



EN ACTION

Vol. 33 | No. 2 | May 2020

Special Provincial Council on May 15
Special Provincial Council on May 22

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“LET’S END THE INHUMANE” CAMPAIGN

At the end of May, the FIQ and FIQP launched an ad campaign called “Let’s end the inhumane.” The goal of the campaign is to reassert our solutions, send a message to the government, and raise public awareness around our demands. Today, healthcare professionals are the ones who are sick, their working conditions are inhumane, patients are in inhumane conditions, and it all needs to change now.

ACTIONS TO DEMAND RESPECT

Delegates participated in a first virtual special provincial council on May 15 and a second one on May 22 in order to discuss the many challenges that healthcare professionals have been facing since the beginning of the health crisis in Quebec due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The delegation approved a provincial action plan to force the government and employers to respect healthcare professionals.

Given that the meeting could not be held in person to make decisions in the usual manner, the FIQ and FIQP took the necessary steps to hold their meetings remotely. The meeting was a success and allowed delegates to hold discussions and debates virtually. Delegates have noticed that the battle against COVID-19 is leaving its mark on all work settings, whether it be in a hot or cold zone, in Montreal or one of the regions, yet not in the same way. For some, it’s the iniquity of the premiums that distress them most, while for others it’s the cancelled vacations, the ministerial orders or the lack of personal protective equipment.

All the same, there is one thing that everyone feels the same about: healthcare professionals deserve respect. Healthcare professionals feel

forgotten, mistreated, denigrated. And yet, respect is absolutely essential in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and the government needs to understand that. The crisis is far from over and healthcare professionals are key fighters in this battle. And so delegates have chosen to hammer home the message of respect as often as possible in the coming weeks.

For delegates, showing healthcare professionals and their work respect means giving them the time to rest that they need so that they can continue to provide care, it means protecting them so that they don’t fall ill in turn, it means paying them for their increased availability, for the inconveniences they experience and the risks they run, and it means organizing their work in accordance with their

collective agreements, without ministerial orders.

All actions in the action plan will be carried out in compliance with social distancing and hygiene rules. They will inevitably provoke reactions from the public and the government. The FIQ and FIQP firmly believe that it’s time to send a more forceful message and require respect for healthcare professionals, and they are determined to voice their demands everywhere.

In addition to these actions, the FIQ and FIQP have also mobilized on several other fronts: making demands to the CNESST, taking legal action in court, denouncing the INSPQ’s varying recommendations, and questioning elected officials at all levels. ■



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WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

En Action, Vol. 33, No. 2, May 2020 | Published by the Communication Service | **Distribution:** 76,000 copies | **Graphic layout:** Josée Roy | **Photography:** Alexandre Claude, Jean-Pierre Roy Valdebenito | **Printing:** Solisco | Reprint of any article or excerpt must indicate "reprint from the publication *FIQ en Action*" | 100% recycled paper | If you wish to receive only the electronic version of FIQ publications, send a request to info@fiqsante.qc.ca | ISSN 1913-1755 (Print) | ISSN 1913-1763 (Online) | fiqsante.qc.ca | info@fiqsante.qc.ca



LET'S SPEAK UP AND PUT AN END TO INHUMANE CONDITIONS

Nancy Bédard

The previous months have been intense and the coming months likely will be too. First off, I would like to thank each and every one of you because all FIQ and FIQP members are weathering this turmoil with characteristic energy and determination. Healthcare professionals plunged into the fight against COVID-19 without hesitation only to realize that neither the network nor the government were properly prepared for such a situation.

And with the public health emergency came ministerial orders: questions quickly gave way to a storm of orders and employers abused this new found power. Many regions have eased their lockdown restrictions but healthcare professionals' rights continue to be violated, which we continue to actively fight.

While the Health Minister wanted to limit healthcare professionals' vacation time this summer, we made efforts to fight this both locally and provincially. On May 19, approximately 30 of us gathered

outside the Premier's offices, which bothered the government. Imagine how much of an impact more people would have gathered in strength and solidarity to denounce the inhumane working conditions imposed on healthcare professionals!

An action plan was adopted specifically so that healthcare professionals who battle COVID-19 every day are shown respect. We are demanding that the government stop managing through ministerial orders, that it provide better protection to healthcare staff, that it raise salary conditions

associated with the fight against the pandemic, and that it grant real vacation time. The plan was developed following a consultation with local vice-presidents in charge of communications and mobilization and features hard-hitting targeted actions.

In addition to these actions, we have launched a broad ad campaign called "Let's end the inhumane," which will amplify our voice on the ground and put pressure on the government. This summer's likely going to be hot! ■

LES VÉRIFIQATRICES

The FIQ recently launched a page called Les VériFIQatrices, which is accessible through its website. The goal of the page is to reveal what's really happening in the health network, as well as the truth about healthcare professionals' current working conditions and how they are risking their lives every day. It will feature articles that contradict the government's statements, made during press conferences for example, and state what's really going on in the field. Visit the page as much as you like and feel free to share the information on it! ■

"STOP ISSUING MINISTERIAL ORDERS AND TAKE ACTION!"

On May 19, around thirty FIQ and FIQP union reps gathered outside the Premier's offices in Quebec City as part of a symbolic action to demand that the government stop issuing ministerial orders decreeing healthcare professionals' working conditions. Health Minister Danielle McCann came out to speak for a few minutes to the healthcare professionals without making any commitments.

"Quebec is in the process of easing restrictions and we are gradually resuming regular activities in the health network. During this time, healthcare professionals are still stripped of their rights. Their employer is forcing them to work full-time, withdrawing statutory holidays, and is changing their schedules and vacations. This is not how they will get through this challenging pandemic. The ministerial orders need to stop now and healthcare professionals need to recover their working conditions," exclaimed Nancy Bédard.

A little later, during his press conference, the Premier said he was disappointed with this symbolic action. This certainly set sparks aflame. The next day, the deputy premier announced during the press conference that healthcare professionals could have their vacations this summer. This action was victorious. Healthcare professionals will continue to speak up, stand up for their rights and will do what's necessary to get respect, for themselves and their patients.

