

Equality Health in French believes that Vitalite is under the tutelage of the government

Description

Heard by the Senate in Ottawa, Dr. Hubert Dupuis denounced the "interference" of the New Brunswick Minister of Health in the operation of the Vitalité health network.

The president of Égalité Santé en français presented himself on Monday evening before the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages. Dr. Dupuis took the opportunity to criticize the governance of the francophone community.

"The governance of our healthcare institutions is eluding us. The management of our health institutions is under the control of the Minister of Health," he told senators.

He cites as an example the ministry's plan to privatize food, transportation and maintenance services for hospitals in the province, despite repeated opposition from Vitalité's board.

"We are seeing an erosion of services in our health authority, which we believe is a loss of our constitutional rights," he said.

"The department can plan but not oversee and manage health services. It's the role of Vitality."

Dr. Dupuis regrets that the President and CEO of Vitalité is appointed by the Minister, as are seven of the 15 members of the Board.

He would like the people to elect the entire board of directors and to have the power to appoint or dismiss the presidency and the leadership. The Dieppe physician added that the decision to close a hospital, beds or reduce services should first be the responsibility of Vitality, rather than the Ministry.

The Ministry of Health has recently established joint committees with representatives from the two boards and the government. This mode of cooperation dilutes the voice of Francophones in certain cases, says Dr. Dupuis.

"The result of these structures is that decisions and consensus are made by the dominant community, all too often to the detriment of the Francophone community. The management of the Vitalité Health Authority is constantly subject to the Minister of Health, who interferes with it on a daily basis. This way of doing things prevents the full and complete management of our health authority by our community. "

In addressing his demands to the Senate, the institution charged with protecting the rights of minorities, the president of Equality Health in French hoped to move the lines.

"It is time for the federal government to fulfill its responsibilities and make it clear to the province that it needs to do better to protect the rights of francophones," says Dr. Dupuis.

The organization is also calling for a new electoral division because the electoral sub-districts are established on a geographical and non-linguistic basis. Currently, only residents of northern and southeastern Ontario can elect members of the Vitalité Health Network Board of Directors.

Francophones in Saint John or Fredericton, for example, do not have the right to vote in the francophone board, and only have the opportunity to vote for representatives of the English-language board. The organization therefore calls for the creation of two healthy electoral maps that overlap completely.

Called to comment on these demands, Minister Victor Boudreau did not respond to our request for an interview.

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