



PROTECTEUR  
DU CITOYEN

## **INTERVENTION REPORT (EXCERPTS)**

**Intervention at Centre intégré  
universitaire en santé et services  
sociaux de la Mauricie-et-du-Centre-du-  
Québec (CIUSSS MCQ)**

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Québec City, December 20, 2023

## THE INTERVENTION

On July 6, 2023, the Québec Ombudsman received a report concerning the educational and disciplinary practices of a living unit that accommodates a mixed clientele aged 12 to 17, under two different missions: intensive supervision and less restrictive supervision. The person who made the report was critical that inappropriate disciplinary measures had been applied by the unit's educational staff. This person complained about periods of room confinement lasting several days, which, on a regular basis, could continue for up to two weeks.

The facility concerned was the Le Séjour unit of Centre de protection et de réadaptation pour les jeunes et les mères en difficulté d'adaptation Charles-Édouard-Bourgeois of Centre intégré universitaire de services de santé et de services sociaux de la Mauricie-et-du-Centre-du-Québec (CIUSSS MCQ).

Given the vulnerability of the young people concerned, the Québec Ombudsman decided to investigate into the reported incidents.

During the investigation, other factors were brought to our attention and were added to the initial grounds for intervention, including Le Séjour's dual mission (the two kinds of supervision), as well as use of the secure emergency area as an intake environment for new arrivals.

## THE CONCLUSION

The investigation described in this report provided an opportunity to take stock of practices at the Le Séjour unit. The Québec Ombudsman noted the excellent cooperation of management, staff and the young people we met. It saw that the workers care about the well-being and interests of the young people housed at Le Séjour. However, certain practices remain causes for concern.

The Québec Ombudsman's investigation showed that:

- "Time-out tactics" are commonly used as a disciplinary measure and the justification for them is questionable at times;
- The timetable of activities and its application are sometimes at odds with some of the obvious needs of the young residents;
- Room time frequency seems excessive;
- Some rules are applied forcefully and rigidly;

- The two types of Le Séjour unit residents are subject to more or less the same restrictions, which should not be the case under current legislation;
- Some young people stay in a secure emergency area (a place where they can be closely monitored) for several days, which is particularly disturbing because it is not a genuine living environment;
- At times, Le Séjour unit residents are not adequately informed of their rights or of the disciplinary measures that may apply on the unit;
- On one occasion, an intervention officer reportedly behaved provocatively towards a young woman.

The Québec Ombudsman is aware of the organizational, clinical and financial implications of the situation, and it took these factors into account in its analysis. However, the rights of young users placed in rehabilitation centres must be respected. This client population is particularly vulnerable. The young people thus entrusted to the unit have considerable needs in terms of guidance, education and support. They must receive consistent and caring interventions.

The Québec Ombudsman noted recent initiatives such as the addition of management staff, additional training, a mechanism for accessing residential services, a users' committee, etc. These initiatives reflect the institution's desire to improve the living environment of the young people in its care. The Québec Ombudsman considers them relevant efforts that can be built on.

## THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Québec Ombudsman is recommending the following to CIUSSS MCQ, for the Le Séjour unit of Centre de protection et de réadaptation pour les jeunes et les mères en difficulté d'adaptation Charles-Édouard-Bourgeois:

**R-1** Analyze the reasons for using time-out tactics for the period from June 1, 2023, to October 31, 2023.

**R-2** Develop an action plan to reduce time-out frequency.

**R-3** Implement the action plan with the clinical team.

By April 30, 2024, send the Québec Ombudsman the action plan and inform it about the measures for achieving these three objectives.

**R-4** Review the program to reduce the number of scheduled room periods.

**R-5** Ensure that the new program is integrated by the clinical team.

By March 31, 2024, send the Québec Ombudsman the new program and a follow-up on the measures to make it effective.

**R-6** Review how staff apply rules and instructions so that the procedure complies with the unit's mission and slate of services (welcome, soothe, observe, rehabilitate).

By March 31, 2024, inform the Québec Ombudsman about the measures for achieving this objective.

**The Québec Ombudsman is recommending that the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, jointly with CIUSSS MCQ:**

**R-7** Work with CIUSSS MCQ to develop a strategy to ensure that the Le Séjour unit's two mandates are carried out in the context of separate units.

By April 30, 2024, inform the Québec Ombudsman of the actions taken in this regard.

**The Québec Ombudsman is recommending that Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux de la Mauricie-et-du-Centre-du-Québec:**

**R-8** Establish an action plan to ensure that the use of the secure emergency area complies with the legislative framework in force and make any necessary adjustments.

By April 30, 2024, send the Québec Ombudsman the action plan.

**R-9** Adopt concrete measures to give the young residents access to the necessary information on the recourse available through the service quality and complaints commissioner and through the Québec Ombudsman.

By March 31, 2024, inform the Québec Ombudsman of the action taken regarding this objective.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

**F-1** By January 31, 2024, convey the results of the investigations into the alleged intimidation of a female resident by an intervention officer.

### **Expected follow-up**

As provided for in the *Act respecting the Health and Social Services Ombudsman*, no later than 30 days of receiving this report, CIUSSS MCQ must inform the Québec Ombudsman of whether it intends to implement the recommendations made to it, or of its reasons if it has decided not to act on them.

The Québec Ombudsman is also asking the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, to no later than 30 days of receiving this report, inform the Ombudsman of whether it intends to implement the recommendation made to it.



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