

PRESS RELEASE

RPCU believes 18-foot-long lease form for elderly living in private residences is unreasonable

MONTREAL, Sept. 6, 2011 - When placed end-to-end, the pages of a lease form an elderly person must sign run a full eighteen feet in length. Even the aged who choose to use the Régie du logement lease form and schedule, as proposed in Bill 16, which is currently under study by a parliamentary commission, could not know all of the costs associated with the lease they sign.

"How can elderly people with reduced autonomy, or even caregivers who are close to them, be expected to understand the costs associated with living and receiving care in a private residence as described in this lease?" decried Pierre Blain, director general of the Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers (RPCU), when submitting the association's brief on September 6.

"No organization currently has a mandate to defend the rights of elderly people living in private residences and help them lodge complaints if needed," continued Pierre Blain. The new bill contains no provisions under which the elderly can be assisted by someone close to them or by a group. Yet Sections 11 and 12 of the Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services do contain provisions of this nature relating to users of the health and social services network, and the RPCU maintains that they should also be included in Bill 16 and made applicable to private residences.

"An institution's users' committee, representing the territory within which the private residence is located, should be able to defend the rights of all users - including those who live in private residences," asserted Claude Ménard, head of the RPCU. The ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux seems to have a problem with this, however.

Bill 16, tabled by Dominique Vien, Minister for Social Services, is intended to ensure additional protection for elderly people living in private residences. Previously, operators of private residences for the elderly were required to become certified when a single service was offered. The requirement is now for two services, and the RPCU is concerned that many residences are skirting the law.

The Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers wishes to see health and social services agencies ensure close follow-up of certified residences, while also performing evaluation visits, as is done for public homes. The RPCU fears a recurrence of what happened at Pavillon Marquette in Montreal if these stringent control measures are not put in place.

The brief submitted by the RPCU can be accessed (in French only) at its website, www.rpcu.qc.ca

The Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers (RPCU) protects the rights of users of the health and social services network. It acts as a spokesperson for 590 Users' and In-patients' Committees that have been set up throughout Quebec, in its institutions.

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