

For immediate release

QCGN presents its brief on Bill 10

Montreal – October 30, 2014 – The government must find a way to ensure that Quebec’s English-speaking communities continue to have some degree of control and management over the institutions that it built and has supported for generations. It must also ensure that institutions designated to provide bilingual services are not abolished by the provincial government’s sweeping health care reforms.

Those were among the messages the Quebec Community Groups Network and its partners and stakeholders delivered to Health Minister Gaétan Barrette during public hearings on Bill 10 at the National Assembly in Quebec City.

“The QCGN, our member organizations, and the many partners we have consulted over the past few weeks are profoundly worried about how Bill 10 will impact our institutions and the vitality of our communities,” QCGN President Dan Lamoureux told the commission looking into the proposed legislation that would abolish regional health agencies and regroup some 185 health and social service institutions into 19 mega regional centers.

“When our institutions are threatened, our community is threatened. And Bill 10, in its present form, doesn’t just threaten our institutions. With a single exception, it eliminates them,” said Sara Saber Freedman, President of the Board of MAB-Mackay Rehabilitation Centre in Montreal. Freedman, who presented [the brief on behalf of the QCGN](#) and the community, said that according to the community’s read of Bill 10, the only institution with bilingual designation that will remain standing if the proposed legislation is enacted is the McGill University Hospital Centre (MUHC) in Montreal.

Freedman noted that the QCGN and its partners – together with most of Quebec society – shares the government’s objective of making our health care system more efficient and better able to provide better continuity of care and good quality services. But, not unlike many other groups that have appeared before the commission, QCGN has serious concerns on the speed in which the legislation is moving forward, the centralization of control and management of the system, and the submerging of social service mandates into vast structures whose priority is medical care.

The QCGN is worried that the Minister has convinced the public that the bill is about saving money by cutting down on bureaucracy. "But what the government is really doing is abolishing our institutions and centralizing power in the hands of the minister," said Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General of the QCGN, noting the community needs a better understanding of the impacts of Health Minister Barrette's proposal.

"The proposal as it stands now will evacuate our community out of the governance of those institutions that are key to our very vitality" contended Richard Walling, President of the Quebec Health and Social Services Foundation in Quebec City. Walling, a former President of the Provincial Advisory Committee on the dispensing of health and social services in the English language, said the community is more than willing to help find remedies that meet Dr. Barrette's goals. "We are open to solutions as long as we do not lose the community institutions that are at the heart of our communities".

The Quebec Community Groups Network (www.qcgn.ca) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together 41 English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

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