

## ATTRACTION, RETENTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Following a number of representations made by the APTS to the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* (MSSS) regarding letter of agreement no. 4 on administrative measures dedicated to technical and professional employees working in Health and Social Services, the MSSS finally informed us of its intentions on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Accordingly, the MSSS presented us with its terms of reference and the procedure for application of the letter of agreement. The guidelines established can be summarized as follows:

- The creation of a National Advisory Committee, composed of the MSSS, the APTS, the CSN and the FTQ (the latter having a letter of agreement "similar" to ours), to discuss the projects submitted in the establishments, regions, or even at the national level;
- Projects subject to a consensus between the union, the employer and the Regional Agency must be presented to the National Committee before April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, and must cease to apply at the latest by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010;
- In order to be accepted by the MSSS, the proposed measure must be documented and its justification supported by quantitative and qualitative indicators, and must aim to solve the problem permanently.

The APTS has established a certain approach to adequately represent its members. That is why political respondents and Labour Relations Counsellors in the establishments, supported by the Professional Groups Sector and the Negotiations Sector will soon undertake (if they have not done so already), at the local level, efforts to identify the sectors and job titles suffering from shortages and appropriate measures to foster the attraction and retention of staff to start discussions with employers on this topic, if applicable.

At this meeting, the MSSS also announced the end of summer measures for all job titles in all classes. The MSSS feels that these measures do not solve the problem permanently, and that is why they, too, would not be acceptable as a measure within the meaning of letter of agreement no. 4.

Over the coming months, your advisor and policy sponsor will give you more information regarding the terms and conditions associated with the application of letter of agreement no. 4.

## PROMOTION OF PROFESSIONS

At the General Council Meeting of November 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the Action Plan for the Professional Groups Sector was adopted as presented. This Action Plan, in effect until the 2010 congress, includes a *promotion of professions* component aiming to promote your work as Technical and Professional Employees working in Health and Social Services with clients of the establishments. Promotional tools will present various aspects of your professional practice. We believe that clients who are better informed will become more aware of the important role you play in the formulation of a diagnosis or the application of a treatment, in addition to learning about other professions practised in the system.

### DEVELOPMENT OF PROMOTIONAL TOOLS

We are producing promotional pamphlets for professions represented by the APTS. We are currently putting the finishing touches on certain job titles in the "diagnostic" grouping, and we hope to make these promotional tools available around the end of December. In addition, work has begun regarding the preparation of pamphlets regarding other professions in the "Rehabilitation" grouping.

Work is also planned for each of the APTS's other professional groups, namely "psychosocial," "nutrition," "prevention" and "clinical support."

The sector coordinators will keep you informed of the progress made in this regard.

# ESSENTIAL WORKERS—

## THE BILL IN "STAGES"

In Quebec, the professional system currently has over 315,000 members in 45 professional associations, close to 60% of which work in the Health and Human Relations Sector. The Professional Code appeared early in the 1970s. It was more specifically in 2002 that *An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions with regards to the Health Sector*, establishing the framework for professional practice in physical health, was adopted. In 2006, a committee tasked by the *Office des professions* and chaired by Dr. Jean-Bernard Trudeau tabled the report titled *Partageons nos compétences sur la modernisation de la pratique professionnelle en santé mentale et en relations humaines*. In this document, the committee proposes directions on professional practice in mental health and human relations, among other things.

Recently, in November 2007, Bill 50 (*An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions in the field of Mental Health and Human Relations*) was tabled in the National Assembly. This bill comprises three great thrusts: psychotherapy support, integration of suicide prevention in the practice of all professions in the area of Health and Human Relations and, lastly, the restructuring of shared activities that would henceforth be reserved for certain professions.

## IMPACT OF THE ACT

Over 12,000 members of the APTS are directly or indirectly affected by Bill 50. If Bill 50 takes effect in its first version tabled in November 2007, close to 15,000 people currently working within the System in Mental Health and Human Relations will no longer be able to practise certain activities. Yet these are activities that Technician and Professional Employees have been practising for many years and for which they have been trained.

## THE APTS'S ACTIONS

Working groups have been set up to analyze the tasks and duties of Educators, Social Work Technicians and Human Relations Officers. They also measured the impact that some of these activities, presently under their responsibility would from now on, be reserved to other professions. To establish an accurate portrait of the reality of our members across Quebec, the groups were divided into two sub-groups: one for eastern Quebec and one for western Quebec.

In response to the bill, the APTS tabled, on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008, a brief at the Commission on Institutions. The main recommendations made in this paper regarded the establishment of a working committee composed of various players from the Health and Social Services System. This committee would have the mandate to examine the work organization and propose solutions to ensure the optimal use of skills. As well, the APTS demanded the recognition of workers absent from the bill and whose contribution in the delivery of services cannot be dismissed.

## MEETING HELD AT THE OFFICE DES PROFESSIONS

The APTS took part in a meeting organized by the *Office des professions* on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The purpose of the meeting was to convey the various amendments made to Bill 50. Several aspects of the bill were addressed at this meeting. The *Office des professions* followed up on certain elements of our many demands in this regard, which can be summarized as follows:



**Persons responsible for the Sector of Professional Groups.**

1<sup>st</sup> row : Francis Collin, Director, Isabelle Legault, Secretary and Johanne McGurrin, 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President of the APTS.

2<sup>nd</sup> row : Geneviève Lantier, Director and Andréa Perron, Coordinator for Manpower Planning and Work Organisation.

# ACCESSIBILITY TO BE PRESERVED

*An Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions in the field of Mental Health and Human Relations, Bill 50*

## ACQUIRED RIGHTS

The addition of a clause aiming to avoid any disruption of service and allowing technicians and professionals not eligible for membership in a professional association to continue to practise the activities they practised before the Act took effect until the end of their professional life.

## TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

Phasing in of the Act to allow the employees and establishments concerned to comply with the act and ensure continuity in the delivery of services. Provisions could be implemented on different dates determined by the government.

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

When the act is implemented, the *Office* will prepare an explanatory guide specifying the provisions of the act and make a network of respondents available to professionals and managers of establishments.

## TABLE OF TECHNICIANS

A table led by the *Office des professions* will be established to analyze the situation of technician employees and determine the activities that will be permanently practised by technicians not subject to acquired rights.

## INTEGRATION IN THE PROFESSIONAL SYSTEM OF CRIMINOLOGISTS AND SEXOLOGISTS

Discussions will be taking place to integrate criminologists and sexologists in the professional system with their respective associations. In addition, activities should be shared with other workers in the professional system.

## NEXT STEPS

The APTS has been invited to sit at the table set up by the *Office des professions*. It intends to take active part in the latter to convey the contribution of its stakeholders in the delivery of Mental Health and Human Relations Services. According to the period indicated by the Office, the work should begin between the date on which the Act is adopted and the date on which it takes effect.

We will continue to support our members and hold information meetings upon request, before and after the bill's adoption.

## IN CONCLUSION

To learn more about the activities in the process of becoming reserved (first and latest version) tabled by the *Office des professions* at the meeting of October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008, visit the APTS portal at <https://portail.apsq.com/>. We remain available to provide more information. You can also contact your local executive, which serves as a link with your policy sponsor at the APTS. Rest assured that we will keep you informed of this matter as it evolves.

## SPIRITUAL CARE WORKERS

Pastoral facilitators: that's what we call them, and that is the title that appears in the list of job titles of the Collective Agreements. The employees who hold this job title were added to the list of category 4 employees following the adoption of *An Act respecting bargaining units in the social affairs sector*, commonly known as Bill 30. The APTS now represents more than 300 of these employees and keeps a close eye on this profession as it evolves.

For several months now the APTS has sat at the table charged with identifying and bringing solutions to issues affecting this profession, such as university education, job title and its wording as well as work organization.

The *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* (MSSS) decided to create a working group tasked with investigating this job title and its wording. Once the work is complete, the MSSS will assess the need to make modifications. In view of the demographic evolution of Quebec's society towards ethnic and religious pluralism, it has become necessary to analyze the changes that occur within this profession.

## A UNIVERSITY CENTRE WANTS TO ERADICATE ITS DEFICIT BY CUTTING OUT HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (DRH)

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008, management at the *Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke* (CHUS) summoned the various union representatives, including those of the APTS, to inform them that the CHUS anticipated a major deficit and that no funds would be devoted to training or development until April 2009.

It is important to remember that the Human Resources Development budget and mode of operation were negotiated and included in the Collective Agreement. The budget, negotiated at the national level, took effect by decree in May 2006. These arrangements are included in article 31 of the *2006-2010 National Provisions*. This article stipulates that the employer must provide for amounts equivalent to a percentage of the payroll for Technical and Professional Employees working in Health and Social Services (category 4) as at April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. In addition, unused sums from a given year are added to the amount to be allocated to activities the following year. Within this context, a budget equivalent to 1.05% of the payroll is provided for in 2007-2008. In addition to the budget, a mode of operation specifying the terms and conditions of how these funds are used was also negotiated at the local level through the Local Provisions.

Yet, at the CHUS, since the APTS Local Provisions were signed in June 2007, the Human Resources Branch, despite our multiple interventions, has either failed or refused to apply the measures provided for in the Local Provisions of the Collective Agreement, despite having been negotiated and accepted by both parties. In this establishment, the Local Provisions negotiated with the employer provide for a parity committee tasked with establishing the Human Resources Development

Plan as follows: collection and analysis of needs, identification of priority development needs, allocation of financial resources, development of employee eligibility and selection criteria, development of a Communication Plan, and assessment of the impact of development activities.

Faced with this attempt to hijack funds from, the APTS publicly criticized the decision made by management at this establishment. Accordingly, the local team (local executive, labour relations counsellors and political respondent), in collaboration with our sector at the national level, published a newsletter distributed to all members of the APTS working at the CHUS, a press release was issued and an article published in the newspaper, *La Tribune*. In addition, the person responsible on the local executive and our president, Dominique Verreault, granted several interviews to various media to publicly denounce the situation.

If you would like to learn more, go to the APTS portal and see the newsletter under the *Regroupements Professionnels* tab and the newspaper article available under the heading *APTS dans les médias*. As for the press release, it was posted on the APTS Website.

Members of the APTS feel that training and development are essential to Technical and Professional Employees. Updating one's skills and growing in the field of practice of one's profession are not considered a luxury today. How could we not be surprised to see a University Centre such as the CHUS make such decisions as it struggles with budget problems? It's beyond belief!

## NUCLEAR MEDECINE TECHNOLOGIST

The APTS made a request to the MSSS in order to have the shortage recognized to the profession of nuclear medicine technologist. As soon as we know more about the opinion of the Ministry, we will transmit the information to you.

