

Gaétan Barrette's autocratic style

Montréal, February 6, 2015 – CNW/Telbec – While the Québec government, on the strength of its parliamentary majority, is preparing to impose the adoption of Bill 10 in the National Assembly, the Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec (FMOQ) feels compelled to speak out against this entirely unnecessary autocratic shift. Absolutely nothing justifies resorting to this gag order in the current circumstances because, in addition to the fact that this government project remains unclear in many respects, there is no objective element to support the government's argument that this bill must be immediately adopted and quickly implemented.

"Health Minister Gaétan Barrette's Bill 10 proposes a major transformation of the Québec health network as well as an unheard of centralization of powers. Gaétan Barrette stands to wield a new and dangerous amount of power. Many stakeholders within the health milieu have condemned this excessive centralization and, in particular, the lack of transparency within the ministry regarding the permanent or temporary nature of some articles of the bill as well as future regulations. Not once has Minister Barrette deemed it necessary to offer a satisfactory response to this effect. Instead, he insists on employing autocratic measures that will disrupt the health network for years without any guarantee of a positive impact on the budget and, above all, access to quality health care," said Dr. Louis Godin, president of the FMOQ.

The adoption of Bill 10 by the National Assembly could have many potential negative consequences, including:

- The extreme politicization of the health network due to the exceptional appointment powers that Minister Barrette wields
- Priority given to the ongoing bureaucratic reform instead of improving access to care
- Genuine geographic distancing of the decision-making administrative levels of the settings where health care is provided
- The development of huge and costly bureaucratic structures where managers will not be held accountable.

"With Minister Barrette's approach, the Québec government is endangering the health care network, despite the virtually unanimous opinions against this approach. Moreover, the opposition to some elements of Bill 10 extends much further than simply deputies of the opposition: health professionals, elected officials and seasoned administrators, among others, also oppose many articles of the bill. Unfortunately, it appears that Gaétan Barrette is absolutely incapable of demonstrating any flexibility or listening. Instead, he continues to insist that he is right on being wrong! This gag order is pointless, unjustified and goes against the interests of our patients. Above all, it is doubly unfortunate that all of the Liberal members are complicit in the autocratic stance Minister Barrette has taken," concluded Dr. Godin.

Read the brief submitted by the FMOQ as part of the consultations on Bill 10:

<http://www.fmoq.org/fr/union/opinions/Lists/Billets/Post.aspx?ID=24>

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