

## **When the most vulnerable pay the price of political choices**

Recent government decisions are hitting seniors, people with disabilities and caregivers hard. These choices are making millions of Quebecers who depend on essential services to live with dignity and maintain a good quality of life vulnerable.

Faced with these injustices, 16 national and regional organizations defending the rights and promoting the interests of these people are joining forces to denounce the growing inequalities caused by these political choices.

Here are the main programs and measures affected and their consequences:

- **Reduction in home support services**

Home support services should provide personalized care, tailored to the specific needs of each individual whose situation requires it. These fragmented actions are insufficient.

Since the reduction of these services, individuals or their family members report that the CIUSSS and CLSCs only provide minor corrections, on a case-by-case basis, to address certain situations. This support remains insufficient and accentuates local and regional disparities.

- **Return to 1991 scales for the Family Support program**

The Family Support Program provides grants to help caregivers, such as parents of children with special support needs, obtain respite. This support is essential to prevent burnout and allow families to continue supporting their loved ones at home.

However, the amounts allocated are based on scales established in 1991, which do not reflect current living costs or the needs of families.

Parents and caregivers must therefore give up moments of respite. This compromises the ability of families to keep their loved ones at home, increasing the risk of institutionalization.

- **Suspension of the Home Adaptation Program (HAP)**

The HAP funds work such as the installation of ramps, lifts or adapted showers, allowing people with disabilities to live independently at home. The suspension of this programme prevents the people concerned from carrying out this essential work.

Currently, by suspending this program, these people are at risk of injuries or falls at home. Costs to the health system will increase due to preventable accidents due to hospitalizations.

- **Reduction of Work Integration Contracts (WIC)**

The WICs offer, among other things, financial support to employers who hire people with disabilities.

By reducing this measure, the government is slowing down the inclusion in employment of people with disabilities, who are already under-represented in the labor market.

**The consequences of the cuts are serious and sometimes irreparable.**

Also, these cuts further isolate those affected by the government's decisions, particularly women and children, and foster a climate of violence and abuse against them. In the absence of appropriate services, our organizations also report that some people are considering medical assistance in dying, due to a lack of adequate solutions.

The government requires people with disabilities and their families to pay additional fees to access essential services. These charges exacerbate inequalities, as these people already face high expenses related to their condition. They must forgo necessary services because they cannot afford the additional costs.

**Let's correct the shot**

Given that the cuts observed affect several ministries, we are directly calling on the Premier of Quebec, Mr. François Legault, to quickly correct the situation. On behalf of all the people represented by our broad coalition, we are demanding the immediate cancellation of all cuts and the restoration of the affected public services, which are already insufficient in quality and quantity. We are calling for the organization of public consultations bringing together the government and civil society in order to find fair solutions for all.

These measures are essential to reaffirm Quebec's commitment to its most vulnerable citizens. It is imperative that the government take the necessary measures to ensure that every Quebecer, regardless of their living conditions, can live with the services necessary for their well-being.

Together, let's build a society that promotes inclusion and dignity.

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