

Two filings:
a unanimous rejection
P. 3

Criticism of private
agencies
P. 5

Solidarity
with Haïti
P. 5

Room for
mobilization
P. 6



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ENACTION

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“TO STAY HEALTHY, A CHANGE IS NEEDED”

“To stay healthy, a change is needed”, that is the message that the 58,000 care professionals, members of the FIQ will send to the government over the next few weeks.

This required change is demonstrated in the imaginative and innovative demands made by the Federation to the government. The objective is simple: allow nursing and cardio-respiratory care professionals to work in their profession with working conditions that they have long deserved.

The visual display chosen to support this slogan well represents the limit

reached by the professionals, but also the point of no return that the Quebec public health network is close to crossing. Indeed, if the government does not carry out the real change proposed by the members of the Federation, it will come up against a wall. This same government can no longer blank out the shortage of professionals which has persisted for several years and which is increasing at an alarming rate with the

retirement of nearly 25% of care professionals over the next four years.

- In order to attract and retain these professionals in the public network;
 - To insure their health and safety;
 - To preserve accessible, safe and quality health care and services;
- it is imperative to make this change. ■**



The FIQ delegation unanimously passed the motion to reject the management offers.

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WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

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MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Régine Daurout

The negotiations have only just begun and already the government has been hammering to the public that the state of Quebec's finances does not allow the government to meet the union organizations' demands. Using the effects of the Quebec economic crisis, the government's representatives, supported by some editorialists, reiterate that the State does not have any money, that it has to cut the fat and that all Quebecers will be asked to do their part.



This government uses the same *modus operandi* with each negotiations. Thus, it tries to make the public believe that the labour organizations make demands that are socially irresponsible. It is abundantly clear that the government is trying to undermine their credibility and, thus, win over public opinion in their fight with their employees.

Is it unreasonable for State employees to ask for a decent salary and working conditions which would allow care professionals to continue to offer, among others, suitable healthcare to all the people of Quebec? The answer is NO.

All care professionals need to be heard as of today. They need to inform their allies and their management counterparts of their conviction that the solutions proposed by the FIQ negotiation priorities are necessary for their health and the improvement in the services they provide. The

countdown has started and mobilization becomes the blueprint for coming to a negotiated settlement which will be at the height of the demands of the members of the Federation.

To achieve this, the care professionals working in the public health network need to make their voices heard. For all those who carry this network on their shoulders: **make your voices heard** in order that the government and the population recognize the disastrous effects of the labour shortage in the health network. **Make your voice heard** and proclaim loud and clear that care professionals are burned out, out of breath and dissatisfied with their working conditions. **Make your voice heard** to share the innovative solutions that the FIQ has proposed to the government: solutions which will render the health field more interesting for care professionals, will attract the younger generation and will keep the more experienced employees for a few more years.

Make your voice heard in order that the demands submitted to the government not be considered as a privilege but rather a right to perform one's work in conditions that are healthy and insure a real quality of life. **Make your voice heard** in order that the users of the public health system understand that they will have the opportunity to be close to healthy, motivated professionals in sufficient numbers.

Make your voice heard for the same cause, that of obtaining a collective agreement that measures up to what you deserve. Everyone will win with this: the members of the FIQ, the Quebec government and the population. **Make your voice heard:** "To stay healthy, a change is needed"! ■



Make your voice heard:
 "To stay healthy, a change is needed"!

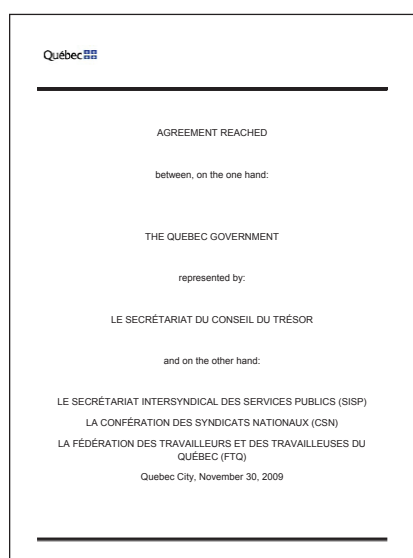
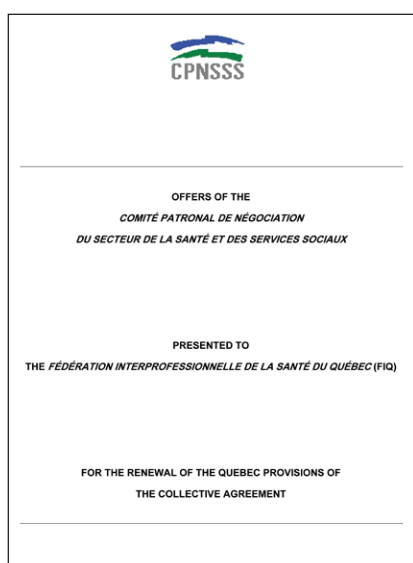


NEGOTIATION



TWO FILINGS: A UNANIMOUS REJECTION BY THE DELEGATES

The coordinating team of Sylvie Savard, Francine Savard, Gino Pouliot and Serge Prévost, presented the delegation with a progress report on the management sectorial and intersectorial offers. The delegates at the Special Federal Council unanimously rejected these offers.



SECTORIAL OFFERS

The work of care professionals is not recognized

The *Comité patronal de négociation du secteur de la santé et des services sociaux* (CPNSSS) tabled its offers with the Federation on December 17th. Unfortunately, they are far from being sufficient to resolve the problems that exist in the workplaces. Essentially, these management offers indicate that there is no recognition of the work of care professionals.

The reasoning of the CPNSSS reflects its four main concerns of:

1. Assure accessible, continuous, safe and quality services to the entire population;
2. Judicious usage of resources and assurance of their availability;
3. Deal with a job market in evolution as concerns the rejuvenation of the labour force and the wave of retirements that is coming;
4. Take into account the State's capacity to pay in the difficult economic context which requires that choices be made in order to limit the increase in costs.

As the CPNSSS wants to reduce the labour costs in order to reclaim these sums and to re-invest them in attraction and retention measures, it is proposing three specific orientations to support its reasoning:

1st orientation: Improve the availability of the labour force.

To achieve this, it is pursuing the following objectives:

- Increase the rate of personnel retention at the beginning and end of their careers;
- Increase the level of expertise on the evening and night shifts;
- Review the restrictive nature of the collective agreement to enable greater flexibility in the work schedule and to increase availability;
- Reduce the rate of salary insurance benefits as well as the bank of sick leave days.

2^e orientation: Optimize the human and financial resources

Since the shortage causes difficulties in replacement and many premiums in the collective agreement have not been reviewed for several years, the government's objectives are notably:

- To review all the premiums stipulated in the collective agreement;
- To evaluate their pertinence;
- To insure that they still meet a need.

3rd orientation: To update some of the provisions of the collective agreement to allow better management of some of the holidays, such as annual vacations and statutory holidays.

The Federation and the CPNSSS agreed on a framework for discussions and a schedule for meetings up to the end of March, 2010. However, considering the government's objectives, the negotiations are starting off gruelling and difficult. The FIQ Negotiating Committee will therefore need the mobilization of the 58,000 nursing and cardio-respiratory care professionals to exert pressure on the government and the employers.

Action must be taken on the labour shortage and the workload with which the members of the Federation are confronted. Stability of work teams, the quality of life at work, reconciliation of family-personal life- work as well as the recognition of care professionals must be promoted. This will itself assure the quality of the services offered to the population and protect the public health system.

INTERSECTORIAL FILING

Disappointing offers from the Conseil du trésor

A meeting was held with the *Conseil du trésor* (C.T.) on January 14th. The coordinating committee gave the delegates a report. In fact, the additional information provided dealt mostly with salaries. Thus the C.T. is offering an increase in the labour costs of 7%, of which 5% is allocated for salary increases which would be spread out as follows:

- 1st year: 0.5%
- 2nd year: 0.75%
- 3rd year: 1%
- 4th year: 1.25%
- 5th year: 1.5%

The remaining 2% will go towards the costs linked to maintaining pay equity, salary relativity, the pension plans and to the corrections brought to amend the sectorial problems, as need be.

Without a doubt, the C.T. offers indicate a downgrading of the salaries in the public and parapublic sectors. It goes without saying that these offers are more than disappointing. Weekly meetings are scheduled with the C.T. as of the end of January. ■

Check the web site of the Federation <www.fiqsante.qc.ca>, its Facebook page <www.facebook.com/pages/FIQ-Sante/254599681602?ref=nf> and follow it on Twitter <<http://twitter.com/FIQSante>> regularly to learn more about the work surrounding the sectorial and intersectorial negotiations.

PAY EQUITY



DECISION OF THE COMMISSION DE L'ÉQUITÉ SALARIALE

On January 5, 2010, the *Commission de l'équité salariale* (CÉS) finally rendered its decision concerning the complaints filed by employees of certain job classes subject to the pay equity program.



A REMINDER

In June 2006, the members of the Pay Equity Committee composed of the *Conseil du trésor*, the FIQ, the CSN, the CSQ, the APTS, the FTQ, the CSD and the FISA reached an agreement concerning the pay equity program of the parapublic sector. In light of the results of the Pay Equity Committee's work, various employees in the job classes "Administrative Assistant Class II", "Dietitian-Nutritionist", "Baccalaureate Nurse", "Nursing Assistant" (Licensed Practical Nurse), "Patient Attendant", "Psychologist" and "Secretary Class I" filed complaints with the CÉS concerning the reasonableness of certain scores awarded or the presumed collection of insufficient information.

About 340 jobs were evaluated and over 5000 evaluation scores were awarded after analysis of the 17 following sub-factors (SF) grouped under 4 main factors, as provided in the Pay Equity Act:

FACTOR 1 - EFFORTS

- SF- 1 Autonomy
- SF- 2 Reasoning
- SF- 3 Creativity
- SF- 4 Concentration and Sensory Attention
- SF- 5 Physical Efforts

FACTOR 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES

- SF- 6 Responsibilities for a Programme
- SF- 7 Responsibilities for Persons
- SF- 8 Responsibilities for Communications
- SF- 9 Responsibilities for Supervision and Coordination of Persons

FACTOR 3 - QUALIFICATIONS

- SF- 10 Professional Training
- SF- 11 Experience and Initiation
- SF- 12 Knowledge Updating
- SF- 13 Skills in Interpersonal Relations
- SF- 14 Physical Skills and Manual Dexterity

FACTOR 4 - WORKING CONDITIONS

- SF- 15 Psychological Conditions
- SF- 16 Physical Conditions
- SF- 17 Inherent Hazards

In April, May and June 2007, the two investigators appointed by the CÉS asked the Committee members for clarifications. At the end of June 2007, the CÉS sent the Committee members and the complainants advance notice of the decision concerning the "Baccalaureate Nurse" job class, in particular. The CÉS considered that there were inconsistencies in 6 of the 17 SF contained in the evaluation plan, namely Professional Training, Experience and Initiation, Responsibilities for Supervision and Coordination of Persons, Concentration and Sensory Attention, Physical Conditions, and Physical Skills and Manual Dexterity. The CÉS also specified that, subject to new facts, representations or additional documents, it would determine that the complaints concerning the "Baccalaureate Nurse" job class were founded and would require the Committee to redo the evaluation of this class completely.

The CÉS also asked questions about the SF concerning Concentration and Sensory Attention, Responsibilities for Persons, and Skills in Interpersonal Relations. It mentioned that, subject to new facts, representations or additional documents, it would determine that the complaints concerning the "Nursing Assistant" (Licensed Practical Nurse) job class were unfounded.

THE DECISION OF THE CÉS

Concerning the "Baccalaureate Nurse" job class, the CÉS recognized that, for the following SF - Professional Training, Experience

and Initiation, Responsibilities for Supervision and Coordination of Persons, Concentration and Sensory Attention, and Physical Conditions - the Pay Equity Committee coherently and uniformly applied the evaluation plan and that the Commission's intervention was not justified.

Regarding the Physical Skills and Manual Dexterity SF, the CÉS ruled that the complaints were founded and asked the Pay Equity Committee to redo the evaluation. The CÉS evaluated that for this SF, which measures the qualification level, the frequency of performance of very accurate or very precise operations should not have served as a criterion.

More specifically concerning the "Nursing Assistant" (Licensed Practical Nurse) job class, the CÉS concluded its analysis by considering that the scores awarded were not unreasonable.

The CÉS determined, by a majority, that the complaints concerning the "Dietitian-Nutritionist" job class were unfounded. It ruled unanimously that the complaints regarding the other job classes were also unfounded.

THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE SCORES AND RANKING

It must be remembered that the evaluation situated the vast majority of jobs within 24 rankings with a constant interval of 29 points. For Ranking 21 obtained by Baccalaureate Nurses, the minimum

and maximum limits are 756 and 784 points respectively. The evaluation had awarded a total of 769 points. By increasing the level of SF 14, the Baccalaureate Nurse thus obtains 9 more points, for a total of 778 points, which does not result in any change in ranking.

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING N^o. 3

In 2007, after reclassification of Baccalaureate Nurses in the "Nurse Clinician" job title, a new evaluation was performed, as provided by the Decree in lieu of a collective agreement. Following this work, the new evaluation had awarded 801 points, raising Nurse Clinicians to Ranking 22. The minimum and maximum limits are 785 and 813 points respectively. Changing the level of SF 14 increases the total points to 810, which does not result in any change in ranking.

NEXT STEPS

The Commission gave the Committee 90 days to report on the measures taken to apply this decision. The FIQ intends to comply and has already informed all the members of the Pay Equity Committee of its intentions. It can be foreseen that more work will be performed by the Committee in the next few weeks. ■

PRIVATE AGENCIES



CRITICISM OF PRIVATE AGENCIES



Jean-Noël Grenier, speaker

Jean-Noël Grenier, a regular speaker at FIQ decision-making meetings, came to speak to the delegates about private employment agencies insisting on their impact on working conditions and union power. This phenomenon, growing exponentially and spread throughout the world, contributes to the commodification of work and limits the rights of employees and eventually leads to job insecurity. The delegation was very receptive to the words of Mr. Grenier who criticizes these agencies which weaken union representation.

Gathered at round tables, the delegates were invited to discuss the disastrous effects of private healthcare employment agencies on care professionals, unionized workers in the public sector, taxpayers and the public health network. This exercise, carried out with the purpose of creating discussion among the union representatives of the Federation, was achieved with good humour and solicited the delegates' deepest convictions.

Monitor the next edition of the *FIQ Special File* which will be on the private healthcare employment agencies. ■



THE FIQ LAUNCHES A CHALLENGE TO ITS AFFILIATED UNIONS

At the Special Federal Council, the FIQ launched an appeal to all its affiliated unions in order to collect donations to help the Haitian people. The challenge is to collect \$58,000, which represents a dollar per member of the Federation. To this amount is added the \$10,000 donation made by the FIQ the day after the horrible earthquake. Thus, it will be almost \$70,000 that the Federation wants to give to such organizations as Oxfam-Québec and the Red Cross. ■



SOLIDARITY WITH HAITI

Several members of the Federation have left for Haiti with various agencies in order to help the people severely affected by the January 12th earthquake. The Federation salutes their courage and their commitment. One of these members attended the most recent Special Federal Council. Thus, with only a few hours notice, Karine Cournoyer from CSSS Pierre-Boucher chose to go lend a hand to the Haitian people thanks to a collaboration set up with the city of Montreal and Port-au-Prince aimed at providing the needed medical aid (care professionals, medical equipment and medications).

MOBILIZATION

THE FIG,
A STRONG VOICE,
ACTIONS THAT COUNT

ROOM FOR MOBILIZATION



The delegates adopted a plan of action for the months of January, February and March, 2010 in support of the sectorial demands. This plan includes mobilization actions which, combined with those set forth by the Common Front, will help put pressure on the government and the employers.

Members are asked to wear their blue bracelets starting now and throughout the negotiations. Those who have not received a bracelet can obtain one at their local union. Furthermore, the members can follow the progress of negotiations through Facebook <www.facebook.com/pages/FIG-Sante/254599681602?ref=nf>, Twitter <<http://twitter.com/FIGSante>> and the FIG web site <www.figsante.qc.ca>.

MOBILIZATION ACTIONS:

January:

FIG: Massive posting of negotiation material
Common Front: Bulletin to boost the negotiations

February:

FIG: Wear the stickers on the sectorial priorities of the negotiations

- Week of February 1st:
The arrangement of work time
- Week of February 8th:
The recognition of inconveniences
- Week of February 15th:
The recognition of responsibilities
- Week of February 22nd:
The recognition of additional training

Common Front:

- February 12:
 - Operation St-Valentine's: distribution of a book-mark to the public
 - Tools to implant the intersectorial demands in the members minds

■ February 22:

Gathering of the negotiating decision-making bodies of each of the Common Front organizations in Quebec City

March:

FIG:

- Wear the armband
- Week of March 8th: Publication of the care professionals demands for the public
- Week of March 14: Wear a transfer (temporary tattoo) in the colours of the negotiations
- Week of March 22nd: Operation emails "last blitz" targeting an elected official

Common Front:

- March 20: Large demonstration
- Event to mark the end of the decree in lieu of a collective agreement

The delegates also adopted a motion covering a televised publicity campaign to be carried out at the appropriate time. ■



It was to the tune of the song "Trois Petits Cochons" by Dan Bigras that the FIG Information and Support Team composed the words of the song that will be used throughout the negotiations for the FIG members. Dan Bigras agreed to collaborate on the project which allows the recording of the new version. To launch this new version, the singer, musician and composer visited the delegates at the Special Federal Council where he took the stage and delivered a speech laced with solidarity for care professionals. The new version of the song is available for downloading on the FIG web site <www.figsante.qc.ca>, in the section, YouTube.



If you prefer to consult the electronic version of our publications, send a request to info@figsante.qc.ca