

CSQ/COLLEGES

For an accessible public network and adequate financing!

Just like the previous year, 2013 will have been one in which the topic of higher education was widely discussed in the public arena. We were satisfied in the way that the Minister of Advanced Education, Research, Science, and Technology (MESRST), Mr. Pierre Duchesne, gave significant attention to the collegial network during the consultation that culminated with the latest summit on higher education. This event led to the initiation of five important task forces, including one which focuses on collegial education.



Photo : François Beaugrand

Anne Dionne, President of the Fédération du personnel de soutien de l'enseignement supérieur (FPSES-CSQ)

Mario Beauchemin, President of the Fédération des enseignantes et enseignants de cégep (FEC-CSQ)

Bernard Bérubé, President of the Fédération du personnel professionnel des collèges (FPPC-CSQ)

It takes political courage!

Our meeting with the president of the task force on collegial education, Mr. Guy Demers, was very interesting. We detected an interest in looking for solutions that would help ensure the sustainability and the vitality of CEGEPs, province-wide. However, the finish line is still a long way off. And, it would be naïve to believe that the tension between certain key players of the collegial network has disappeared as if by magic.

These concerns are not wholly unrelated to widening divide between two points of view on CEGEPs. In one camp, certain people advocate a dispersed decentralization where the establishments are split up, pulled apart and delivered to the competition without any reservation. In the other camp, we believe that a veritable collegial network, present in every region, is a model that is unique to Quebec and constitutes one of our province's greatest strengths. We

cannot let this national treasure be destroyed. Is it really necessary to bring up again the undeniable benefit that is gained from the collegial network's contribution to raising the educational level across the entire province of Quebec? We must continue to fight for this issue, and insist that collegial education remain accessible in every region. To do so, we need to reorganize the program map. Does the government possess the political courage to take this step? Other avenues must also be considered, such as the type of financing. The current formula favours a puerile competition: it's time to rethink the current policy and allow the financing of specific CEGEP operations.

Put an end to iniquity between CEGEPs and private colleges!

We cannot understand why CEGEPs and private colleges do not enjoy the same conditions for the elaboration and the authorization of their new

programs. The authorization that was recently given to the Grasset Institute so that it could offer training in *Techniques de production et de postproduction télévisuelles* just goes to show, once again, how flagrant this iniquity really is. Furthermore, this authorization infringed on the exclusivity of the program *Art et technologie des médias* (ATM) offered by the CEGEP in Jonquière. According to information that we have received, the government is currently looking for a solution to solve these issues.

The coming months will give us the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with the contents of the collegial education task force's progress report; the final report is expected to be released to the public in June 2014. You can count on us to fight for equal rules for CEGEPs and private colleges, and for a true province-wide collegial network, in every region of Quebec.

Long live CEGEPs!



For more information:
collegial.csq.qc.net

For the preservation of the DEC in nursing

The year ahead will be a crucial one for the future of the nursing program, put into question by the possibility of stricter requirements for entry into the profession. The nursing program, offered in 43 of 48 CEGEPS, is the most popular technical program, and very few, if any, criticisms can be made regarding the program's graduates who represent 70 % of the nurses in the province.



Pierre Avignon
Advisor, FEC

Application of the law modifying the professional code and other legislative measures in the field of mental health and human relations placed tremendous pressure on many technical programs¹, yet it was the position of the Order of Nurses of Quebec (OIIQ) that was the final straw. In June 2012, the OIIQ asked the government make a bachelor's degree the new entry-level requirement for those who want to practise nursing. Among the OIIQ's arguments they've put forth is the necessity to augment the training of nursing personnel due to new demands on the profession, including the increase in complexity and scope of care, the creation of new roles for nurses, and the differences in training compared with the rest of Canada.

This position is not a dead letter; in October 2012, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS) created an inter-ministerial task force on the future of the nursing profession, which has participated from the CSQ working alongside the Ministry of Advanced Education, Research, Science, and Technology (MESRST), the OIIQ, the Federation of CEGEPS, the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities (CREPUQ), and other union organizations. The results from this group, assigned to study the level of training required

for the nursing profession within the health care network, should be revealed soon.

Although the CSQ and its federations have stated their opposition to the position of the OIIQ, as have many other groups², the representatives of the universities and the health care establishments are favourable to it. This poses a serious threat to the DEC in nursing. However, there are a number of arguments in favour of maintaining the program's integrity, or rather its reinforcement.

Reinforce the excellent-quality nursing training, already offered at the collegial level

According to a poll conducted by the Federation of CEGEPS, 42 % of nursing students would not have chosen the program if a bachelor's degree were mandatory. Yet, CEGEPS are supposed to be a commitment to ensure accessibility to post-secondary studies for students. This is an issue that is particularly significant for colleges in the regions. A shift toward universities implies a significant increase in the duration of study, as well as the related expenses, which may discourage many potential students. Why go in this direction at a time when Quebec is in the midst of a labour shortage?

If an increase in training is necessary for certain nurses, the mechanisms that are already in place are sufficient for meeting any additional requirements. The revision process of the collegial programs, gate-way DEC-BACs,

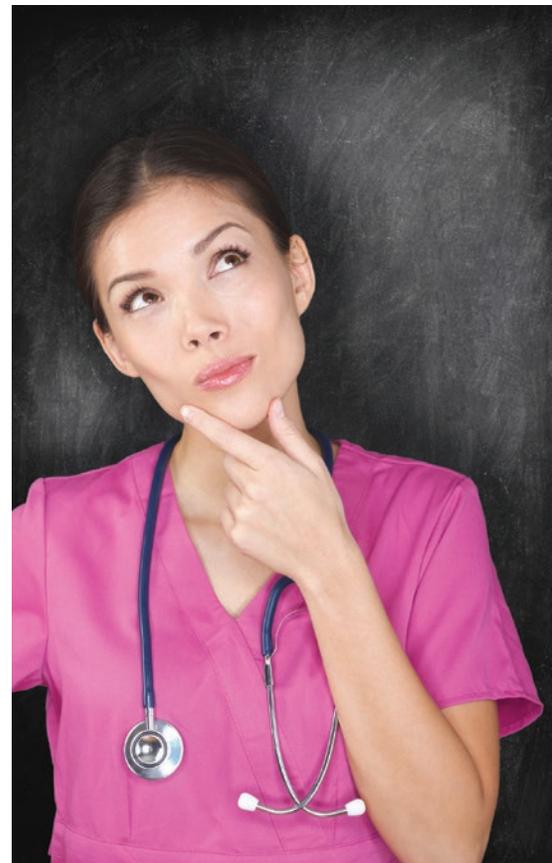


Photo: Fotolia

or the new second-cycle diploma for specialized nurse-practitioners (IPS) are enough to fulfill any new requirements. A mandatory BA in nursing could also have the effect of increasing the number of nursing students who choose to obtain a vocational diploma, and in effect, lowering the general level of training that is held by nurses who are in direct contact with patients!

Before tackling the requirements of the health and social services network, the government should prioritize finding solutions to issues related to public finances, so much needed personnel can be hired.

The collegial federations of the CSQ agree that the government should use existing mechanisms, accompanied by an analysis of the labour situation, to meet the new requirements. Any reflection concerning the basic training of our nurses should be based on real problems related to the existing training programs.

1. Most notably: *Techniques de travail social, Techniques d'intervention en délinquance* and *Techniques d'éducation spécialisée*.
2. The Federation of CEGEPS, the *Association des enseignantes et enseignants en soins infirmiers des collèges du Québec* (AEESICQ), the *Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec* (FIQ) and the *Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec* (FNEEQ-CSN).

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9405, Sherbrooke Street E
Montreal (Quebec) H1L 6P3

Tel: 514 356-8888
Fax: 514 356-9393
E-mail:
danis.gabriel@csq.qc.net

Editor in chief:
Gabriel Danis

Contributors:
Pierre Avignon

Secretary:
Dominique Brown

Revision:
Martine Lauzon

Graphic design:
Interscript

Scriptovisual production:
Johanne Boucher

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