

# INFO-CADRE

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A clear-eyed edition grounded in the realities of managers: while the “mammoth” wrestles with governance, budgets, and IT issues, you continue to deliver, and organizational capacity for change has its limits.

This June edition provides an update on shared service initiatives and their concrete impacts, while also offering useful reference points on the PMP pension plan, pay equity, and occupational health and safety, along with a touch of strategic monitoring...and a reminder of all your member's benefits.

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**JOE VIEIRA**  
President

## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Get the most out of your APER membership

**Next October, the population of Quebec will elect a new government.** The creation of Santé Québec is a legacy of the CAQ government, and it remains unclear what the other political parties intend to do with this new public corporation should they come to power.

Over the past decade, we have lived through the Barrette reform, a pandemic, mass vaccination clinics, labor disputes, and the Dubé reform that led to the creation of Santé Québec. We are now entering the era of shared services initiatives, essentially a series of smaller reforms that will significantly transform the way we work. And within a few months, we may have a new government that will undoubtedly want to put its own stamp on Quebec's health and social services system.

**Amid all this uncertainty, one thing has remained remarkably stable: the services offered by APER.**

Over the years, APER has continually evolved and adapted its service offering to meet your needs. This climate of constant change has understandably increased anxiety across the workforce, and we are seeing a growing number of psychological harassment complaints involving managers. It has also contributed to a greater sense of isolation among managers, who may find themselves questioning whom they can trust in their colleagues, their supervisors, or even their own staff.

Fortunately, we have also seen a significant increase in requests for coaching services. This growing demand confirms that investing in and expanding this service was the right decision. **We have also experienced a substantial rise in consultations**, reflecting both the uncertainty many managers face and the need for greater clarity regarding their employment conditions.

As the APER team often says, this is not the time to stay alone. The wide range of services offered by our association, combined with the many discounts available through our partners, gives you access to expert advice and support at little to no cost.

**On a personal note, I encourage you to speak with colleagues who are not yet APER members about the importance of joining and to share your positive experiences.** We also invite you to share and comment on APER's social media posts to help increase our visibility. Now is the time to show your pride in belonging to the only association that offers such a comprehensive range of services. As members, we are APER's best ambassadors.

**On that note, thank you for your continued loyalty and trust in APER. I wish you a wonderful summer with your family and loved ones. Make the most of the sunshine and enjoy a well-deserved break.**



**PATRICK ECCLES**  
General Manager

## GENERAL MANAGER'S EDITORIAL

### What is Santé Québec's real mandate?

In the last issue of the INFO-CADRE, I discussed the much-talked-about shared services initiatives that Santé Québec plans to implement.

The original objective was to move forward with one shared services initiative per trimester, beginning with attendance management, followed by other human resources functions.

At this writing, the first shared services initiative on the list has still not been completed. Why are things not moving according to plan? **Because the system's capacity to absorb multiple shared services initiatives, or, depending on your perspective, multiple reforms, was clearly underestimated by Santé Québec.**

While we hear about shared services, our members continue to tell us that additional budget cuts are being requested. When we take a closer look at the situation, it raises an important question: What is Santé Québec's real mandate?

According to its strategic plan, Santé Québec's role is to provide accessible, high-quality health and social services that meet the needs of the population. Yet based on what we observe, there is a growing perception that the organization is more focused on balancing the Government of Quebec's budget than on fulfilling that mission. **One of the stated objectives behind the creation of Santé Québec was to reduce the influence of politics on the health and social services network. Clearly, however, politics remains very much part of the equation.**

Shared services initiatives are being pursued primarily as a cost-saving measure. University health centers are being expected to achieve the same performance levels as integrated health and social services centers. Have we forgotten the mission of university health centers, to care for patients requiring highly specialized tertiary and quaternary services? Comparing their performance to that of other institutions makes little sense. By definition, these university organizations require more resources, more time, and more complex interventions.

In our discussions with Santé Québec representatives, we are constantly reminded that Quebec is facing a budget deficit. But if Santé Québec was created to distance the healthcare system from political considerations, why is this message so frequently emphasized?

To be clear, I am not suggesting that the responsible management of public funds is unimportant. **What I am saying is that I would rather hear more about quality of care, innovation, and efficiency than about deficits, cuts, and the redistribution of the misery.** This is precisely why APER wishes to meet with the health critics of the opposition parties. Formal requests have already been sent, and we are currently awaiting their responses.

In closing, we still do not know what Santé Québec's true mandate is. APER's mandate, however, is crystal clear. We are here to defend your interests and to do everything we can to help ensure that our health and social services network is in a better position tomorrow than it is today.

**With that, I wish you an enjoyable summer and a well-deserved vacation season.**



## A WORD FROM THE TEAM

Endless approvals: when delays become a risk

Santé Québec has a clear mandate: to ensure accessible, high-quality health and social services that meet the needs of the population. On paper, everyone agrees with that objective.

In practice, however, a growing trend is beginning to emerge: the belief that everything must be approved, often by more people, at higher levels, and over longer periods of time, **without a proportional increase in added value.**

### Me ANNE-MARIE CHIQUETTE

I say this all the more plainly because I have experienced it myself. We try to reach agreements with Human Resources departments in the interest of clarity and consistency, yet those agreements must now be validated by Santé Québec. The result? Delays, back-and-forth exchanges, and waiting periods that simply did not exist before. This is not a theoretical debate. **When an adjustment that could once be resolved quickly becomes a validation process, time is wasted**, energy is drained, and managerial capacity is diminished, all while teams continue to work and services continue to be delivered.

Journalist Patrick Lagacé recently shared one of these “mammoth tales”: an absurd yet revealing situation in which rules and processes ultimately created more complications than solutions. The value of such stories lies not in the anecdote itself, but in what they expose. **Every additional layer of approvals and procedures does not necessarily improve oversight; it often slows things down, discourages initiative, and shifts responsibility away from those closest to the work.**

And this is not new. Since the Barrette reform, for example, management salary classification reviews have required ministerial approval. The process is notoriously lengthy; we are talking about delays exceeding six months. Yet the real issue is not the number of signatures involved. The challenge is ensuring that decision-makers have the right tools, expertise, and guidelines to make sound decisions. There are other ways to achieve this: provide organizations with better support, clarify the criteria, strengthen analytical capacity, and conduct audits when necessary, while allowing decisions to be made closer to the action, more quickly and more simply, **as was the case before the reform. As a side note, the teams in place in the establishments were so knowledgeable that Ministry officials regularly sought their expertise, not the other way around.**

There are, in fact, examples elsewhere in the public sector where greater emphasis is placed on guided autonomy. Organizations make decisions within a clear framework without having to escalate every case to the ministry. **The objective is not to eliminate governance; it is to make governance useful.** Governance should establish guardrails, ensure consistency, and address exceptions. It should not turn managers into administrative follow-up agents.

The test is simple: if an action that was once resolved efficiently now requires endless waiting because it must be approved at a higher level, we are not modernizing the system, we are slowing it down. And in a network already under significant pressure, slowing things down does not improve quality. It increases the risk of disorganization, frustration, and operational failures that ultimately carry a high cost in time, workplace climate, and service continuity.

If Santé Québec is to succeed in its mission of quality and accessibility, one principle must prevail: decisions should be made at the appropriate level, supported by accessible expertise, clear processes, and reasonable timelines. Otherwise, despite promises of efficiency, what we will create is simply more bureaucracy.



**DOMINIQUE FORTIER** CRIA  
Director of Professional  
Services

## LABOUR RELATIONS ISSUES

When to call us: Better early than late

In sensitive situations, the right time to contact APER is rarely after everything is already underway.

The earlier we can support you, the better we can help clarify the process, prepare you for important discussions, avoid common pitfalls, and reduce the sense of isolation that many managers experience.



### Situations where we recommend reaching out to us :

- **Psychological Harassment (PH) Complaint** : A complaint has been filed against you, you receive a summons or notice, allegations are presented to you or not, you are invited to a “fact-finding” meeting, you are asked to act as a witness in an investigation involving one of your employees, you need guidance on managing your team during the process, etc.
- **Workplace Investigation or Workplace Climate Process** : You are called to a “fact-finding” meeting, involved in an administrative investigation, asked to provide documents, or required to participate in a workplace climate review.
- **Professional Order Complaint or Ombudsman Process** : You receive notice of an investigation, requests for information, questions regarding your role or communications, or an invitation to a “fact-finding” meeting.
- **Performance Improvement or Development Plan** : A plan has been issued to you, a plan has been announced as “forthcoming,” expectations suddenly change, objectives seem unclear, or you feel you are receiving mixed messages (praised yesterday, questioned today).
- **Concerns About Reorganization or Position Elimination** : Persistent rumors, signs of mergers or shared-services initiatives, discussions about the “relevance” of your position, or indications that a function may disappear.
- **Other Situations** : End of an assignment, removal of responsibilities, change in role, loss of a premium or allowance, significant salary recovery or any other situation affecting your working conditions.

### Why contact us early ?

- To confirm your rights and understand the applicable procedure (processes, timelines, and expected documentation).
- To help you prepare your statement of facts without unnecessarily exposing yourself.
- To support you during meetings or investigations that become complex, stressful, or burdensome.

**A simple rule of thumb :** In doubt, reach out.  
It is always better to clarify a situation early than to try to fix it later.

## COLLECTIVE ISSUES

### THE ESSENTIALS ON RETIREMENT, INSURANCE, PAY EQUITY, AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Even when change is limited, these issues warrant continued vigilance.

#### UPDATE FROM SANTÉ QUÉBEC'S STRATEGIC OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE



The Santé Québec Strategic Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee continued its work on April 17, adding on the discussions initiated during its first meeting in February. The committee brings together union representatives, management associations (including APER), healthcare institution leaders, and various stakeholders across the network involved in occupational health and safety.

APER raised significant concerns regarding the approach currently reflected in Santé Québec's working documents, particularly the draft of the Workplace Health Policy. **Several elements remain heavily focused on "the responsibility" of management, performance indicators, and individual behaviours, while Santé Québec's concrete prevention responsibilities appear to receive much less attention, or, in some cases, appear to be absent altogether.**

APER also notes that certain aspects of the draft policy appear to shift a significant portion of prevention responsibilities onto workers and frontline managers. This approach risks adding further pressure in a context already marked by organizational transformations, shared-services initiatives, staffing shortages, and increasingly complex managerial responsibilities.

Union representatives also raised several important concerns, particularly regarding the transfer of prevention responsibilities to workers, privacy and personal information protection issues, and expectations surrounding joint occupational health and safety mechanisms.

In fact, several stakeholders around the table share similar concerns about the risk of adopting an approach that is overly theoretical or disconnected from operational realities. **In light of the many comments and concerns expressed, Santé Québec has decided to postpone the adoption of its OHS policy until nextfall in order to continue discussions and revisit certain aspects of the draft.** APER considers this decision both necessary and appropriate under the circumstances.

#### Why does a workplace health and safety prevention policy matter ?

An Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy is not simply intended to define administrative orientations. It establishes the organization's priorities regarding prevention and the protection of employees' physical and psychological health.

Across Quebec's health and social services network, many organizations already had various OHS policies, programs, and mechanisms in place.

However, in the context of a single employer model, the development of a provincial policy is both relevant and appropriate to ensure greater consistency in OHS practices across the network.

Since the adoption of the Loi modernisant le régime de santé et de sécurité du travail (LMRSST), employers' obligations have also been expanded, particularly with respect to psychosocial risks in the workplace. These include, among other things, workload, organizational climate, workplace violence, psychological harassment, and the impact of certain management practices on employees' psychological health.

Although the legislation does not explicitly require employers to adopt a formal Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy, both the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the modernization reforms require organizations to implement structured mechanisms for the prevention and management of workplace risks.

## COLLECTIVE ISSUES (SUITE)

### THE ESSENTIALS ON RETIREMENT, INSURANCE, PAY EQUITY, AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Even when change is limited, these issues warrant continued vigilance.

#### YOUR PPMP ANNUAL STATEMENT: THE BEST PLACE TO START



Retirement often arrives sooner than we expect and the PPMP is not something you want to start learning about when it is already too late. Before making important decisions such as taking a leave, changing positions, purchasing service credits, or **choosing a retirement date, it is helpful to confirm the fundamentals: your recognized years of service**, your **participation** in the plan, and what your **annual statement** actually says about your projected pension.

To gain a clearer picture, we encourage you to review your PPMP annual statement through [my Account on the Retraite Québec website](#). This document is extremely useful and allows us to provide more accurate guidance during a consultation. And, as always, do not hesitate to reach out if you would like help understand your statement or knowing your options ([association@aper.qc.ca](mailto:association@aper.qc.ca)).

#### MICHELLE BOURGET

Advisor, Job Evaluation, Pay Equity and Labor Relations



#### UPDATE FROM 2021 PAY EQUITY MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Since the last INFO-CADRE, only two meetings of the Pay Equity Maintenance Committee and two meetings among the Associations have taken place.

Following the employer's relay of their proposal for identifying the gender predominance of various job categories, the Associations conducted an in-depth analysis of the data. **This review revealed significant differences between the employer's assessment and that of the Associations, particularly with respect to several management job categories.**

The disagreements concerned, among other things, the large number of categories identified as gender-neutral (neither predominantly female nor predominantly male) in the employer's document, as well as the gender predominance assigned to newly created job categories. In response, the Associations developed and presented an initial alternative scenario. Even with this new proposal submitted, the employer maintained its initial position.

The Associations subsequently presented two additional scenarios. During the most recent Committee meeting, the employer revisited the first scenario and indicated a willingness to discuss the gender predominance assigned to the new job categories. This openness would also extend to a limited number of key existing categories that are not newly created, with discussions restricted to a maximum of ten categories.

**The Associations met on June 2 to prepare a reply to the employer's proposal, and another Committee meeting was planned for June 9.** While we hope to meet the most recent timeline, which targets completion of the exercise by August, we remain somewhat skeptical. **As always, we will keep you informed of any significant developments.**



**DOMINIQUE FORTIER** CRIA  
Director of  
Professional Services

## STRATEGIC WATCH

### APER Pointers

In a demanding environment, a few articles and practical tools to support you as a manager

June is often the month where everything seems to be ending and beginning, all at the same time: wrapping up projects, covering vacations, organizing summer camps, dealing with family surprises, planning time off, and more. In short, life moves fast.

To avoid adding to the load, I'm offering you some lighter content this month (or at least, some of it!).



### Tool of the Month: *Your difficult conversation companion*

Some conversations are more challenging than others. And sometimes, what we lack most is the time, or the inspiration, to prepare for them. Let AI do some of the heavy lifting. Using Copilot or another AI tool, without including any names, try a prompt such as:

*"Prepare three opening statements for a difficult conversation about [topic], along with key phrases and questions to incorporate. The objective is to be clear, calm, and factual."*

### Monthly Micro-Challenge: *Your SOS check list* ((SOS))

Each week, do a quick check-in using three indicators:

- S Sleep: Am I truly getting enough rest ?
- O Oxygen: Am I moving, getting outside, or stepping away from the pressure?
- S Support: Am I getting the help I need?

Then choose just one action for the week (for example: "go to bed 20 minutes earlier on two nights," "take one 15-minute walk," or "call X").

Keep it simple.  
No need to overcomplicate it!

## 2 Reads and Podcasts that caught my attention (French only)

### Une absurdité du mammoth de la Santé (parmi mille)

Patrick Lagacé (La Presse)

In this column, Patrick Lagacé recounts a situation that occurred at the pediatric orthopedic surgery clinic of the CHU of Québec to illustrate, in a very concrete way, how the healthcare "mammoth" can become inefficient. The underlying message is that this type of absurdity is not exceptional, it can happen anywhere across the network.

### Le stress du retour au camp de jour

Mélanie Bilodeau

This article, along with the accompanying radio segment, explains how returning to day camp can trigger strong emotions (tears, resistance, anxiety), even in children who "loved it" the previous year. That reaction is perfectly normal: starting over means a new group, a new routine, and a period of adjustment. A useful read for managers with school-aged children.

### Bonne nuit quand même

Maude Landry, Ohdio

This podcast uses humor to explain how sleep works and offers a practical reminder that getting enough rest is not a luxury. If we want to maintain our judgment, energy, and resilience, sleep remains one of our most valuable resources.

## Short survey (3 minutes max)

*AI in your day-to-day work:  
share your perspective*



**It's here.**



## ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY YOUR APER BENEFITS

More Value for our members: Training, Savings and Support

Member benefits are not just “extras”, they are practical tools to help you build your skills, move forward, and catch your breath.

### Trainings

We are seeing an increasing number of managers facing psychological harassment complaints. The online training course, “Harassment, Diversity and Inclusion: Management Challenges Within Your Reach,” was developed by APER to provide managers with practical tools to help prevent harassment and to respond appropriately when a situation or complaint arises.

- The training takes just **40 minutes to complete**, and you can watch the videos whenever it is convenient for you.
- It covers the recognition of psychological and sexual harassment, the manager’s role and limitations throughout the complaint process, as well as practical strategies and best practices for fostering a healthy and inclusive workplace.

### ACCESS THE TRAINING HERE.



### More information about CIBC

The CIBC group banking program for APER is an exclusive offer of banking advice and solutions valued at more than \$2,900 per member.

To learn more, visit this site:  
<https://www.cibc.com/fr/group-banking/members.html>



## ASSOCIATION COMMUNITY YOUR APER BENEFITS

More Value for our members: Training, Savings and Support

Member benefits are not just “extras”, they are practical tools to help you build your skills, move forward, and catch your breath.

### Our partnership

Several benefits and discounts are available to members.

You can find the full list at this link, which will be updated regularly:  
<https://partenariataper.my.canva.site/english>  
**Save it to your bookmarks!**



[Version française](#)

### Our partnerships



Last update : February 26, 2026



Thanks to our partnership with Germain Hotels, APER members can enjoy preferred rates and exclusive benefits on their stays. To learn more about the offer and how to take advantage of it, visit the partnerships microsite.



While on vacation, we tend to treat ourselves and dine out a little more often! Visit the Dining section of the partnerships microsite to discover the discounts available to APER members.

### Coaching Services

Because managers' realities are diverse, APER is expanding its coaching offer to better adapt to your needs.

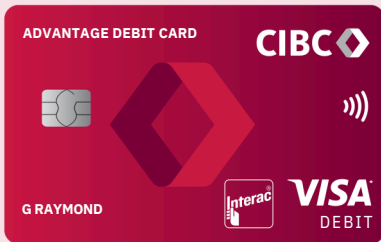
Two complementary approaches are available. **Patrick Eccles, General manager**, offers concrete, pragmatic support at the crossroads of coaching and advisory services, particularly helpful for issues related to how the network operates and the management of day-to-day challenges. **Dominique Fortier, Director of Professional Services**, offers an approach more focused on manager development, particularly in the areas of leadership, communication, professional presence, and balance.

**This service is included in your membership, with no predetermined maximum duration and no required frequency.** Requests may be sent to APER ([association@aper.qc.ca](mailto:association@aper.qc.ca)), and an initial exploratory meeting will help guide you toward the most appropriate type of support.



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**We are part of your team. We've seen this before,  
and we're here to help.**

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