

2018-2019 budget in health and social services: reinvestment is welcome but targets are unclear

Québec, March 27, 2018 - "In health and social services, the announced reinvestments fail to cover the massive cutbacks imposed in the past few years," declared APTS President Carolle Dubé. "Patients and personnel have borne the brunt of these cutbacks. Let's not forget that when the government is shelling out billions of dollars in all directions a few months before the next elections. We would have liked to see targeted budgets for measures to alleviate the distress of health and social services personnel, particularly women, who constitute the majority of public-sector employees. The APTS wants the government to take into account the impact of its budgetary measures on women employees, in future."

The APTS applauds the investments in home support services, mental health, residential services, and services for troubled youth, among others, but is concerned about the ambiguity surrounding the way the funds will be spent. "Will this money be used to add personnel like physiotherapists, social workers, occupational therapists and educators, as Minister Barrette clearly indicated to us at our [meeting](#) on March 19? If that's not the case, why wasn't that specified," asked the union president. "This lack of detail is not reassuring. We're keeping a close eye on how these measures are applied in practice."

Once again, prevention is the poor cousin in health-care funding. "The government is announcing funds that are clearly insufficient, when all the studies show beyond a shadow of doubt that investments in prevention actually pay off," decried Carolle Dubé. "They reduce overcrowding in hospitals and enable seniors to live at home longer."

On-going deconstruction of the public health and social service system

The APTS is disappointed to see the government continue to make the shift toward family medicine groups (GMFs) and activity-based funding. "Family medicine groups are private entities, managed by and for doctors, unlike CLSCs that can count on multidisciplinary teams for the greater good of patients," added the union president. And patient-based funding or activity-based fund involves major risks, such as by placing institutions in competition with one another. "This type of funding encourages institutions to concentrate on the more 'lucrative' activities, to the detriment of social services and other types of services," concluded Carolle Dubé.

The APTS

With its 55,000 members, the APTS is an indispensable public-sector union in health and social services. It represents professionals and technicians in over a hundred job titles, in diagnostic services, rehabilitation, nutrition, psychosocial intervention, clinical support and prevention services.