

The Users' Committee

October 2011

You may have read about Users' Rights Week in the September issue of Main Street. This is an initiative of the Regroupement provincial des comités des usagers (the provincial grouping of users' committees) aimed at increasing awareness of the rights of all users of facilities or services provided through the health and social services network across Quebec.

The "users" of the CSSS des Sommets are all the people who have used, or may in the future use, any of the services provided in the Ste. Agathe hospital, including its emergency room and out-patient facilities, and in the CLSCs and long-term care facilities located in Ste. Agathe, Mont Tremblant and Labelle – in other words, all of us.

These committees were set up in every CSSS across Quebec as a result of Bill 83, promulgated in November 2005, which caused a major reorganization of the health and social services networks across the province. The principal functions of the Users' Committee of the CSSS des Sommets include:

1. Informing users of their rights and obligations
2. Enhancing the quality of life of the people living in the care facilities and evaluating their satisfaction in regards to the services received
3. Defending the rights of the users both individually and collectively
4. Upon request, accompanying and helping a user through the complaints process
5. Assuring the smooth running of the residents' committees in each of the three long-term care facilities in the institution

Users' Rights Week, which will take place at the end of September every year, is the principal means of explaining what the rights mentioned in Item 1 are all about. They are there to help you receive the best possible care with attention to your personal needs. Among the rights that you can expect to exercise is the right to receive services in English, although there are some limits to that right in our CSSS due to available staffing and funding, as explained in the column on the English Access Plan published in the May issue of Main Street. Other important rights include the right to information, to consent to care and to participate in decisions; the right to choose a professional and an institution; the right to receive care in case of emergency; the right to access your file and to have it remain confidential; the right to respect and dignity; the right to relief from pain; the right to have someone else represent you; and the right to complain and to be protected from all reprisals as a result of a complaint.

Along with rights come obligations. As a user of the services offered through the institution, you have the responsibility to provide full and accurate personal and medical information; to collaborate with the institution and to use the facilities judiciously; and to respect the rules of the establishment, such as the rules regarding visiting patients.

The Users' Committee represents you, the user, whether you need services on an ongoing basis or just occasionally. If you have any questions or comments about the committee or about any of your experiences, both good and bad, anywhere in the CSSS des Sommets, don't hesitate to contact the committee. You can leave a message by phoning 819-324-4000, extension 4238, by email to comite.usagers.sommets@ssss.gouv.qc.ca or by leaving a note in the suggestion box that you can find in the waiting room of the emergency department. If you have a complaint to make, the Users' Committee can help

guide you through the process of preparing it for the Commissaire local aux plaintes et à la qualité des services (the local complaints and quality of services commissioner).

Don't hesitate to use all the avenues that are open to you to help you navigate your way through the labyrinth of the health and social services network. The Users' Committee of the CSSS des Sommets is there for you!

With special thanks to Jessica Million, English Communities Committee representative on the Users' Committee

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