

NEGOTIATIONS

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won't have much choice but to call in their members for a vote in order to get their mandate in order to prepare for a general strike that could occur at the same time as the next federal election.

"It's bad," said Pierre Allard. "It's worse than bad."

As the leader of the APTS (Association des Professionnels et des Technologues de Santé) union local in Montreal's Jewish General Hospital, Allard is in a good position to see what the government's so-called "austerity" budgets are doing to the hospital's high standards of care as well as to its working environment and the morale of his members. Aside from the 34 percent pay raise that the province's physician will get over the next eight years, Allard told *The Suburban* that his members were less than pleased to hear about the generous salaries that are being offered to senior health executives

when tens of thousands of healthcare professionals throughout the province will not receive any kind of a raise over the next two years.

"And even then, they're offering nothing more than one percent (per year) over the next three years," said Allard. "That' three percent over five years...three percent!"

Other issues include a re-evaluation of existing pension plans that will include adding another two years of mandatory work (from 60 to 62) before workers will be eligible for a full provincial pension along with increased penalties that will be lopped off their pensions (four percent to 7.2 percent) should they choose to retire before putting in their 35 years on the job or leaving after their 65th birthday.

Aside from their refusal to yield on any of their discussion points, Allard also described what he called "sectorial" negotiations that are going to have a huge effect upon hundreds of health professionals who work in the city's west-end

CIUSSS.

"We used to be able to set aside our sick days (9.6 per year) and get paid for those days that we didn't use at the end of our career," said Allard. "Now they want to roll the clock back at midnight on New Year's Eve and that means that whatever days we didn't use will be lost at the end of the year."

While he admits that the proposal will save the health care system a lot of money, Allard also believes that it will also encourage health care workers to use up their sick days — a measure that will create even more opportunistic staff shortages and more work for those who remain on the floor. Other items include a new definition of what used to be the five-day work week into a seven-day work schedule — a proposal that could alter home and family routines for many health professionals who could be asked to come in to work weekend shifts.

Following another question about a previous *Suburban* story



CSN vice-president Francine Lévesque and FTQ president Daniel Boyer during Sunday morning demonstration outside city's convention center.

P.A. SEVIGNY PHOTO

about the need for a recognized day-care center for the children of employees who work at the 'Jewish', Allard had to laugh before he told *The Suburban* that he's still waiting for some kind of word from the government. As there are two subsidized day care centers at the St. Justine Hospital that's just down the road, another two at St. Mary's that's only a block away and

none at the Jewish, he said that there are a lot of employees who wonder why the government won't do something for one of the city's major hospitals where there are a lot of working mothers who need the service.

"It's crazy!" he said. "It's political and I think that somebody out there is very angry at us, and if that's the case, I want to know why." ■

CSL's Manoir Montefiore to close in 18 months

By Joel Goldenberg
The Suburban

Manoir Montefiore, the seniors residence at Cavendish Blvd. and Mackle Road, will be closing its doors in 18 months, *The Suburban* has learned.

The news broke last week in Councillor Mike Cohen's blog. The residence first opened in 1989. The facility is owned by Réseau Selection, which also owns Côte St. Luc's Le Waldorf and many other seniors residences in Quebec.

André Grégoire, general manager of the residence, said the closure is taking place because management noticed a "gap between the services we're offering to the community right now and what our residents and future residents need — there's a big gap.

"What we've decided to do is, in the next 18 months, help our residents relocate in the community," he added. "This is a Kosher facility, and it's supervised, and there are three other properties within two or three kilometres [of Manoir Montefiore], and we'd certainly like to assist them in that. We're not closing in six weeks, we're really taking the time that's needed to make sure this is done smoothly with the families and the resi-

dents."

Grégoire further explained that the average age of the current residents is 90 and over.

"The needs at that age are more than [what would be the case] at the average age of 78," he pointed out. "This beautiful property was built 26 years ago for independent living. We've refused many [potential new residents] in the last year. We were kind of noticing we didn't have the appropriate offer for these residents."

Grégoire said the announcement to the families was made June 10.

"We told them 'we have all the time in the world, let's meet soon, let's make sure the transition goes well.' Obviously, they'll be compensated and we'll help with reasonable moving costs. We'll meet them in the next few weeks. We have 18 months to do this. If someone wants to move in six months, no issues, no problem. Choose the residence that you want, make sure you have the appropriate level of care and we'll help you with that."

Grégoire said the atmosphere is calm at the residence.

"People understand. Most of our discussion was with families June 10 and it's really the families who will discuss this with the parent." ■

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