

Contract talks in the public and parapublic sectors

The APTS decries the government's improvised approach

Longueuil, May 26, 2020 – The APTS (*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux*) decries the Legault government's improvised approach in public- and parapublic-sector contract talks, and the cavalier way that the head of the Treasury Board, Christian Dubé, publicly unveiled its entire management proposal without even giving the unions time to consult their members. What a flagrant lack of respect!

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the government has been like a weathervane, changing direction whichever way the wind blows. Just last Thursday, its spokesperson informed us that our contract talks were no longer being fast-tracked. Today Mr. Dubé told us that we have to conclude negotiations before the summer, in less than a month. Their words and actions don't line up. Can someone please tell us where we stand?" demanded APTS President Andrée Poirier.

The APTS finds it astonishing that the government is unable to grasp the complexity of the issues facing the health and social services system, and that its only solution is to raise the salaries of beneficiary attendants. Yet the APTS has submitted a variety of proposals to improve working conditions and recognize the value of the work performed by professionals and technicians.

"Magical thinking doesn't work. Our health and social services system is facing immense challenges, and we have to take the necessary time to find effective, long-lasting solutions. With these negotiations, we have an opportunity to redress the longstanding under-recognition of those who are working flat out to keep our public system going, and bolster their spirits," added Andrée Poirier.

For the APTS, the issues that need to be tackled in priority are work overload and the ensuing psychological distress experienced by professional and technical personnel. Concrete measures are also urgently needed to help attract and retain employees, particularly in youth protection, to ensure the necessary services for the Québec population.

APTS-FIQ alliance finds the government wage offers disappointing

The wage offer of a 5% increase over three years falls far short of APTS and FIQ members' expectations. What's more, the proposed joint committees on the retirement plan and parental rights would only defer key decisions to a later date.

"If Mr. Dubé wants to settle quickly, he'll have to sweeten his wage offer," announced the two union presidents, Andrée Poirier for the APTS and Nancy Bédard for the FIQ. "This proposal has practically nothing more to offer than the one we rejected last December. The pay increase for beneficiary attendants won't solve the problem of work overload for our members."

The government's stubborn insistence on a forum on general health care is also incomprehensible to the APTS-FIQ alliance. "We already said no to the *Forum sur la santé globale*, so why is the government so set on it? The fact that a small amount of money is associated with it doesn't change a thing," the union presidents declared.

FIQ activists rejected the government wage offer on Tuesday at a virtual meeting. The APTS delegation will be briefed on Friday about the offer presented to the APTS-FIQ alliance.

The APTS and the FIQ

The [APTS](#) represents 55,000 professionals and technicians who provide a myriad of healthcare and social services to the population, including 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.

- 30 -

Contact: Mathieu Le Blanc
Communications and media relations officer
Cell: 514 609-2906