

APTS responds to government action plan to tackle COVID-19 second wave

Longueuil, August 18, 2020 – The APTS (*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*) takes note of the action plan unveiled today by the health and social services minister, Christian Dubé. While the plan includes measures that are to be welcomed, significant caveats are also required.

The APTS is concerned about the pressure on already overstretched medical labs and technical medical departments. As regular activities resume in the health and social services system, the union is sounding the alarm on the limits of these units' capacity to handle the second wave of the pandemic.

“Will lab personnel and medical imaging technologists finally get the recognition they deserve?” asks Véronic Lapalme, the APTS second vice-president. “Lab personnel carry the responsibility for COVID-19 screening, and medical imaging technologists work with service users to carry out tests. They’re still not entitled to the 8% hazard premium, even though faster processing times are being requested. The government needs to show respect for employees who’ve been working around the clock for months.”

Throughout the first wave, the APTS campaigned for appropriate protective measures for professionals and technical workers in the system at a time when health and social services employees accounted for 25% of positive diagnoses. The APTS welcomes the government’s commitment to limit the movement of workers between institutions, to enforce rules around infection prevention and control, and to keep the system supplied with individual protective equipment. According to the APTS, the precautionary principle should be applied in this area: specifically, N95 masks should be distributed to any employee who is in contact with COVID-19 cases.

“We’re glad the government says it will keep withdrawal of services at a minimum in the social services, but rehabilitation services shouldn’t be forgotten,” says Véronic Lapalme. “The people receiving these services may see their situation get worse if their needs are set aside again during the second wave.”

Professionals and technicians working in the health and social services system made a vital contribution during the first wave of the pandemic, which deprived Quebecers of services they needed over several months. The APTS is adamant that everything must be done to avoid seeing this script play out again in the fall.

The APTS

The APTS ([Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux](#)) represents a total of 56,000 members who play a key role in ensuring that health and social services institutions run smoothly. Our members provide a wide range of services for the population as a whole, including diagnostic, rehabilitation, nutrition, psychosocial intervention, clinical support, and prevention services.

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