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Public Coverage of Psychotherapy

Montréal, December 3, 2017

The health minister announced today the creation of a public psychotherapy program with an injection of more than 35 million dollars in the project. According to the minister, this will allow psychological health services to be offered to 240 000 Quebecers.

The Federation of Medical Students of Québec (FMEQ) is delighted by this announcement. Indeed, since 2016, the Federation has asked the government to improve the services offered in psychotherapy. “It’s a major gain for the FMEQ, but first and foremost, it’s a gain for our patients”, declares Samuel Bergeron, president of the Federation. The FMEQ had previously presented its recommendations to deputies and ministers of the National Assembly in April 2016, within the context of its annual Lobby Day.

The medical students of the province generally asked the government:

- 1. To develop a program of public access to psychotherapy;*
- 2. To promote a migration of the psychotherapy workforce from the private to the public system, with financial incentives, and by creating full time jobs, to guarantee an equitable access to all Quebec citizens;*
- 3. To adopt a sustainable approach to mental health aiming to decrease the long-term social and economic burden, with significant investments, that will benefit future generations;*
- 4. To consider the possibility of compensation for internships in psychology as a retention factor for graduates in psychology in the public network.*

With this new measure that will help guide patients towards accessible psychotherapy care, Quebec joins several countries like Great Britain and Australia, where convincing results have been observed in terms of effectiveness and cost-efficiency by the establishment of public psychotherapy.

The next generation of medical professionals of the province can count on this new item in the care of its patients to offer them the best care possible. The medical students wish to collaborate with other health care professionals in order that this program can be set up as quickly as possible.

Link to the FMEQ paper on access to psychotherapy: http://www.fmeq.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Mémoire-FMEQ_Psychothérapie.pdf

On the Fédération médicale étudiante du Québec

Founded in 1974, the Fédération médicale étudiante du Québec (FMEQ) has always had as first mission to unite the four medical faculties of medicine of Quebec (Université Laval, McGill University, Université de Sherbrooke and Université de Montréal) to promote and defend the collective interests specific to Quebec medical students on pedagogical, political, and social matters. It represents the 4200 medical students of Quebec.

