

SHARED VALUES

Respect

Cooperation

Commitment

Accessibility

ORGANIZATIONAL
CODE OF
ETHICS

Québec 

Mission

The mission¹ of the *Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de la Montérégie-Centre* (CISSSMC) is to help promote, maintain, improve and restore the health and well-being of its territory's population by making accessible a full range of quality health and social services.

In this effort, the CISSS's role² is to

- plan, coordinate, organize and provide its territory's population with the complete range of health and social services, according to ministerial guidelines and directives, and determine their coordination mechanisms;
- ensure the care of its territory's entire population, in particular the most vulnerable clienteles;
- ensure management of simplified access to services.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre originated from the consolidation of the *Centres de santé et de services sociaux (CSSS) Champlain–Charles-Le Moyne* and *Haut-Richelieu–Rouville*, the *Institute Nazareth et Louis-Braille* and the former *Agence de santé et de services sociaux de la Montérégie*.

It has more than 9,000 personnel members and 800 physicians working in some 40 facilities, including the Hôpital Charles-Le Moyne, designated university-affiliated centre, the Hôpital du Haut-Richelieu, research centres and a number of CHSLDs (residential long-term care facilities) and CLSCs (local community service centres). It serves a population of 383,000 citizens.

¹ Plan stratégique du ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec 2015-2020 (updated 2016).

² <http://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/reseau/reorganisation/portrait>

The following terms used herein are defined as follows:

- Personnel: all managers, employees, contractors, physicians, residents, externs, trainees, partners, and any person exercising a professional occupation or volunteering within the CISSS;
- User: anyone who receives CISSS care or services. This term includes, where applicable, any representative of the user within the meaning of section 12 of the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services (LSSSS). Users also include residents who receive care or services in a CHSLD, an intermediate resource or a family-type resource.

Values

To foster the climate of trust required for the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre's mission, the organizational code of ethics is based on values at the heart of available healthcare and services. These values promote respect for the rights of all and personnel cohesion. They are:

- respect
- cooperation
- commitment
- accessibility

In addition, other values guide management decisions and actions that personnel take for the user. They contribute to sound management and their realization requires rigour and transparency. They are:

- integrity
- appropriateness
- fairness
- performance

Respect

Respectful care and services place the human being, his/her interests and well-being at the heart of actions and decisions. Respect consists of showing the other person consideration, sensitivity, empathy and compassion in an ongoing effort not to harm him/her by words or actions. It is to demonstrate at all times a fair attitude, without discrimination.

Cooperation

Cooperation is the effort that personnel and users provide to achieve a common goal - the user's wellbeing - while demonstrating solidarity and support. Cooperation means working together with others.

Commitment

Committed personnel are dedicated to users and their health. They contribute, to the best of their ability, to realizing the organization's mission. Commitment involves the active participation of everyone to the best of their ability.

Accessibility

Users consider care and services to be accessible when they are delivered as soon as possible with a flexible timetable. Accessibility is also recognized by the simplicity and quickness with which users feel themselves taken into care, with attention paid to their abilities, language, culture and state of health. It aims at offering care and services adapted to the largest number of users, within the limits of available resources.

Integrity

Personnel with integrity are honest and responsible. They inspire user trust, maintain genuine relationships and respect their commitments and organizational values. An organization with integrity accepts to answer openly for its decisions.

Appropriateness

Appropriate care and services are those that are safe and of high-quality, mindful of best practices, scientifically justified and leave room for innovation. An organization concerned with the appropriateness of its care and services ensures that it knows the needs of its clientele and remains focused on them to the best of its abilities.

Fairness

Fair care and services treat every user equally and without discrimination, while taking into account the diversity of every individual. They allow impartial treatment, respecting the rights of all.

Performance

Efficient care and services reflect the sensible, thoughtful and optimal use of resources, whether human, material, financial, technological or informational. Efficient care performance is achieved by providing the right care at the right time.

Code of Ethics

The organizational code of ethics is intended for all personnel contributing to the organization's mission, as well as users and their families. It encourages the promotion and integration of the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre values and convictions in interventions by all available means, continuously focused on quality and the search for best practices.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre has developed its code of organizational ethics with the rights of registered users in mind, in particular the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services (CQLR, c. S-4.2.), the Civil Code of Quebec and the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. It also takes into account the Act Respecting End-of-Life Care (CQLR, c. S-32.0001).

The code of organizational ethics sets out the rights and conduct expected of users and their families and the commitments and responsibilities of personnel towards them. It is the result of reflective approaches and consultations with users and personnel and the organization's various clinical and administrative bodies.

The purpose of the CISSS Code of Ethics is to:

- ensure that user rights are known and respected by all personnel;
- provide safe, quality care and services;
- promote the expected conduct from its personnel;
- encourage empowerment, participation and cooperation of users, their relatives, organization personnel and partners;
- strengthen the bond of trust between the user, user's relatives, personnel and the population served;
- promote collective thinking that aims to develop a personal, relational, clinical and organizational ethic.

User Rights/Personnel Commitments/Expected User Conduct

The user, user's family and the population served are at the heart of the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre's mission and constitute its purpose. The organization considers essential the recognition and respect of user rights by all personnel, as set out in the health and social services act (CQLR, c. S-4.2.).

The following section provides a summary of user rights, personnel commitments and expected user conduct designed to foster the necessary trust for providing safe, quality care and services.

Respect for the Person

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre advocates respect for the user, recognition of his/her abilities and limits, uniqueness, right to dignity, integrity, autonomy, intimacy, equality, privacy and freedom.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre personnel are committed to:

- maintaining respectful, courteous, honest and frank relations with everyone;
- promoting user participation while respecting their abilities and individuality;
- allowing and promoting free expression and respect for user values, beliefs and opinions, insofar as they do not infringe on the rights and freedoms of others;
- obtaining the user's free and informed consent before any examination, sample-taking, treatment or other intervention, except in an emergency situation (when the life of the user is in danger or his/her safety is threatened), for the hygienic care of an incapacitated adult or where a court order applies;
- ensuring respect for intimacy and privacy;
- dealing with all faithfully, fairly and without discrimination;
- announcing one's presence before entering the room of an in-patient or hospitalized user;
- identifying oneself verbally by name and function, carrying the organization's official identity card, specifying the purpose of interventions and explaining the nature of the care and services he/she is about to provide;

- ensuring an environment free of all forms of abuse, harassment, exploitation, neglect, overly familiar ways, verbal, physical or psychological abuse, and all indecent acts or attitudes.

Conduct expected of the user and his/her family, to:

- maintain respectful, courteous, honest and frank relationships with all, free from verbal, physical or psychological abuse;
- respect the rules established by the organization for proper operation of care and services for the safety of the user and others;
- respect the property and equipment the organization provides.

Accessible and Safe Quality Care and Services

Care and services provided allow for the organizational limits of the establishment and constraints related to available resources.

The user has the right to:

- have access to the care and services required by his/her state of health as soon as possible;
- choose the facility or professional from whom he/she wishes to receive required care and services, subject to organizational limits, available resources and the right of the professional to refuse;
- receive adequate scientific, human and social care and services in a personalized and safe manner;

- receive palliative and end-of-life care, including medical assistance in dying and continuous palliative sedation, according to the criteria provided by law;
- receive care and services in French and English according to the program for access to health and social services in English.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre personnel are committed to:

- creating a climate of trust;
- being available to the user;
- maintaining the correct therapeutic distance;
- listening to users and partners;
- providing care and services in accordance with recognized standards and practices;
- maintaining a level of skill and professionalism meeting the requirements of their position and engaging in an ongoing process of care and service quality improvement;
- taking steps to ensure safe care and services delivery;
- cooperating with organization partners when required;
- ensuring continuity of care and services required by the user's state of health;
- adjusting, as far as possible, information and interventions in accord with the user's pace and ability;
- providing assistance and protection when users or residents exhibit behaviour dangerous to themselves or those around them;

- dealing quickly with any problem situation and aiming for a resolution satisfactory for all parties;
- exercising due diligence to minimize the risk of incidents or accidents, reporting them promptly to the designated authority and making relevant reports a timely manner;
- using resources sensibly;
- avoiding any situation that could lead to a conflict of interest;
- fostering innovation based on scientific advances;
- focusing on research activities.

Conduct expected of the user and family:

- cooperating with personnel in care delivery;
- acting conscientiously as a healthcare and services user;
- using the services with discernment;
- respecting hygiene principles required for infection prevention and control;
- providing a safe and supportive environment for care delivery;
- not engaging in conduct that could negatively impact care delivery;
- agreeing to leave the facility as soon as discharge is prescribed.

Information and Participation

The user is able to make his/her own choices in a free and enlightened manner at the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre and to act in accordance with them.

The user has the right to:

- be informed of his/her state of health and well-being in order to understand, as far as possible, the different options available;
- be informed of the risks and consequences generally associated with each of the health options, in order to express informed consent;
- be informed of the existence of social services and resources available in regard to health and services and how to access these services;
- participate in the development of his/her care, intervention or service plan, when such a plan is required;
- accept or refuse an examination, sample-taking or any other care or service. This right prevails at all times, except in an emergency situation (when the life of the user is in danger or when his/her safety is threatened), for hygiene of an incapacitated adult or when court order applies;
- be informed of any accident that occurred during care and services delivery that may have affected his/her state of health, as well as risk management measures taken to counteract the consequences and prevent recurrence of such an accident.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre personnel are committed to:

- adjusting vocabulary to promote the user's understanding of his/her condition and needs and to obtain their free and informed consent;
- answering user questions to the best of their knowledge;
- creating an environment that promotes expression of user needs and expectations;
- providing the necessary support to develop the user's full potential;
- promoting participation of users and their families in the development or revision of the care, intervention or service plan;
- respecting user refusals after making sure they understand the different care options or services and the risks and consequences associated with each;
- encouraging the participation of users in the users committee or, where applicable, resident committees;
- consulting users to know their expectations and satisfaction regarding quality and organization of services.

Conduct expected of the user and family:

- participating in the development of the care, intervention or service plan;
- respecting commitments as far as possible;
- providing contact information for family and the person to notify in case of emergency.

Confidentiality of Personal Information and Right to Medical File Access

Information concerning the user is confidential, including that of the user's medical file.

Users aged 14 and over have the right to:

- access to information contained in their medical file if they request it from the archives, in accordance with policies and procedures in force in the organization;
- be assisted by a qualified professional to help them understand the information contained in their file;
- request that information contained in their file be forwarded to another organization or professional and that it be rectified if it proves to be inaccurate or incomplete;
- request treatment or healthcare in complete confidentiality.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre personnel are committed to:

- exercising discretion and respect of confidentiality rules applicable to personal information;
- ensuring confidentiality of obtained information;
- being considerate of the privacy of all those to whom they provide care;
- not disclosing confidential information obtained in the performance of duties without the consent of the user or unless authorized by law;
- promoting secure distribution of all relevant information and answering questions so that the user can exercise informed choices regarding required care and services.

Supportive Assistance and Representation

Users have the right to:

- be supported and assisted by a person of their choice to receive information or to undertake any procedure relating to care or service provided by the organization;
- be represented in the exercise of their rights;
- if underage or incapacitated, to have their rights exercised by a legal representative who will speak and act on their behalf.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre is committed to:

- assisting users who wish to express themselves about a situation or subject concerning them, or when they wish to obtain care, a service or monitoring;
- contacting the user's representative to obtain a substitute consent when the user is no longer able to give it, seeking his/her consent;
- encouraging the involvement of representatives in the care, intervention or service plan of users unable to give their consent;
- respecting the level of care specified by the user;
- respecting the primacy of medical directives expected by users.

Conduct expected of the user and family:

- discuss and inform loved ones about the healthcare and services he/she would like to receive if no longer able to express their own wishes.

Communicating Dissatisfaction or Complaints about Care and Services

The user has the right to:

- express dissatisfaction, provide comments or observations on services to the appropriate officials, with the assurance that they will be examined with respect and confidentiality without risk of harm;
- file a complaint with the quality-of-service and complaints commissioner, in accordance with the organization's current policy and procedures;
- be supported and sustained by the users committee, the resident committees or the *Centre d'assistance et d'accompagnement aux plaintes de la Montérégie*.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre personnel are committed to:

- listening to the user, representative, family and all clientele served by the organization when they wish to express dissatisfaction;
- considering expression of user dissatisfaction as an opportunity for improvement and change;
- cooperating with users to resolve their dissatisfaction;
- assisting and referring users and their families to the quality-of-service and complaints commissioner when the proposed resolution is unsatisfactory.

Information and Resources

Research

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre is at the healthcare forefront and promotes research. Accordingly, the user may be asked to participate in a research project. If so, the researcher will need to obtain free and informed consent after explaining, in clear terms, all the details of the research protocol. User participation in any research project is voluntary. Users are free to refuse to participate. Users may withdraw from the project at any time, without need for justification, by making their decision known to the researcher responsible for the project or to one of the latter's assistants. The decision not to participate in, or withdraw from, a research project will have no impact on the quality of care and services to which the user is entitled or on his/her relationship with the researcher responsible for the project or anyone else.

Research projects for which user participation is requested have previously obtained the approval of the research ethics committee of the Hôpital Charles-Le Moyne or the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation of Greater Montreal. These committees report to the board of directors. Their main mission is to ensure the rights, safety and well-being of those involved in research projects.

Teaching

During treatment, the user may be in contact with medical and pharmacy residents as well as trainees and students from all areas of health. These people must inform the user that they are in training.

Requests

A facility may use certain personal information contained in the user's file (last name, first name and address) in the following cases:

- requests for donations for the benefit of the organization or organization foundation;
- a user survey to determine their satisfaction and expectations regarding quality of provided care and services.

Only persons duly authorized by the CISSS may use personal information (surname, first name and address) for the prescribed purposes. At any time, users may request that their personal information no longer be used. Users can request this by contacting the organization's archives department.

In Case of Dissatisfaction

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre places great importance on the quality of services and respect for user rights. In the event of dissatisfaction, the organization encourages clientele to first attempt to talk to the personnel concerned. In many cases, this simple step is enough to resolve the situation. However, if this first step does not satisfy the user, he/she may make a complaint, verbally or in writing, to the complaints and quality-of-service commissioner, or request the assistance of the users committee.

Commissariat aux plaintes et à la qualité des services

The complaints and quality-of-service commissioner promotes and protects individual and collective user rights. The commissioner's role is to improve the quality of services, increase satisfaction, listen to problems and concerns, instruct about rights, responsibilities and recourses, receive and process requests (information, assistance or intervention), to review complaints, and to promote the organizational code of ethics.

You can contact the office of the *Commissariat aux plaintes et à la qualité des services* at 1-866-967-4825, ext. 8884 or by writing to 3120 Taschereau Boulevard, Greenfield Park, Quebec J4V 2H1.

Organization User and Resident Committees

These committees promote the rights of users and residents. They can also help users and residents formulate and file a complaint. They ensure the improvement of quality of living conditions for users and assess their level of satisfaction with healthcare and services.

Resident committees are active in each of the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre's CHSLDs. User committees can be reached at the following numbers:

- Champlain local services network:
450 466-5000, ext. 3040
- Haut-Richelieu–Rouville local services network:
450 358-2578 or 1 866 967-4825, ext. 8958
- Institut Nazareth et Louis-Braille :
450 463-1710 or 1 800 361-7063, ext. 363

In Conclusion

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre's ongoing preoccupation is to improve itself and offer the population quality care and services meeting the highest standards. The values detailed in this organizational code of ethics form the basis of the quality relationship the organization wants to maintain with its users, their families, clientele served, partners and employees.

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre mission is carried out in a relationship of trust and mutual respect, recognition of the specificity of each user and his/her potential to be achieved.

It is in this spirit that the organization wishes to fulfill its mission on a daily basis.

Application of the Organizational Code of Ethics

The code of ethics allows the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre personnel to acquire benchmarks to adjust practices and conduct.

The organizational code of ethics does not replace or supersede any laws, regulations, codes of ethics or conventions in force in Quebec.

Officials for the Development, Application and Promotion of the Organizational Code of Ethics

The following are responsible for the development, application and promotion of the organizational code of ethics: the President and Chief Executive Officer, the quality, evaluation, performance, ethics and Lean management; the human resources, communications and legal affairs management, and the complaints and quality-of-services commissioner, with the assistance of management teams.

The ethical dimension involves all personnel as well as users and their loved ones. It is therefore up to everyone to become familiar with the principles and rules in this code so that it is a part of everyday life. Any breach of the organizational code of ethics may be the subject of a complaint to the complaints and quality-of-service commissioner.

Adoption and Entry into Force

The organizational code of ethics was adopted on May 11, 2017 by the CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre board of directors, pursuant to section 233 of the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services, CQLR, c. S-4.2. The organizational code of ethics goes into force on the day of its adoption by the board of directors.

Review

The organizational code of ethics must be reviewed no later than three years after its adoption by the board of directors.

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