

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STAFF: A CONSTANT CHALLENGE DESPITE THE IMPROVEMENT (REGIONAL DISPARITIES IN FERMONT)

Baie-Comeau, July 6th, 2020 – The Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de la Côte-Nord is working hard to attract new talents and to keep them in the region. There have been 557 hires made since March 15th, while we usually hire around 600 people per year.

The CISSS is really proud of the work accomplished so far, but we are aware that we must now retain this new staff. In November 2019, the establishment held a forum on human resources challenges with its managers and employees. Several ideas to favour labour attraction and retention emerged from this event. Actions are already underway regarding the welcoming of new employees and the assistance provided for integration, among other things.

Certain national provisions of collective agreements provide mechanisms to attract and retain labour, including Annex H, which provides a framework for regional disparities and improves some working conditions of employees working in remote areas who meets certain specific criteria. Well aware of labour-related challenges, the CISSS is doing everything possible to favour the hiring and retention of its staff, in compliance with the eligibility criteria on regional disparities provided in Annex H.

Employees who felt that their rights have been violated, since several years before the establishment of the CISSS in 2015, were invited to submit their file to a committee composed of representatives from the Board of Directors, the Direction des ressources financières and the Direction des ressources humaines, communications et affaires juridiques, which analyzed them rigorously. The appropriate direction then met with every employee having submitted their file, who could be accompanied by their union representative if desired. For the sake of transparency, a group meeting will be held this week to explain the process and to address employee concerns. The employer's representatives will also be available for individual meetings with employees upon request.

The President and executive director in office since July 1st, Mr. Claude Lévesque, wants to go to Fermont this summer in order to meet the staff on site and the employees who want to talk with him. He also wants to meet with several key actors, including union representatives and elected representatives from the region. "I am very excited about discovering our beautiful region and meeting the employees. I am also very open to meeting with union bodies. Since I arrived very recently, I obviously need to assimilate the region's colours, issues and challenges", says Mr. Lévesque.

- 30 -

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