

The APTS welcomes new funding for youth mental health

Longueuil, October 28, 2020 — The APTS (*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*) welcomes Minister Carmant's announcement that an extra \$25 million will be provided to boost mental health services for young people. At the same time, the union emphasizes that the minister must go further. It also takes note of the minister's multidisciplinary approach, which relies on the participation of all health and social services professionals who are qualified to treat anxiety and psychological distress. Both of these keep rising as the pandemic continues.

"By choosing a multidisciplinary approach that must truly respect the expertise of each profession, Minister Carmant is demonstrating how important it is to get professional and technical personnel involved so that we can act effectively in the area of mental health," says APTS president Andrée Poirier. "We find this reassuring because the Legault government, since the beginning of the pandemic, has felt free to exclude APTS members from measures that would give their professions greater recognition and standing. Let's hope the minister's colleagues take up his approach – it's one that reflects a genuine understanding of the system's complexity."

On the other hand, the APTS continues to worry about the ability of the health and social services system to attract and retain personnel, since the system is still not providing the work conditions that would make it possible to alleviate the labour shortages currently undermining it. The MSSS workforce planning analysis indicates that even psychologists are now a profession that is at risk.

"The Legault government can't hope to attract the personnel we need if it does not improve employees' working conditions or provide financial incentives to retain experienced personnel," says Poirier. "By paralyzing negotiations to renew our collective convention, the government is aggravating the labour shortage in the public system and undermining Minister Carmant's efforts."

The APTS is also concerned that CISSS and CIUSSS managers may simply use the new funds to create permanent positions for people who are currently working to cover a replacement or to meet needs resulting from an increased workload. In that case, they would not really be adding personnel to cope with growing needs in mental health.

"With youth centres, funding was announced, but it didn't necessarily translate into an increase in the actual number of youth workers in the field," says Poirier. "The funding enabled integrated centres to stabilize teams by confirming positions, but it didn't lead to very many new hires. Work overload is still a problem, and personnel retention is still woefully inadequate. That is unacceptable for youth centres and it's just as unacceptable in mental health."

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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