

These negotiations are vital!

APTS summer consultations come to an end in Montréal

Montréal, September 10, 2020 — A summer round of province-wide consultations organized by the APTS (*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*) is coming to an end today in Montréal. To mark the occasion, a festive event will be held on the theme *Negotiations are vital!* with a musical performance by singer-songwriter Emile Bilodeau.

For years, the APTS has been denouncing the serious staff shortages, overwork, stress, and multiple health and safety problems that have taken a heavy toll on professional and technical personnel in the health and social services system. These conditions are depriving Quebecers of the high-quality services they are entitled to, and the current health crisis has exposed the system's fault lines. At the same time, the crisis has confirmed the importance of a public system. Our public sector has ensured continuity of services, unlike the private sector, which proved incapable of doing so.

"Our members are at the end of their rope, in Montréal and throughout Québec," says APTS president Andrée Poirier. "After ten weeks' discussions with employees from every region, one thing is crystal clear. If we want to provide Quebecers with quality services, we desperately need to address current problems in recruiting and retaining professional and technical staff. The government has got to provide lasting solutions to the problems that are jeopardizing our public health and social services system, and it has to genuinely recognize the value of our members' work. The first step in that direction would be to improve their working conditions and conditions of practice. That's not just necessary – it's vital!"

Demands to strengthen our public health and social services system

The government won't be able to remedy labour shortage and overwork problems unless it genuinely understands the work done by our 56,000 members, and their vital contribution to our health and social services system. Performance indicators and work paces imposed by management ignore the human factor involved in the care and services provided by professionals and technicians, and deny their professional autonomy and clinical judgment. The government will have to address this issue. In addition, APTS members – 85% of whom are women – have been experiencing pay inequity for far too long, and the government will have to provide decent pay increases to fix this.

This round of contract talks offers us a crucial opportunity to make public health and social services an attractive sector to work in. The APTS is calling for improvements in the premiums and lump-sum amounts offered to its members, as well as better access to continuing education and better working conditions and conditions of practice for professional and technical personnel, especially those working in youth centres or residential resources with continuous assistance. We are also calling for full recognition for psychologists, lawyers and other job classes that are being offered much more advantageous conditions outside the public sector.

The APTS: a key player in the greater Montréal area

"In Montréal, there are 16,000 APTS members providing care and services to the population. It's urgent that these jobs be attractive to future employees, and to current ones who are thinking of leaving because their work is not recognized. We have to rectify the errors of the past and rebuild on fair and equitable foundations. We want a strong, better-funded health and social services system." This is the position taken by the five APTS provincial representatives in Montréal: Nathalie Chalifoux (CHUM, Montreal Heart Institute, and CIUSSS Montréal West Island), Daniel Dubé (CIUSSS du Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal), Josée Fréchette

(MUHC), Caroline Letarte-Simoneau (CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal), and Teresa Muccari (CIUSSS West-Central Montreal). The APTS also represents professional and technical employees in Montréal's private institutions under agreement.

As part of its summer round of consultations, the APTS travelled over 12,000 km to meet members throughout the province. The goal was to discuss the issues involved in current contract talks, hear members' concerns about the future of the health and social services system, and launch mobilization actions to make sure that the value of their work as professionals and technicians is fully recognized.

The APTS

The APTS ([*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*](#)) represents a total of 56,000 members, of whom some 16,000 are employed in Montréal. APTS members 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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