

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

MEDICAL RESIDENTS HOLD DAY WITHOUT TEACHING TODAY

Montreal, Monday, March 12, 2018 – “Today, Quebec’s 3,600 or so medical residents will not be doing any teaching of medical students and other health professionals in their training sites,” stated the President of the *Fédération des médecins résidents du Québec* (FMRQ), Dr Christopher Lemieux. “In this way, we want to demonstrate to the Quebec government that medical residents are fully fledged professionals.” Medical residents work an average of 72 hours a week, during the day, evenings, nights, and weekends, across Quebec. They meet patients, manage their cases, make diagnoses, and provide treatment. “Not only does the Minister not appear to acknowledge our work,” Dr Lemieux added, “but he is even asking us to do more, whereas 55% of our members are already showing signs of burnout!”

The FMRQ is thus continuing to intensify its tactics to pressure the government since, at the most recent bargaining session on December 15, 2017, the representatives of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS) broke off negotiations—tabling a comprehensive offer that a month earlier had already been rejected by medical residents—right after residents had presented a compromise proposal to achieve a settlement in time for Christmas, a goal the MSSS claimed to share.

“Medical residents are already overextended,” Dr Lemieux pointed out, “and the MSSS is proposing, at the negotiating table, that healthcare establishments can get around the limit of 16 hours’ work per 24 hours—a limit medical residents managed to obtain in 2011 when a court ruled that going beyond that limit violated the Charters of Human Rights and Freedoms. It may now be time for Quebec’s Premier, who is also Minister responsible for Youth Issues, to get involved in the case,” Dr Lemieux stressed, “and to be sure to delegate people who understand our reality and are capable of negotiating with respect, so that genuine solutions can be found and our collective agreement—which expired three years ago!—can be renewed.”

Patient care and services are maintained

Medical residents, as well as delivering patient care, conduct research, and teach medical students, fellow residents, and other health professionals on a regular basis. It is this last teaching part that they will refrain from doing today—March 12—for a single day, for now. Medical residents will continue to deliver care, and take part in surgery, examinations, and other clinical activities during this day without teaching. In fact, this way, they will have even more time to devote to patients. The Day Without Teaching will last 24 hours. Medical residents will resume teaching everyone the following day.

“But other days without teaching will be held over the coming weeks if the government refuses to hear our voice,” stated the FMRQ President. “All we are asking for is acknowledgment of what our contribution is really worth. Medical residents want to sign a collective agreement. The ball is in the government’s court. If the government continues to ignore us, and does not resume negotiations seriously, with a more respectful approach,” he concluded, “the FMRQ could be forced to launch a general strike.” The FMRQ already has strike mandates, obtained with the support of 97.7% of its membership.

Fédération des médecins résidents du Québec

The *Fédération des médecins résidents du Québec* is made up of the four medical resident associations linked to the establishments in the University of Montreal, McGill University, University of Sherbrooke and Laval University (Quebec City) healthcare system. It has some 3,600 members, who deliver services to the public in Quebec's healthcare establishments. One quarter of these medical residents work in family medicine, while the remainder are in other medical, surgical and laboratory specialties. More than 57% of medical residents are women.

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