

2ND COVID-19 WAVE: OUR REGION IS VULNERABLE, BUT THE CISSS IS READY

Baie-Comeau, October 2nd, 2020 – The North Shore moved on from the green to the yellow alert level on October 1st, and the evolution of the situation in the province is concerning. Our region is vulnerable for different reasons and particularities (remoteness and size of the territory, ageing population, etc.), and the regional health network is no different, especially because of the labour shortage. The Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de la Côte-Nord wants to remind the population of all the efforts made since the start of the pandemic in order to be prepared for any eventuality.

Employees stepping up

Between January 1st and September 1st, 2020, we have hired 902 people, while the annual number is usually around 600 hires. The recruitment team is working tirelessly to fill the vacancies and the new positions created to face the pandemic (door attendants, cleaning attendants, etc.). The CISSS is very proud of the work done, but we are aware that we need to retain this new staff.

In terms of direct care to users, the staff of certain departments have been increased during the first wave. Additionally, around 20 nurses arrived from other CISSS and CIUSSS to support our mother-child centre and pediatrics teams in Baie-Comeau and Sept-Îles during the summer. Sixteen new physicians have also joined the medical team this year.

In addition, about 40 people who have completed the health care attendant training course have now been working for the CISSS since September. A new call for applications was recently launched to find employees interested in taking the health care attendant training course, to create new cohorts in Baie-Comeau and Sept-Îles. This training will eventually be offered to employees elsewhere on the territory.

Finally, upon ministerial recommendation, new administrative support positions were created in residential and long-term care centres (CHSLD). The purpose of this measure is to increase the presence of managers in living units, and thus support the teams in the field.

A COVID-19 support team

The CISSS can now count on a team of employees who are ready to be called upon during this time of pandemic. In order to generate more interest, local tourism packages will be randomly given among all employees who want to be part of the COVID-19 support team. As of October 1st, 219 people have declared their availability on a regular basis for the next three months. The teams are currently being initiated and will be deployed progressively starting next week. Moreover, 173 people volunteered to provide support in case of an outbreak. Resources are also available to travel across the territory.

Offloading plan

A reorganization and offloading plan aimed at evaluating all the services provided by the CISSS is underway. This plan will allow us to maintain the service offer in the sectors considered a priority.

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Despite all the efforts made by the organization, the labour needs for certain positions are still critical. This is why the CISSS will keep on using its creativity to ensure that we have the necessary resources in the event of a resurgence of COVID-19 in our region. During a joint meeting with union partners, the President and executive director has reiterated his desire to work together with them.

- 30 -

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