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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For immediate publication**

*We're done working ourselves sick!*  
**APTS-FIQ alliance files its demands with the government**

**Québec City, October 24, 2019** – Accompanied by hundreds of unionized workers chanting *Travailler à se rendre malade, c'est terminé!* (We're done working ourselves sick!), union presidents Carolle Dubé and Nancy Bédard, representing the APTS and the FIQ respectively, marched to the Treasury Board office in Québec City to file intersectoral demands for their 131,000 members, thereby kicking off negotiations with the government to renew their collective agreements.

"Improving working conditions for personnel also means improving the quality, safety and accessibility of care and services for the population," the two representatives for the APTS-FIQ alliance declared in their opening statement. "The government has to understand that everyone wins: employees, who have a right to fairer recognition of their work; our system of health and social services, which will be in a better position to attract the workforce it so badly needs; and the population, which will be able to count on better care and services."

The demands of the APTS-FIQ alliance focus on various aspects of the retirement plan, to ensure greater flexibility and help retain active members of the labour force; on parental rights, to strike a better balance with current needs; on regional disparities, to more effectively overcome problems in attracting and retaining personnel; and on remuneration.

"After a number of years of lagging behind in pay," Ms. Dubé and Ms. Bédard explained, "it's essential that our members be able to benefit from a major catch-up increase to boost their purchasing power and have more of a share in the economic and financial vitality of Québec in an era of prosperity. This is why we're calling for a 7.2% increase for each of the three years of the next collective agreement. Considering the sacrifices our members have made over the years, we're not asking for the moon – we're simply asking for fairer pay."

The two union presidents pointed out that their members have paid dearly – in their standard of living, working conditions and even their health. Austerity measures imposed by successive governments have taken their toll over the years. "Our members have taken the brunt of the austerity policies: multiple budget cuts, work overload, forced overtime, labour shortages, etc. We're done working ourselves sick," they chanted with their members.

They stressed the fact that the government has a substantial surplus and considerable financial latitude to reinvest in our healthcare system. And the CAQ has made health and social services one of its three key priorities. The premier even acknowledged in his inaugural speech that employees in

health and social services have been "hit hard" and that his new government intended to advance with them "one step at a time, hand in hand" to "concretely improve the situation."

"The ball is in its court, now more than ever. It's time for the government to offer its healthcare professionals and its health and social service professionals and technicians due recognition of the essential role they play in delivering care and services to the population. The upcoming negotiations will be decisive, not only for our members but also for our health and social services system. The government has to seriously commit to invest in our system's human capital for the benefit of all Quebecers, starting with the ones who have been keeping the healthcare system going for years," concluded the two union presidents.

### **About the APTS and the FIQ**

The [APTS](#) represents 55,000 professionals and technicians who provide a range of services throughout the public system: diagnostic services, rehabilitation, nutrition, psychosocial intervention, clinical support and prevention services. The [FIQ](#), for its part, represents 76,000 nurses, licensed practical nurses, respiratory therapists and clinical perfusionists working in healthcare facilities across Québec.

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