



**Quebec Government 2012 Budget**

## **RPCU applauds investment in home care**

Quebec City, March 20, 2012 - The Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers (RPCU) expressed its views on the budget announced by Raymond Bachand, Minister of Finance, in the National Assembly today.

### **Investment in home care**

The RPCU approves of measures intended to build on the plan to provide integrated services to the elderly by boosting home care and creating more spaces in seniors' residences, intermediate resources and long-term care facilities. Nonetheless, this group asks: How will these results will be achieved and measured?

*"While we do agree with these measures, the funds allocated in the last budget were not fully spent," declared Pierre Blain, RPCU director general. "What the RPCU wants mostly is to see institutions revisit certain cuts currently being made and quickly invest the money earmarked, in essential services for our most vulnerable seniors."*

### **Health tax**

Referring to the Auditor General's findings on the health care contribution (health tax) implemented in 2010 - which rose from \$25 per capita to \$200 in 2012 - Pierre Blain expressed his wish that the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux spend the money in the Fund to Finance Health and Social Services Institutions (FINESSS), thus fulfilling the mandate behind its creation.

*"In paying this tax, users of the healthcare network - which includes almost all Quebecers - expect this money to be used entirely for the purposes set out in the legislation. If these funds are not fully spent as they should be, the first ones to lose out are users of the system itself," asserted Pierre Blain.*

### **Access to services**

Access to health care remains a burning issue for users, and the RPCU wonders: How will the new budget meet this gap and when will every Quebecer finally have access to a family doctor?

### **Pension plans**

Announcements regarding pension plans are, on the other hand, a step in the right direction, since they will help in the fight against seniors' poverty. Both businesses and ordinary people, however, must agree to this endeavour. What will happen to the most deprived: the jobless and those who are unable to contribute?

### **Organization profile**

The Regroupement provincial des Comités des usagers (RPCU) advocates for users and represents 600 Users' and In-patients' Committees in Quebec's health and social services establishments. The mission of these committees is to defend users' rights and work to improve the quality of services provided to users of the health and social services network.

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