

Régis Paradis, *President*

Reorganizing the health network: let's speed things up

The *Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers auxiliaires du Québec* (OIIAQ) is concerned about the shortage of nursing care resources that keeps impacting the health network. The OIIAQ believes that executives of health care institutions have undertaken the reorganization of human resources and nursing care services much too slowly, yet a wise mobilization of all existing caregivers might compensate, at least in part, for the negative effects of this shortage.

One solution recommended by the *Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* (MSSS) consists of reviewing work organization in the nursing sector. According to *La Presse* and *Le Journal de Québec*, Minister Couillard, reacting to comments made by union representatives who recently denounced the shortage of staff at Ste-Justine Hospital, said the following:

"...He (Minister Couillard) has indicated, as an alternative, a restructuring of nursing tasks, compared to those of physicians and nursing assistants, as well as recognizing the status of these health care practitioners. "*Si on ne fait pas ça, ça va être extrêmement difficile de produire suffisamment d'infirmières pour répondre aux besoins, si elles continuent à travailler comme elles travaillent actuellement*", stated the Minister. (*La Presse, Le Journal de Québec*, January 30, 2007.)"

We believe that Registered Nursing Assistants could participate to a greater degree in home-care and regular nursing services, as well as at specimen collection centres. Moreover, in order to reduce waiting times for

various surgical procedures, a larger number of RNAs could be allowed into operating rooms, an action in line with the recommendations of the Work group on nursing care organization in the operating room, published in 2004.

The *Act to amend the Professional Code and other legislative provisions as regards to the health sector* (Bill 90), which came into force on January 30, 2003, was passed in order to allow health network executives greater flexibility as to the most effective use of their health care employees, a goal which is far from being applied in all healthcare institutions. Nevertheless, this Act allows for more responsibilities for RNAs while enabling them to practice their profession with increased autonomy.

The OIIAQ is also concerned about recent MSSS statistics on nursing care manpower planning confirming that only 34.3% of Nursing Assistants hold full-time positions. It stands to reason that this appalling situation hardly encourages RNAs to continue practicing their profession! Within

the framework of the present electoral campaign, the OIIAQ has sent press releases to all political parties involved, asking them to firmly commit to creating jobs for Registered Nursing Assistants and to establishing clear policies aimed at a better mobilization of human resources within the health care network.

More multitasking for Registered Nursing Assistants

Maintenance activities related to a tracheostomy connected to a mechanical ventilator

A new regulation will soon be adopted regarding the authorization to be granted, under certain conditions, to RNAs to engage in maintenance activities related to a tracheostomy connected to a mechanical ventilator. The *Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec* (OIIQ) has adopted this regulation after almost three years of discussions held between itself and the OIIAQ. As soon as the regulation comes into effect, *Santé Québec* will publish this news.

Editorial

Contribution of RNAs in intravenous therapy

Discussions with the OIIQ concerning the contribution of RNAs in intravenous therapy are continuing, and we are confident that a regulation on authorization will be in effect by the end of 2007. Consequently, the Order will make a continuous training program available to its members throughout Quebec in accordance with statutory requirements under this regulation. We also trust that the *ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport du Québec* (MELSQ) will change the "Health, Assistance and Nursing Care" Program for new candidates accordingly. However, at this time it is too soon to provide all the details concerning the continuous training program to be offered with regard to this new regulation. However, please rest assured that we will do everything possible to facilitate accessibility to this training.

Regulation on Compulsory Continuous Training for Registered Nursing Assistants

The *Regulation on Registered Nursing Assistants compulsory continuous training program* came into effect on March 29, 2007. As you recall, this regulation stipulates that each RNA must complete 10 hours of training every two years. Thus, at the end of the qualifying period – that is between April 1, 2007 and March 31,

2009 – all OIIAQ members will have to show compliance with the regulation requirements. For further details, please consult the present issue of *Santé Québec* in which this regulation is published.

In order to help you comply with this regulation, the OIIAQ will offer various training activities at different times during the year. By completing the attached questionnaire and providing a list of courses or conferences you would like to attend in the coming years, you will help us better respond to your needs. We encourage members of Nursing Assistants Committees (CIIAs) to contact health-care institutions authorities in order to convince them to plan and to organize a greater number of training activities within their institutions.

A special form has been created for you to certify your completion of the continuous training activities. This form is attached to the present issue, and is also available on our Internet site at: www.oiiq.org.

Journée de l'infirmière auxiliaire / Nursing Assistant's Day

This year, Nursing Assistant's Day will have as its theme "***More than a profession... A passion!***" and will be held on May 5, 2007. From May 1 through May 5, 2007, advertisements about the event will be broadcast on *Réseau Rock Détente* radio stations.

I hope many of you will mark this special day.

Régis Paradis

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