

Premier

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Health

The health system faces daunting challenges that include population ageing and the resulting rise in the demand for healthcare and health services at a time when there is a shortage of physicians and family doctors in particular.

The government is active on this front and on other fronts. Marked progress has been made in various fields as a real response to the wishes of Quebecers.

Important measures have been established to increase the number of physicians in Québec, so that, today, figures are increasing.

The government has focused on improving access to surgery. Hip, knee and cataract surgery occurs within 6 months for 93% of patients. The central access management system introduced by the government of Québec provides reliable information on the wait times for surgery.

Also see:

[Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux](#)

[Family medicine groups](#)

[Access to specialized medical services](#)

To improve the situation in emergency wards and to reduce pressure on them, the government is continuing to strengthen front-line services and to spend more on modernizing emergency facilities.

Major university medicine projects are also underway in Québec (i.e. CHUQ, CHUM, CRCHUM, CUSM, CHRTR and Hôpital Sainte-Justine). All of these institutions will be state-of-the-art. This in turn will contribute to the excellence of the care delivered and confirm Québec's leadership in the health sector, with Québec as a whole reaping the benefits.

Apart from performance is the issue of health system funding. In 1980, healthcare accounted for 31% of government expenditures and programs. Today, the share is 45%. Health costs are climbing. Consequently, ways must be found to secure health system quality, sustainability and funding, while ensuring that the State's other missions are not shortchanged.

The work carried out by the government and the various players within the health system is producing results, but further gains must be made. Deployment of front-line services continues and is being stepped up. In 2003, there were 17 family medicine groups in Québec. Now there are 230. Access to specialized medical services must be improved, and emergency wards must regain their former fluidity.

The adoption of measures for guaranteeing the operation, quality, funding and sustainability of the health system will be possible only if all stakeholders pool their efforts and gather around the same goal. The government participates fully in maintaining a climate of open collaboration with all its partners and promotes the most intelligent use possible of the budgetary resources available to it.

The health system is:

- 300 institutions across Québec
- 275,000 workers, including 16,500 physicians and 67,000 specialized nurses and nursing assistants
- 4.5 million days of hospitalization expected this year
- 3.5 million emergency ward patients
- 8.4 million out-patients
- 39 million medical clinic patients
- 14.5 million days in a long-term care facility
- 7.5 million home visits

Behind these numbers there are human faces, male and female alike.
Millions of people cared for and thousands of caregivers.

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Québec 

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