

Majority of health workers are stressed out, union says



PRESSE CANADIENNE

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File photo: Quebec Health Minister Gaétan Barrette. *DARIO AYALA / MONTREAL GAZETTE*

The Alliance of Professional and Technical Occupations in Health and Social Services (APTS) is

sounding the alarm about the mental health of its members.

The APTS on Sunday unveiled the results of a survey of its union members, who work in the Quebec health network as physiotherapists, social workers, medical imaging technologists, special educators and other positions.

The union reports 60 per cent of its members have a high or very high psychological distress index.

APTS president Carolle Dubé is not surprised by these results, saying they are part of the reason for the rate of worker absenteeism.

The APTS blames budget cuts and the reorganizations imposed by the Quebec minister of Health, Gaétan Barrette.

Dubé pointed to the centralization caused by the law, which she said had caused a “loss of benchmarks” without improving services to the population.

“It’s going at a crazy speed right now in the health network. There is no longer anyone who is able to follow. It’s reorganization over reorganization,” Dubé said in an interview with Presse Canadienne.

Dubé denounced the “authoritarian approach” of Barrette and called for more consultation of professionals and technicians in the health network.

According to the study carried out with the support of researchers at Université Laval, 35 per cent of the 32,000 alliance members have been absent from work for psychological reasons over the past year. About 65 per cent say they are running out of time to do their jobs.

“Currently, we have six people out of 10, professionals, technicians, who are at risk of depression, living in situations of high anxiety,” Dubé said.