itself, must contribute to a strong union life, enriched with the support and great involvement of its members. The advances that the Federation is counting on making over the next year depend on the vitality of this collective mobilizing force, that is the 58,000 care professionals that the FIQ represents.

Here are some of the actions adopted by the delegates:

- Creation of tools to provoke involvement of members in union life, for example: welcoming policies, delegates structure, local journal, creation of a box of mobilization tools.
- Support of unions in the setting up of youth committees in all institutions.
- Development and distribution of information, education and mobilization tools in the socio-political files. ■



**ELECTION TO THE
YOUTH COMMITTEE**

Carine Durocher, from CSSS du Suroît, was elected to the Youth Committee

A FULL INFO-SUPPORT TEAM

In order to complete the team, the Federal Council elected the last three FIQ regional representatives for information and support. They are:

- Outaouais: Martine Chartrand from the Centre hospitalier Pierre-Janet, SRPSQ
- Montérégie: Sonia Mancier from Vigi-Santé Montérégie, PSSU
- Bas-St-Laurent-Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine: Luc St-Laurent from CSSS Rimouski-Neigette, SPSICR

GROUP INSURANCE RATES IN EFFECT AS OF JANUARY 1, 2010



Carole Grant, Executive Officer in charge, Social Security Sector

At the October 22, 2008 Federal Council, the delegates adopted the recommendation from the Executive Committee to accept the submission from *Desjardins Sécurité financière* received in response to our call for tenders. This proposal included a guarantee of the rate for 2 years for the Basic (medications and extended plan III) and Extended I (dental plan) Plans as well as a guarantee of the rate for the extended plan II (life and LTD) until 2012.

Table presenting the accepted rates which will be in effect as of January 1, 2010.

COVERAGE	2009	2010	2011
Basic Plan - medications ¹			The rates of these coverage options will be adjusted according to the conditions of renewal negotiated at that time.
Individual	\$27.65	\$30.14	
One-parent	\$35.67	\$38.88	
Family	\$64.98	\$70.83	
Extended Plan III - Basic Health			
Individual	\$4.90	\$4.90	
One-parent	\$4.90	\$4.90	
Family	\$9.75	\$9.75	
Extended Plan I - Dental			
Individual	\$11.27	\$11.72	
One-parent	\$21.41	\$22.27	
Family	\$31.56	\$32.82	
Extended Plan II ²			
Basic Life and AD&D (rate for \$5,000 of ins.)	\$0.28	\$0.28	\$0.35
Additional Life and AD&D (rate per \$1,000 of ins.)	\$0.07	\$0.07	\$0.089
Dependent children's life (rate per family)	\$0.06	\$0.06	\$0.08
Long-term disability (rate as % of gross salary)	0.715%	0.715%	0.863%

¹ Rate including the employer contribution. As of January 1, 2009, this contribution for an employee with a job title for which the maximum salary on December 13, 2005 is equal to or greater than \$40,000/year is \$1.59 for individual coverage and \$3.98 for one-parent or family coverage. For a job title with a maximum lower than \$40,000, this contribution is \$2.78 for individual coverage and \$6.97 for one-parent or family coverage.

² DSF guarantees for 2012 that the maximum rates for this plan will not exceed the effective rates for 2008.

FINANCIAL FORECASTS: THE FIQ IS IN GOOD FINANCIAL HEALTH

The year 2010 will be an important year for the finances of the Federation because, compared to 2009, a small increase in the budget is foreseen. This fact requires close follow-up in the year to come. The following is the message that Lise Martel, Treasurer, accompanied by Marie-Claude Martel, Executive Director, and Pierre Giroux, Consultant gave to the delegates.

In the context of Influenza A(H1N1), the loan provided for Protective Reassignment of the pregnant worker (RPTE) is increased to \$50,000 in order to support pregnant care professionals, who must contest the decision of their employer in order to prevail.

Also, the 2010 financial forecast includes the transformation of temporary positions into permanent positions as well as the creation of two new positions, one for a computer technician and a team leader position in documentation. This is to insure the development of all the aspects of the master technology plan for the organization, including the *FIQ Militantes* and *Livelink* modules.

Two positions of union consultant, one for the coordination committee and one for the information-support team, have been added for the duration of the negotiations.

The delegates unanimously passed the 2010 financial forecasts. ■

CNFU: 14th CONVENTION



Régine Laurent, Denyse Joseph, Roberto Bomba, Line Larocque and Michel Léger

Michel Léger, President and Roberto Bomba, Administrative Vice-President of UHCP, as well as Line Larocque, President and Denyse Joseph, grievance agent on the Executive Committee of the SPSICR-MUHC gave a report to the Federal Council delegates of their participation at the biennial 14th convention “Voices in Unison” of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions- CFNU. This convention was held in Vancouver in June, 2009 and 750 delegates from across Canada, Ireland, Australia and the United States attended.

THE WORKLOAD AND MORAL DISTRESS OF NURSING PERSONNEL

During the convention, Patricia Rodney, Professor at the University of British Columbia School of Nursing, presented her research on workload and psychological distress in the workplace. She stated that resources have dramatically diminished over the last few years and that there are many more part-time positions now than before. It has become normal to see Emergency Room corridors full of stretchers. The abnormal has become the norm. The situation is such that care professionals no longer question, they just act to do whatever is possible.

THE STORY OF LORI DUPONT, ONTARIO NURSE

During this time of commemoration of the events at the Polytechnique, the story of Lori Dupont takes on a special meaning. Lori was a nurse working in the Recovery Room of the Hôtel Dieu Hospital in Ontario. She was stabbed at work by her husband, Mark, who was an anaesthesiologist in the same hospital. Mark had been followed by psychiatry since he had attempted suicide with medication. In spite of the fact that there were three complaints of violence against him, the hospital had not taken any measures. There was not even any question on where the medications came from for his suicide attempt, while it was known that if a nurse is suspected of stealing medications the employer will fire her on the spot. Following the coroner’s inquest, which took 10 weeks and the testimony of 51 witnesses, 16 risk factors were identified in the relationship between Lori and Mark and 84 chances to intervene were missed.

THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING A MEMBER OF THE CFNU

The PSSU and MUHC members informed the delegates of the advantages of being a member of the CFNU. Presently, the FIQ has a close relationship with this Federation and regularly follows its work, but it is not a member. The PSSU and MUHC delegates are of the opinion that it is in the FIQ’s interest to join in order to benefit from all the advantages that it offers:

- Access to the results of research projects or statistical reports;
- Collaboration with different Canadian organizations;
- A voice at the different levels of government;
- International discussions.

MEETING OF THE CFNU ON OCTOBER 5, 6, 7 AND 8, 2009, IN OTTAWA

Last October, Régine Laurent, President, attended the meeting of the nursing unions, members of the CFNU, with Michèle Boisclair, 1st Vice President of the FIQ. Régine Laurent gave the Federal Council delegates a summary of this meeting.

Plan of action 2009-2010

- Defend public health services;
- Pursue the reflection on the future of the profession;
- Increase the defense of socioeconomic interests of the members by supporting the negotiations of the collective agreements.

Overtime

- Two Japanese nurses died because they had been forced to work too many overtime hours. These deaths have been well documented and it has been established that they were definitely linked to the excess of overtime hours.

CHSLD

- Discussions brought out that private CHSLDs are being developed throughout Canada. The FIQ proposed that Canadian actions be contemplated.

Youth Committee

- The CFNU has had a Youth Committee for some time, and one of its representatives sits on the presidents’ meetings.
- The next Canadian Youth and Student Conference will be held in Quebec City from January 26 to 30th. The FIQ contributed \$3,000 to the organization of this event.

Working Committee FIQ-FCSH

- The presidents have formally committed to examine the possibility of the FIQ becoming a member of the CFNU.
- The FIQ Executive Committee will set up a working committee and a follow-up will be done at the next Federal Councils. ■



Régine Laurent, President of the FIQ



TWO HOT FILES FOR THE SISP

Régine Laurent, President of the FIQ, informed the delegation of the two main files in which the *Secrétariat intersyndical des services publics* (SISP) has been actively involved over the last several months: the creation of the *Infrastructure Québec*, the agency to replace the *Agence des partenariats public-privé* (PPP) and the prebudget consultations on public funding.

The SISP is denouncing Bill 65, passed on November 26th, which covers the creation of *Infrastructure Québec*. This bill has been unequivocally supported by the opposition parties, a support that the SISP much regrets. In light of the information in the last report from the Auditor General, the SISP considers that it would have been imperative to more closely analyze the issue of recourse to the PPPs which is always to the detriment of public interest.

Following the prebudget consultations, the *Secrétariat* will take a position in the media. Care professionals are therefore asked to watch the media or visit the web site of the Federation: <www.fiqsante.qc.ca> . At the time this article was written, a press conference was scheduled for December 13th and a meeting with Raymond Bachand, Minister of Finance on December 14th.

GENERATION SHOCK, CONFERENCE OF CAROL ALLAIN



Carol Allain, speaker

THE IMPORTANCE IS TO BE DIFFERENT, NOT TO CONFORM

It was with humour, which the delegates seemed to enjoy, that Carol Allain tackled the value gaps that separate the baby boomer generation from the X Y generation. Between 1970 and 2000, society moved from simplicity to multiplexity. It has been 50 years since people asked few questions, decisions were based on rational, the public was poorly educated and they lived mainly in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Today, information circulates at great speed, a bachelor's degree has become the minimal standard and the economy is based on services.

Baby boomers were raised apart from adults, they played outside and they respected parental authority. Their children have lived inside, close to adults who have asked a ton of questions, provided answers, listened to their needs and negotiated compromises. The X Y generation is therefore more concerned with emotion, relationships and communication. They want to see the world, they want to achieve, while their parents dreamed of having a roof over their heads and to eat three times a day.

The way to tackle life is different between these generations and has had an important impact in the workplace. While baby boomers had

the right to recognition after 25 years of loyal service, their children who were born into affluence, inundated with gifts and attention, expect to be appreciated on a daily basis. For them, being successful in life is not synonymous with having a successful life. Interrelations and the work climate therefore become very important.

Thanks to his hilarious monologue, Carol Allain teaches that change in work perspective is a key factor. In a context of a labour shortage, these generational differences must be acknowledged and conditions as well as organization of work likely to attract young people must be offered. ■



STATUS OF WOMEN

THE FIQ, A STRONG VOICE, ACTIONS THAT COUNT



DEPARTURE OF A GREAT ACTIVIST

Régine Laurent, President of the FIQ, marked the retirement of a great activist. Indeed, Francine Dufresne, Union Consultant has decided that the time has come to take up other challenges. During her years at the Federation, Ms Dufresne was distinguished by the duties she performed in the Task and Organization of Work Sector and the Education-Animation Service. Thank you for all your work and happy retirement!

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: UNFORTUNATELY STILL A DAILY EVENT

After having commemorated the 20 years since the events on December 6, 1989 at the Polytechnique in a very special manner, a report from the Status of Women Sector was presented to the delegates by Brigitte Fauteux, Executive Committee member, in replacement of Michèle Boisclair, Executive Officer in charge of the Status of Women Sector, accompanied by Martine Éloy, Union Consultant.

Reading the Bulletin from the Women's Network which is included with this edition of the FIQ en Action, will give the members of the Federation more knowledge on the conferences and discussions held at the meeting of the Women's Network on November 11 and 12 in Montreal with the theme, "Private violence, public violence, break the cycle". This bulletin also proposes information on the 12 days of action against violence against women, as well as a calendar of activities for the 2010 World March of Women which will be launched on March 8th, International Women's Day.

During the Federal Council, the members of the Women's Network had the opportunity to share their traditional Network dinner with Alexa Conradi, the new president of the *Fédération des femmes de Québec*. ■



Martine Éloy, Union Consultant, Status of Women Sector

DEFENDING THE FIREARMS REGISTRY

The Firearms Act was passed on December 5, 1995, This law obliges all owners of firearms to hold a permit and since 2001 they are subject to a thorough verification in order to insure that they do not represent a danger for public safety.

Since the laws of 1991 and 1995 reinforced control of rifles and small arms, the murder rate linked to these arms has come crashing down by 70%. The police use the firearms registry nearly 10,000 times a day and the information provided by this registry serves to prevent crime and contributes to the progress in criminal investigations.

Nevertheless, the federal government has tabled a bill, Bill C-391, An Act modifying the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act, which would remove the obligation for firearms owners to register their arms.

The FIQ asks its members to participate in the campaign of letters to be sent to federal members of Parliament against the adoption of this Bill C-391. The information on this campaign is available by clicking on the button "Lutte des femmes", under the tab *Condition féminine* on the FIQ web site at <www.fiqsante.qc.ca>. ■



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