

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

SPECIAL EDITION #4



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE IN ONTARIO WHAT THE CISSSAT SAYS... AND OUR POSITION

Dear citizens,

Many of you have asked me how the CISSSAT could suddenly cut off our access to essential healthcare after more than 40 years of a proven practice. Today, thanks to information I obtained through an access-to-information request filed as early as July 30 – before this change even took effect – I can finally share clear facts with you.

These facts show one thing: **our population has been sacrificed on the altar of poorly calculated financial numbers and technocratic management that is completely disconnected from human realities.**

THE CISSSAT'S JUSTIFICATION: NUMBERS THEY DIDN'T EVEN KNOW, A DECISION WITH HEAVY CONSEQUENCES

Since August 1st, the CISSSAT has justified ending this long-standing practice for financial reasons. According to them, stopping it would save \$212,280 per year, based on the last full reference year. This amount, in their logic, would help reduce their deficit.

But this so-called saving is an illusion. In reality, 2,200 claims from Ontario doctors were processed during that reference year.

If we account for the now mandatory travel to Abitibi – which could have reached \$239,800 in reimbursements – the “savings” claimed by the CISSSAT vanish. And that's without mentioning the human impact: fatigue, stress, discouragement, cancelled appointments, and broken care paths.

The CISSSAT also argued their decision would free up the equivalent of half an administrative job. But that same time will now be needed to process reimbursement claims for our travel. Meanwhile, thousands of hours of suffering and anxiety will be imposed on our families, our seniors, and our sick.

While the CISSSAT claimed that our tax dollars should be used to fund care in Quebec and pay Quebec doctors, we responded that this money must first and foremost serve to provide us with care, period. Yet in the end, it will go toward paying for gas. What a waste.

A false economy – paid at the price of our health.

THE AUGUST 28 PUBLIC MEETING: THE VOICE OF THE POPULATION

On August 28, more than 250 citizens from Temiscaming, Kipawa, and Kebaowek gathered to voice their deep concern.

And what did we learn from the CISSSAT?

- That this was mainly a financial decision, expected to generate savings.
- That no law, no directive, and no pressure from Santé Québec or the Government required this decision.
- That no consultation had been done – not with elected officials, not with citizens, not even with Ontario doctors.
- That they had not foreseen the massive wave of cancelled appointments, even though I had warned them with proof a week before August 1st.
- That they would handle communications differently if they had to do it again, but they would make the same decision regardless.
- That only the day after this public meeting – after 30 days of my repeated requests – the CISSSAT would finally share contact information for citizens in urgent need of help.

TOWN OF TEMISCAMING

Phone number : 819 627-3273

Email : ville.temiscaming@temiscaming.net

- That they would report Ontario doctors who cancelled appointments to their professional orders, if you reported it to them.
- That in the first 25 days, they had already received 85 complaints about lost services in Ontario — including 28 urgent ones sent directly to the head of care by the assistant commissioner of complaints, bypassing the usual procedure, because she judged immediate action necessary. That’s more than one serious case per day. And still, despite my repeated demands, no additional resources were deployed to Témiscaming.

**Worse still, the CISSSAT refuses to apologize to the population.
This is what we are facing: a wall of indifference toward our lives and our reality.**

OUR POSITION TODAY

We have analyzed, consulted, and listened. The conclusion is clear:

- The CISSSAT has used misleading and opaque communication. It has made reckless management decisions.
- Despite our repeated requests, no support resources have been deployed to help our most vulnerable citizens.
- The trust link with Ontario doctors has been broken and cannot be restored under the current leadership.

**That is why we are officially requesting that the CISSSAT be placed under trusteeship.
It is the only solution to restore trust, resolve the crisis, and reopen the healthcare corridor to Ontario.**

We have also demanded that Minister Dubé come to Témiscaming to meet directly with our citizens and the health establishment employees — who are overwhelmed and remain silent for fear of reprisals. He must see for himself the seriousness of this situation and, most importantly, recognize that we are full human beings deserving of respect.

WHAT DOES “PLACING THE CISSSAT UNDER TRUSTEESHIP” MEAN?

Trusteeship is an exceptional measure taken by the Government of Quebec when a CISSS or CIUSSS shows poor management or makes decisions that harm the population.

Concretely:

- The current leadership loses part of its powers.
- A trustee appointed by the Ministry of Health temporarily takes control.
- Their mandate: to fix the crisis, protect the population, and restore proper services.

In our case, trusteeship would allow the government to directly intervene to re-establish an effective and humane healthcare corridor to Ontario.

MY COMMITMENT TO YOU

I want you to know that I will not give up.

- I will continue to inform you with full transparency at every step.
- I will keep pressing the government so that our reality is recognized.
- I will remain by your side so that our voice is never silenced.

Because our situation is not comparable to the rest of Quebec. Here, every extra kilometer, every cancelled appointment, every administrative barrier puts our health, our dignity, and our quality of life at risk.

The status quo is not acceptable. We must act. Together. Now.

By your side,

Alain Gauthier
Mayor of Témiscaming

USEFUL CONTACTS

To contact the CISSSAT directly if you need help or had an appointment cancelled:
transfertmedtk@ssss.gouv.qc.ca or 819 627-3385

Citizen support for your procedures: 819 627-3273, ext. 104

