



We're done working ourselves sick!

131,000 REASONS
TO STAND TOGETHER



Regional disparities

Intersectoral demands

Personnel attraction and retention are huge problems in some regions, and especially in isolated communities. Lack of personnel:

- leads to breaks in services (that are often recurrent) in some communities;
- forces patients and service users to travel long distances to receive care;
- leads to increased risk of work accidents; and
- leads to increased use of personnel from agencies, a practice that has been associated with skyrocketing costs over the past few years.

And yet, professionals and technicians in health care and social services are at the heart of remote communities, with their purchases boosting local economies.

Provisions on regional disparities are intended not only to compensate employees for the inconvenience associated with working in remote locations, but also to provide attraction and retention measures that will encourage them to work and stay there. These provisions are an essential lever to ensure that all Quebecers have access to the same quality care and services, regardless of where they live. They are also a key driver for regional development.

Regional disparity provisions include an annual isolation and remoteness premium. Travel and moving expenses are also reimbursed, as well as certain food transportation costs in extremely isolated regions. Trips out are paid for, ensuring that employees and their dependents can go back to major centres a few times every year. And an 8% retention premium already exists, although it applies only to Sept-Îles and Port-Cartier.

Localities, territories and municipalities covered by the provisions are divided into five sectors according to remoteness. Remoteness and isolation premiums, as well as trips out, vary by sector.

The general objectives of APTS-FIQ alliance demands are:

- to extend the scope of the 8% retention premium so that it includes all Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Côte-Nord employees (among others),
- to add localities in some sectors where a remoteness premium applies,
- to provide greater access to trips out,
- to require the employer to fully mitigate tax losses linked to benefits, and
- to modify leave without pay for work in northern regions in order to make it more accessible and extend its length.

Among labour organizations, the APTS-FIQ alliance is the one with the largest number of demands regarding regional disparities. Better conditions for everyone working in Québec's regions are essential in order to provide better care and services for all Quebecers.

Each region faces specific issues, which may include a massive exodus of employees from small facilities in remote areas to major centres.

Together, the FIQ and APTS represent members in every Québec region, and as a consequence, APTS-FIQ demands cover all of Québec.

These are the APTS-FIQ alliance demands:

- Grant an 8% retention premium to all employees in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Côte-Nord regions, where personnel shortages are acute and the use of independent workers has skyrocketed.
- Create regional working committees to address personnel attraction and retention issues in the following regions, to identify localities that should benefit from the 8% retention premium, and to assess the possibility of applying other measures: Capitale-Nationale, Bas-Saint-Laurent, Mauricie—Centre-du-Québec, Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, Laurentides, Lanaudière, Estrie, Chaudière-Appalaches, Outaouais and Gaspésie. Working committees are also demanded for Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Côte-Nord; at the same time, we're demanding that the 8% premium be paid immediately to employees in these two regions where labour shortage problems are particularly severe.
- Add localities in certain sectors covered by isolation and remoteness premiums:
 - Isle-aux-Grues and Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs (sector I),
 - Oujé-Bougoumou and Fermont (sector III), and
 - part of the Côte-Nord region, from Kegaska to Labrador (sector IV).
- Give the benefit of trips out to all employees, regardless of where they were recruited, to avoid inequities and encourage local recruiting.
- Make the following changes to leave without pay granted to work in a northern institution:
 - force the employer to grant it,
 - extend it from 12 to 36 months, and
 - make it available to employees who are going to work in Abitibi-Témiscamingue.
- Require the employer to fully mitigate tax losses linked to benefits in order to retain and stabilize personnel in the Grand-Nord and Côte-Nord regions, and to reduce inequities in relation to independent workers who do not experience such losses.
- Upwardly harmonize various provisions currently applying to other labour organizations, to the benefit of members of the APTS-FIQ alliance. These include the "settling in" premium for Fermont and Blanc-Sablon, the reimbursement of food transportation expenses, and the availability of trips out for a family member or friend.
- Ensure the health and safety of healthcare professionals by maintaining two members on staff in each northern clinic, even if the employee lives with her family.