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To our fellow medical students,  
To the population of Quebec,  
To our patients,

In the past weeks, the negotiations surrounding physicians' salaries led by the FMSQ and the FMOQ have been displayed in the public arena in a rather negative light. In this sense, it seems as though the issue of physicians' salary is impossible to dissociate from the practice itself.

For this reason, we have seen a new trend appear in the media in parallel with the negotiations between the MSSS and the medical federations: Doctor Bashing. The pejorative propositions disseminated at the societal level have caused concrete damage to the relationship that exists between physicians and their patients, but has also led to strained workplace relationships, which can impact even medical students.

Some among you may have read an open letter published in Le Devoir in which a medical student announced his shame towards the Quebec medical community. Many doctors have also come out in the media to express similar opinions, and have used this platform to criticize the agreements between our government and medical federations.

Our mission is neither to criticize the opinions of those who denounce the present situation nor the work done by the professional federations. However, the Fédération médicale étudiante du Québec, which represents the voice of 4200 medical students throughout the province, would like to clarify one point: the medical students of this province should not be ashamed of the profession which they have chosen.

We are not ashamed of our profession: to us, medicine is not another act for which we bill, but rather a vocation in its truest sense. We are not ashamed to dedicate over ten years of studies to our trade, to work long hours in our clinical rotations, to sacrifice innumerable nights and weekends for our call shifts and to use the remainder of our time to study for exams. Medicine allows us to discover ourselves, both as professionals and as humans. We are not ashamed to practice medicine, because the contact we are able to have with our patients, the fact that we are able to support someone through the most difficult moments of their life and to bring them just a moment of comfort, confirms that we have chosen a profession which inspires us. We are proud to wear our white coats day after day, because we want nothing more than to defend the health of our population and to contribute to the future of our profession – and this message is unanimously shared by the medical community.



Some of you will find us optimistic, or even naïve. But if we allowed ourselves to become cynical towards the future of our profession, we would not be able to invest the hours nor have the dedication required to complete our medical studies. Moreover, this would represent a massive loss to our society, who deserves a generation of advocates for their health. We would like only to remind you that medical students are not there to count bills, but rather to dedicate their heart and soul to their passion: healing. The FMEQ believes that we must have an open debate regarding physician remuneration, but we ask only that it remain respectful towards all parties, whether that be within the professional or public sphere. We need to think together about the future of our health care system, rather than each party only pulling recklessly towards their own interests. This we must do, for our patients.

The Executive Council of the FMEQ

