



Press release

The Auditor General presents the conclusions of his audit concerning the management of youth centres and the allocation of financial resources in the health and social services sector – Press release no. 3

Québec, Wednesday, November 18, 2009 – Mr. Renaud Lachance today made public the Volume II of the *Report of the Auditor General of Québec to the National Assembly for 2009-2010*.

Chapter 3 deals with the management of youth centres and resource allocation. Schedule 3 of this chapter also presents, for the health and social services sector, a description and an analysis of the breakdown of financial resources between the regions.

Youth centres intervene with young people who find themselves in a situation that compromises or risks compromising their safety or their development, by providing specialized services related to youth protection or young offenders. In 2007-2008, the 16 youth centres of Québec had revenues of more than one billion dollars, 88 percent of which came from the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS). Of that number, we audited three specifically, namely the Centre jeunesse de Québec – Institut universitaire, the Centre jeunesse de Laval and the Centre jeunesse du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean.

Our work revealed deficiencies, notably the following.

Resource allocation

Financial resources devoted to health and social services are still not shared among the regions solely on the basis of the needs. The MSSS has set the target of reducing by 2010 by at least 50 percent the estimated variances in funding between the regions. These variances arise from a comparison between the sums that the regions actually receive and those that the regions should receive based solely on their needs. Admittedly, progress has been made since 2005, but variances between the regions are still noted. The current pace of reduction of the variances does not allow the MSSS to ensure regional fairness in relation to needs when it comes to the sums devoted to the Youth People in Difficulty services-program, thus to youth centres and by extension to young people. The budget of youth centres per young person having benefited from intervention services varies from \$5,929 to \$14,453 for 2008-2009.

Performance measurement

The indicators monitored by the MSSS and the agencies concern only a few elements of the performance of youth centres (mainly accessibility). As result, it is not possible to evaluate this performance. We found significant differences between the youth centres in the choice of accommodation resources as well as in the cost of each resource. For example, a youth centre lodges its young users in institutional resources in a proportion

of 42 percent of their presence-days whereas the provincial average is 20 percent. Since the cost of these resources is higher than that of non-institutional resources, if this youth centre used institutional resources in the same proportion as the provincial average, the potential savings could reach \$6 million annually.

Staff working with the external clientele

The majority of the work time of the clinical workers examined of two of the three youth centres is not devoted to direct services to the clientele; no analysis is made to maximize the efficiency of these employees. Moreover, few tools are used to objectively justify the differences in workload between employees.

Compensation of foster families

The rating system established for the additional compensation of foster families has not been revised by the MSSS since it was first introduced in 1993. This system, which is costly to manage, does not promote fairness between young people and between foster families.

Parental financial contribution for the placement of young people

Parents are billed the right amount for the financial contributions required from them; however, the proportion collected varies from one youth centre to another.

The Highlights are available on the web site of the Auditor General of Québec at the following address: <http://www.vgq.qc.ca> (English home page). The full report and the presentation given to parliamentarians are available under the "Rapports" heading of the "Publications" section.

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