

## YOUR RIGHTS AND YOUR HEALTH

The **Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms of the Person** states that all human beings are equal and have the right to the equal protection of the Law.

Thus, **Article 10** of the Charter « *prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, skin colour, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil state, age (except as determine by Law), religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, handicap or use of any means to compensate for a handicap* ».

The rights of clients recognized by the **Health Services and Social Services Act** are as follows:

- **The right to be informed** about available healthcare and social services and resources;
- **The right to adequate** and continuous services in a scientific, humane, civil and personalized manner, in a secure installation, and in compliance with available resources;
- **The right to choose** the professional or agency that is to provide the services, taking into account the organization's mission and availability of resources;
- **The right to receive emergency care** services. Anyone whose life and integrity are endangered is entitled to receive the care required by his condition;
- **The right to be informed** about one's health status and about treatment options, risks and consequences before agreeing to receive a treatment; and **the right to be informed** as soon as possible of any accident occurred during the treatment which may have consequences to one's health or well-being;
- **The right to adequate accommodations** as required by one's condition;

- **The right to seek compensation** in case of any professional or other malpractice;
- **The right to file a complaint** in the framework of the official complaints process.
- **The right to consent** or to refuse consent regardless of the type of treatment being undertaken, from a blood test to an organ donation. Consent must be manifest, informed and freely given.
- **The right to participate** in any decision affecting one's health or well-being;
- **The right to be accompanied and assisted** to obtain information or to help the client to make a decision about services to be provided;
- **The right to be represented** in the case of a minor or of an inapt adult;
- **The right to access** one's medical file and to require confidentiality;
- **The right to receive services** in English provided the agency or program has the necessary resources;

The **Health Services and Social Services Act** establishes a human, material and financial resources organizational structure intended notably to:

- *Take into account the geographic, linguistic, sociocultural, ethnocultural and socio-economic characteristics of all regions (Article 2.5).* ;
- *Favour, depending on resources, the accessibility of health services and social services in their languages, for persons of the different ethnocultural communities (Article 2.7).*

## TO FILE A COMPLAINT

If you think that your rights have not been respected, you can contact:

- The particular healthcare agency's Complaints Commissioner;
- The Montreal Island's Complaints Assistance and Accompaniment Centre (CAAP-Île de Montréal) at 514-861-5998;
- Any human rights' advocacy organization.

## HEALTHCARE COVERAGE AND IMMIGRANT STATUS

All landed immigrants (accredited workers, sponsored relatives, etc.) are subject to a 3-month **waiting period without coverage** before being admissible to Quebec's Health Insurance Plan (RAMQ), which means they have no right to free healthcare services and treatments during that period. However, the following cases are exceptions to this no-coverage policy: prenatal and peri-natal care and follow-up; services for victims of conjugal or family violence or sexual aggression; and infectious diseases that could pose a danger public health.

Before being admissible to Quebec's Health Insurance Plan, persons subject to the no-coverage policy must pay for all healthcare services they receive during this period or register with a private insurance policy **within five days of their arrival in Canada**.

Refugees (i.e., persons who have a Certificat de sélection du Québec and proof of having been determined as Convention Refugees by Canada) are not subject to the 3-month no-coverage policy. However, refugee claimants still being processed are covered by the Interim Federal Health Program until they can be legally covered by the RAMQ.

In Quebec, everybody must have a **Drug insurance policy**. This can be provided by the Quebec's Health Insurance Plan (RAMQ) or by a private plan (linked to your

employment). If you are admissible to a private insurance plan, you must opt out of the RAMQ plan by calling (514) 864-3411. This is obligatory and it is also your responsibility.

### THE CSSS

A CSSS (or Health and Social Services Centre) is a public agency which encompasses the CLSC (or local community services centre), the general hospital and the CHSLD (or long-term residential healthcare centre) operating within the same territory.

The mission of a CLSC is to offer health services and social services both curative and preventive. It offers a whole spectrum of services such as: medical consults, nursing care, dietician consults, homecare services for increasingly-dependent persons, HIV-AIDS and STI's detection, vaccinations and blood tests, a peri-natal program, mental health and drug rehabilitation consults, etc.

### TO CONSULT A DOCTOR

Quebec is presently experiencing a dearth of doctors, so it is sometimes difficult to consult a physician in a CLSC or to secure a family doctor. To get treatments, you can go to a walk-in clinic (you can consult a directory at your CLSC) by calling ahead of time to know their opening hours. It's always better to return to the same clinic, as they will be better acquainted with your medical history.

### TO CONSULT A SPECIALIST

In Quebec, in order to consult a specialist (dermatologist, gynaecologist, urologist, orthopaedic, ophthalmologist, etc.), you must be **referred** by a general practitioner (a family doctor or a doctor consulted in a walk-in clinic.)

### NEED AN INTERPRETER IN YOUR MOTHER TONGUE?

Persons who have difficulty understanding either French or English can procure the services of an interpreter. To do so, he or she must first go to their healthcare agency (CLSC, hospital, nursing home, clinic, etc.), which will make the proper arrangements. The interpreter can go to the point of service or interpret on the phone. This service is free but must be planned ahead of time.



### INFO-SANTÉ

For any question about your health or that of a family member, you can consult a nurse by calling 8-1-1. The nurse will evaluate the situation, will give you advice and / or will direct to the proper agency (medical clinic or hospital emergency ward.) This service is free; and is available 24 hours-a-day.

### THE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY WARD

Waiting time in an emergency ward can be very long. Unless you are suffering from a serious health problem, consult a doctor in a walk-in clinic or phone Info-santé (8-1-1) before going to a hospital. In case of **heart attack, loss of consciousness, road accident, head or spine trauma**, etc., call for an ambulance immediately at 9-1-1.

### POISON CONTROL CENTRE



This service responds to any urgent case of poisoning. It's free and available 24 hours-a-day by calling 1 800 463-5060.

# SANTÉ-VOUS CHEZ-VOUS!

## Healthcare Services in Quebec

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Version en anglais

This brochure is only complementary to a longer information session. It is not meant to be exhaustive.

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