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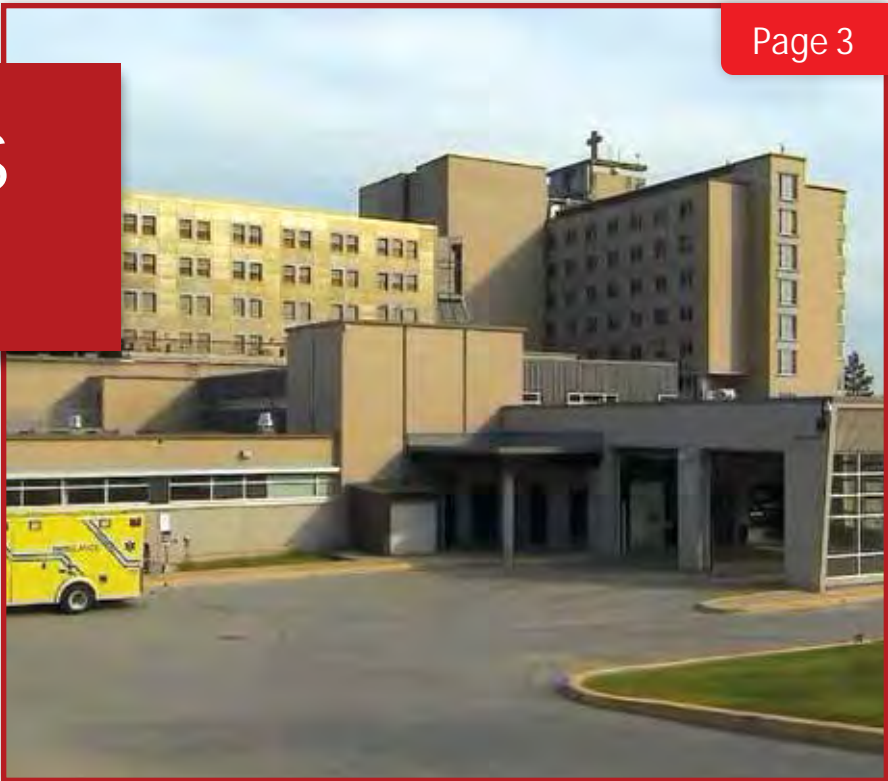
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## Perfect score for the CISSS des Laurentides



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## Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac brings life into the winter

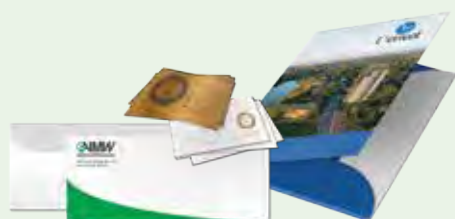


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# Blainville chiropractor sanctioned after **disciplinary body finds** 23 professional breaches

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
info@newsfirst.ca

A chiropractor practising in Blainville has been temporarily barred from the profession after Quebec's disciplinary authorities concluded he committed a wide range of serious professional violations over several years.

The disciplinary council of the Ordre des chiropraticiens du Québec has found Jean-Philippe Lamb guilty on 23 counts following a formal complaint filed by the order's syndic. The misconduct occurred between 2017 and 2024 and involved patients treated at his clinic in Blainville.

According to the council's decision, the infractions covered fundamental aspects of professional practice. Investigators determined that Mr. Lamb repeatedly failed to carry out complete clinical evaluations and did not always obtain patients' free and informed consent before proceeding with treatment. The council also cited significant breaches in record-keeping obligations, including the presence of inaccurate or incomplete information in patient files.

Beyond administrative and clinical shortcomings, the disciplinary body concluded that the chiropractor engaged in conduct deemed unbecoming of the profession toward certain female patients. The ruling also highlights instances where Mr. Lamb exceeded the legal scope of chiropractic practice in Quebec. Among

the violations retained by the council were the unauthorized use of dry needling techniques and the recommendation of medications, acts that fall outside the competencies granted to chiropractors under provincial regulations.

Mr. Lamb entered a guilty plea to all 23 charges, a factor that was taken into account during the sanctioning phase of the proceedings. The council imposed a temporary suspension from practice lasting 24 months. In addition, he was ordered to pay fines totaling \$7,500, cover all associated disciplinary costs, and assume the expense of publishing the decision, a measure intended to inform the public and reinforce professional accountability.

In its reasoning, the council emphasized that the sanctions reflect both the number of violations and their seriousness, particularly where patient safety, consent, and professional boundaries are concerned. Regulatory bodies in Quebec are mandated to protect the public, and disciplinary decisions such as this one are meant to underscore the standards expected of health professionals.

The ruling serves as a reminder that chiropractors, like all regulated health practitioners, are subject to strict ethical and professional obligations. Failure to respect those obligations can result in significant disciplinary consequences, including suspension from practice and financial penalties.

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# Laurentides health network achieves perfect pass rate on Quebec nursing exam

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
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The Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux des Laurentides (CISSS des Laurentides) is reporting an exceptional result in the latest provincial nursing licensing examination, with all 94 candidates to the nursing profession (CEPI) successfully passing the exam administered by the Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec (OIIQ).

The results, released following the November 2025 examination session, give the CISSS des Laurentides a 100 percent success rate, well above the national average of 88 percent. According to the health authority, this continues a strong trend, with pass rates over the past two years fluctuating between 96 and 100 percent.

Health officials attribute the achievement to several complementary factors, beginning with the quality of college-level education received by the candidates. A large proportion of the newly certified nurses completed their training at the Cégep de Saint-Jérôme, an institution that has long been a key feeder for the Laurentides health network.

Beyond academic preparation, the CISSS des Laurentides points to the effectiveness of its structured welcome and integration program for CEPI, designed to support new graduates as they transition into clinical practice. This is complemented by a targeted exam preparation program developed internally by CISSS teams. The program focuses specifically on guiding candidates through exam content and study strategies in the final stages before the OIIQ assessment.

Since the introduction of this preparation initiative several years ago, the CISSS reports a marked improvement in exam outcomes, with success rates consistently remaining above the 90 percent threshold.

"These two programs, created by our teams,

help CEPI feel well supported as they begin their careers and prepare for the exam," said Julie Delaney, President and Chief Executive Officer of the CISSS des Laurentides, in a written statement. "Year after year, the results speak for themselves, with success rates that remain above the national average. I thank our teams for their commitment to supporting CEPI and congratulate the candidates on their success. I also thank them for choosing the Laurentides to begin their careers. Welcome to our organization."

Retention figures further underline the impact of the program. The CISSS reports that 98 percent of CEPI remain within the Laurentides network following certification. Among the newly licensed nurses, some are continuing their university studies while remaining employed by the CISSS, while others have already taken up permanent positions in hospitals, long-term care facilities and outpatient clinics.

Officials note that all sectors across the Laurentides region are benefiting from the arrival of these new nurses, at a time when the healthcare system continues to face staffing pressures across Quebec.

The CISSS des Laurentides says it intends to maintain and further refine its support programs, viewing them as essential tools both for professional success and for strengthening long-term workforce stability in the region.



Mélyna Brière



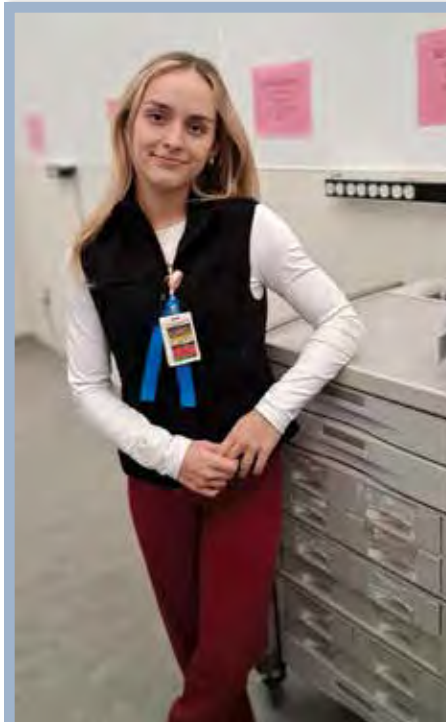
Julianne Denis



Shirine Yasmine Mekerri



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Mary-Lee Lévesque

Among the newly certified nurses at the CISSS des Laurentides who successfully passed the OIIQ exam.

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# OPINION & Editorial



## Legault's resignation was inevitable

François Legault's exit from the premiership of Quebec is not just a personal decision—it's the culmination of a deep political crisis that had been brewing for months. The image of him announcing his resignation without taking questions, without dialogue, without a shred of self-criticism speaks volumes: a leader who grew accustomed to speaking at society, not with it.

Legault didn't fall victim to circumstances; he collapsed under the weight of his own decisions. His farewell message, dressed up in phrases about "the good of the party and Quebec," cannot hide the truth: when politics is built on prestige and polling numbers—and those collapse—the emergency exit becomes the only strategy.

### A Slow-Burning Decline

This erosion didn't happen overnight. It was the result of a long trajectory filled with warning signs: electoral defeats in local races, internal leaks, high-profile resignations, and legislative initiatives that promised order but delivered chaos. When health ministers and other heavyweights abandon ship, it's not the sea's fault—it's the captain who steered it into the rocks.

### The Mirage of an "Aggressive" Economic Strategy

Legault's economic plan was marketed as "aggressive," with flashy investments and high-profile projects. Let's not forget the Northvolt fiasco. But politics isn't an investment portfolio—it's a balance between spectacle and substance. When citizens see no improvement in their daily lives—cost of living, hospital wait times—the narrative collapses.

And that wasn't all. His government burned through billions on electronic systems like

SAAQCLIQ that still don't work. Legault, like a naïve child, believed the fairy tales his ministers fed him: one promising massive energy investments, another pledging health system reform while sabotaging doctors and nurses behind the scenes.

### The Numbers Tell the Story

Legault wanted to leave as the man who delivered two big majorities and put Quebec's economy "on track." But politics isn't cumulative accounting—it's trust. And that trust evaporated long before he hit the brakes. His goodbye doesn't just close a chapter; it forces society to look in the mirror: less charm, more accountability. Fewer grand plans, more tangible results. And if "numbers are stubborn," so are citizens when they've had enough—they turn the page.

All of this dragged his party to the bottom of the polls.

### Fourth—and Sweating

In the latest poll conducted on January 10, 2026, by Pallas Data, the CAQ landed in fourth place:

- Parti Québécois (PQ): 34%
- Liberal Party (PLQ): 24%
- Conservative Party of Quebec (PCQ): 16%
- Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ): 11%
- Québec solidaire (QS): 11%
- Others: 4%

For a party that promised "less talk, more results," this is a resounding condemnation. The numbers that once crowned Legault now bury him. And when trust is gone, no PR stunt can bring it back.

His choice of a controlled, one-way farewell speech is itself a political statement. At the start of a journey, momentum and the aura of

"renewal" can mask cracks. At the end, those cracks become a mirror—and that mirror reflected fatigue, detachment, and scripted rhetoric.

### The Day After

The next day isn't just a leadership race—it's a painful detox from the syndrome of the all-powerful leader. If the CAQ doesn't find a new reason to exist—not another growth PowerPoint, but a viable plan for healthcare, cost of living, social cohesion, and realistic language policy—it will tumble from ruling party to political relic.

Legault's departure opens space. The question is: who will fill it?

A conservative platform capitalizing on discontent?

A progressive surge turning criticism into a credible governing program?

Or a new synthesis that finally speaks the language of citizens without hiding behind statistics?

Either way, the next election won't just be about "change." It will be a referendum on maturity—or a relapse into easy promises and grandiose rhetoric.

And speaking of referendums: that's what the Parti Québécois is salivating over. But Quebecers don't want referendums. The latest poll shows PQ at only 34%, while the leaderless Liberals still hold 24%. That proves Quebecers hesitate to hand a blank check to a party obsessed with separation. Voters are far more mature than PQ imagines. They know that in today's geopolitical reality, Quebec is stronger in a united Canada—a fact Alberta should also grasp.

George S. Guzman

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[editor@newsfirst.ca](mailto:editor@newsfirst.ca)



# Three arrested after residential break-in in Lorraine



**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
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Police in the Laurentians say three suspects were arrested Thursday afternoon following a reported residential break-in in the city of Lorraine.

According to the Régie intermunicipale de police Thérèse-De Blainville (RIPTB), the incident unfolded on Jan. 8 at approximately 2 p.m., when a resident contacted 9-1-1 after hearing unusual noises coming from inside her home. Officers were dispatched immediately to the scene.

Upon arrival, police ensured the safety of the resident while the suspects fled the area in a vehicle. Authorities say the rapid response by patrol officers, combined with information provided by witnesses and assistance from neighbouring police services, led to the quick identification and location of the suspect vehicle.

The three individuals, two men and one woman, were apprehended a short time later

following a brief foot pursuit. Police confirmed that no one was injured during the incident.

Two of the suspects were held in custody and were scheduled to appear Friday at the Saint-Jérôme courthouse to face charges including break and enter, theft, and mischief. The third suspect was released on a promise to appear and will face multiple charges at a later date.

Inspector-Chief Karine Desautniers praised both officers and residents for their role in the swift resolution of the case.

"This rapid intervention demonstrates the effectiveness and vigilance of our teams," Desautniers said in a statement. "I would like to commend the professionalism of RIPTB officers as well as the valuable collaboration of citizens. The situation was quickly brought under control, and the safety of residents remains our absolute priority."

Police are reminding the public that any information related to criminal activity can be provided confidentially by contacting the RIPTB at 450-435-2421, extension 0.



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# New faces join Blainville's youth commission

MARIA DIAMANTIS  
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Blainville has welcomed four new members to its youth advisory body, the Relève Blainville commission, strengthening the voice of young residents in municipal affairs. Caliana Payette, Maude Gagné, Laurence Raynauld, and Léonard Duval recently joined the commission, which serves as a consultative forum for youth aged 16 to 29.

The new appointees share a common goal: to become actively involved in their community and to ensure that the perspectives, priorities, and values of Blainville's younger generation are reflected in municipal projects and decision making. Through the commission, members are invited to propose ideas, participate in discussions on issues affecting youth, and provide recommendations to the city council.

Their arrival brings the total number of commissioners to seven. The four newcomers will work alongside current members Audrey Daigneault, Carl Picard, and Jennifer Wefu, forming a diverse group intended to represent a broad cross section of Blainville's youth.

Municipal officials say the commission plays an important role in fostering civic engagement and encouraging younger residents to take part in public life. By offering a structured space for dialogue with elected officials and municipal staff, Relève Blainville aims to bridge the gap between city hall and the next generation of citizens.

Jean-François Pinard, councillor for the Henri-Dunant district and the municipal council's representative on the commission, welcomed the new members enthusiastically. In a statement, he said he was genuinely excited by the



addition of the four recruits, praising their energy, commitment, and abundance of ideas. He added that he looks forward to working with them to help shape the Blainville they envision for the future.

Blainville, located in the Laurentians north of Montreal, has increasingly emphasized youth

participation as part of its broader civic strategy. Initiatives like Relève Blainville are designed not only to give young people a say in municipal governance, but also to cultivate leadership skills and long-term engagement in local democracy.

With the arrival of Payette, Gagné, Raynauld, and Duval, the commission is now positioned

to continue its work with renewed momentum, bringing fresh perspectives to the table as the city plans its next steps.

Caption: From left to right: Léonard Duval, Caliana Payette, Maude Gagné, and Laurence Raynauld, the newest members of Blainville's Relève Blainville commission.

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# Small businesses must be the first priority when MPs return to Ottawa

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA  
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As Parliament prepares to reconvene, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is demanding that the federal government make 2026 the year it finally delivers for entrepreneurs. Small businesses have carried Canada through economic turbulence, and now they need real action—not recycled promises.

## 2025 was brutal for small businesses

Small businesses were hit with unpredictable tariffs, labour disruptions, weak consumer spending, and relentless cost increases,” said Corinne Pohlmann, CFIB’s executive vice-president of advocacy. “The November budget offered little more than lip service. MPs must return to Ottawa ready to put small business needs at the top of the national agenda.”

Small business owners say flagship federal programs like the \$51billion Building Communities Fund and the \$1billion Regional Tariff Response Initiative (RTRI) are missing the target entirely.

Nearly 80% of entrepreneurs didn’t even know the RTRI existed. Less than 1% have applied. A third say they won’t bother, and more than a quarter say it doesn’t apply to them. Meanwhile, the Building Communities Fund risks shutting out most small firms by giving unionized businesses a builtin advantage—an approach CFIB calls unfair, discriminatory, and out of touch with the realities of the small business economy.

“SMEs feel excluded from programs that were supposedly designed for them. Words mean nothing without action. It’s time for the federal government to create conditions where small businesses can actually grow,” said Jasmin Guénette, CFIB’s

vice-president of national affairs.

With Canada–U.S. trade talks stalled, 60% of SMEs want Ottawa to actively work with the U.S. to reduce uncertainty. Entrepreneurs also want internal trade barriers reduced (59%) and broad-based tax relief (56%) to help offset tariff impacts.

CFIB is calling on the federal government to take immediate, concrete steps:

- Cut the small business tax rate from 9% to 6%, raise the deduction threshold to \$700,000, and index it to inflation.
- Return all countertariff revenues to the small businesses that paid the price.
- Lower payroll taxes by reducing EI premiums for small

employers or shifting the employer/employee split to 50/50.

- Fix internal trade barriers by adding food to Canada’s mutual recognition framework.
- Slash red tape by tracking the total number of federal rules and applying a true “two-for-one” rule across regulations, legislation, and policies.
- Protect supply chains by preventing work stoppages in federally regulated transportation and at Canada Post.
- Align immigration programs with real small business labour needs.
- Commit to a balanced budget with legislated spending limits outside of global crises.



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# Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac brings winter alive with recreation, wellness and civic engagement

MARIA DIAMANTIS  
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As winter settles over Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac, the city's event calendar is filled with opportunities for residents to embrace the season with activity, connection, mindfulness and civic participation. From themed skate nights to outdoor wellness walks and council discussions, the municipality's winter programming

reflects a broad effort to bring people together across age groups and interests.

## Disco-patin lights up the ice

One of the standout recurring offerings this season is the "Disco-patin" series at the Parc Municipal outdoor rink. Running on multiple Saturdays including January 17, January 24, January 31, February 7 and a special extended session on February 14,

the colourful skate evenings combine outdoor exercise with music and social interaction for families, friends and skaters of all skill levels.

These skate gatherings encourage residents to enjoy one of winter's iconic pastimes in a lively atmosphere, turning a municipal ice surface into both a recreational hub and community meeting place.

## Mindful movement in winter landscapes

Beyond skating, the city is promoting wellness-oriented activities that take advantage of local green space even in winter. On January 25 at 10 a.m., a meditative forest walk invites participants aged 16 and older to experience the quiet of the season within Parc de l'Érablière. These slow-paced guided walks focus on mindful engagement with nature and are designed to offer physical and mental refreshment.

Following that, February 8 at 10 a.m. brings another outdoor activity at Parc de la Frayère: "Yoga-neige" for parents and children six and up. This snow-yoga session blends gentle stretching and breath with fresh winter air and provides a unique way for families to stay active together outside.

## Municipal governance in focus

Civic life remains an integral component of the city's winter rhythm. Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac's municipal council will open its session cycle for the year on January 21 at 8 p.m., with a follow-up meeting scheduled for February 11 at 8 p.m. at the council chamber of city hall. These gatherings welcome public attention and input on local governance matters as the city moves deeper into 2026.

## A season of activity already underway

The winter events calendar paints a picture of a municipality actively engaging citizens with a mix of recreation, wellbeing and democratic participation. With skating, outdoor wellness, and structured municipal meetings providing anchors for community life through the colder months, Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac continues to build opportunities for connection.



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# DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

## REWRITING HISTORY

**Q** My wife and I have been married 40 years. I recently found out that 14 months after we married she began a three year affair. I was called to active duty in the Air Force at the time and sent out of state. Not knowing how long I would be gone, she moved back home.

The affair began immediately after I left. I had no idea. I knew her for four years before our marriage, and she came from a good Christian family. Although I made it back home every other weekend, the affair continued. After 18 months I was released from active duty, and we moved into an apartment.

Low and behold, soon after I returned I got a fantastic promotion that required me to be out of town Monday through Friday. The affair continued full steam ahead. At one point my wife asked me for a divorce, giving no specific reason. Unfortunately, I talked her out of it.

The shocker was when my wife also admitted to a one-night stand with her boyfriend's best friend just to make her lover jealous. She also admitted having sex with a guy she met at a dance club. Although this was more than 30 years ago, it seems like it happened yesterday.

We are seeing a counselor presently, but it's not doing me much good. I still have visions about the affairs and find it hard to forgive her.

Ian

**A** Ian, history is the slave of written records. If someone wrote the history of your marriage, they would have a marriage license, birth and graduation records, bills, and decades of photographs—but the real story would be untold.

In the law there is something known as an incompensable wrong. If someone mows down your rose bushes, they can be forced to compensate you for your loss, but if someone mows down your child, there is no adequate compensation. What is the price of a life?

Your wife has stolen your peace of mind, and it is not in her interest to tell you more than you already know. Because you and you alone have suffered a traumatic event, you need individual counseling with someone who will not diminish what you are going through.

Part of that involves sifting through the ashes of the past to separate fact from fiction. The meaning of your life with her, even the paternity of your children, are open to question. You must also deal with a range of negative emotions: anger at her betrayal, sadness at what you've lost, fear of going forward, and contempt for her as a person.

Then you can decide where and how to spend your remaining years. She doesn't get to decide. She had her life and she had yours, too. You don't have to lash out and hurt her, you just have to decide on your future.

Wayne & Tamara

## MATCHMAKING OR MEDDLING?

**Q** I have two friends; we'll call them Bill and Sheila. They've known each other more than 20 years, and everyone thinks they are perfect for each other. Neither has ever married. Friends have tried setting them up, but either one of them was in a relationship or the other was just out of a bad relationship.

Currently neither is involved with anyone. Schedules and location make it difficult at this point, but Bill wants to try. He's worried if it doesn't work out their 20 year friendship will go down the drain. Are his fears of losing his

best friend justified?

Annie

**A** Annie, we can't work our will on others. You may want to bring them together, but this is all about them. If there were a mutual attraction, you would be hard-pressed to keep them apart.

Everyone wants Bill and Sheila together but Bill and Sheila. Has Bill really decided? Or is this what Annie and "everyone" have decided?

Wayne & Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF ([www.yourotherhalf.com](http://www.yourotherhalf.com))

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# The Quebec primary care conundrum

## Good intentions, persistent problems

continued from previous edition

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Between 2009 and 2014, the number of physicians participating in GMFs increased by 41.5 percent, yet registered patients rose by only 5.9 percent (VGQ 2015). While extended hours were often the only feature distinguishing GMFs from other clinics, many GMFs failed to meet their after-hours access obligations (Dunkley-Hickin 2013; Forget 2014; VGQ 2015; Aubin and Quesnel-Vallée 2016). Yet, the ministry and regional agencies continued funding GMFs without evaluating whether their regulations or agreements were improving access, leaving GMFs and network clinics with wide latitude but limited accountability (VGQ 2015, 2020).

The initially proposed capitation model was replaced by a mixed system, still dominated by fee-for-service but supplemented with bonuses for specific services and patient registration. Later, however, the patient registration bonus was extended to physicians outside GMFs, thereby weakening the distinct financial incentives associated with GMFs (Pomey, Martin, and Forest 2013). By broadening the remuneration structure, non-GMF clinics could operate much like GMFs – enjoying higher pay but without the GMF label or its associated accountability framework. As a result, the GMF reform had only marginal effects.

In 2003, Quebec passed Bill 25, restructuring its healthcare system by replacing eighteen regional health boards with a three-tiered structure: the Ministry of Health and Social Services at the top, fifteen new intermediary administrative agencies in the middle, and ninety-five health and social services centers (CSSSs) at the local level (Bourque and Quesnel-Vallée 2014). The agencies served as administrative intermediaries between frontline care and the

ministry, monitoring population health, allocating funds, and reporting on performance, while CSSSs provided an administrative umbrella for local health and social institutions that delivered direct patient care.

In effect, assigning the agencies significant managerial authority shifted greater decision-making power to the provincial level (Pomey, Martin, and Forest 2013). The new public management principles driving the reform, particularly accountability and performance reporting requirements, created excessive centralization incompatible with patient-centred care (Bourque and Quesnel-Vallée 2014). Problems with accessibility persisted and many Quebecers still lacked access to a family doctor. Although the reform was intended to advance regionalization, its structure and implementation may have inadvertently enabled the centralization efforts that led to the system's overhaul through the 2015 reform (Pomey, Martin, and Forest 2013; Arpin, Gautier, and Quesnel-Vallée 2025).

In 2015, Quebec passed Bill 10 to further centralize decision-making and reduce administrative layers, mirroring similar reforms in Alberta and Nova Scotia, which had consolidated multiple regional health authorities into single provincial bodies during this period. The reform abolished the fifteen agencies established in 2003, moving from a three-tiered to a two-tiered system, while merging 182 facilities into 34 integrated health and social services centers (CISSSs/CIUSSSs) responsible for both oversight and care delivery (Quesnel-Vallée and Carter 2018). Proponents argued that the restructuring would reduce bureaucracy, increase direct accountability to the ministry, enhance transparency, and improve service integration (Arpin, Gautier, and Quesnel-Vallée 2025). However, experts noted that the reform lacked evidence on achievable economies of scale, optimal organizational size, or whether

vertically integrated structures could respond to diverse population needs (Béland et al. 2014; Quesnel-Vallée and Carter 2018). Evidence supporting administrative mergers to improve access or service quality is limited (Béland et al. 2014). The governance model – where each CISSS/CIUSSS board of directors is appointed directly by the ministry and reports to it – was also criticized as increasingly political rather than evidence-based (Quesnel-Vallée and Carter 2018). Over time, this highly centralized structure created significant challenges for public health governance and health human resource management, issues that became particularly visible and were amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic (Arpin, Gautier, and Quesnel-Vallée 2025).

In 2015, in response to persistent access issues, Quebec also passed Bill 20 to expand primary care availability. The legislation required FPs to register a minimum number of patients, with non-compliance resulting in a 30 percent fee reduction (Young 2015). This reform marked a departure from previous reforms, adopting a “stick” rather than a “carrot” approach to influence physician behaviour. Within three years, both patient registration and continuity of care improved: by December 31st, 2018, 81 percent of the Quebecers were registered with a primary care physician – up from 68 percent before the reform, though short of the 85 percent target – and continuity of care rose from 68 percent to 84.4 percent (Laberge and Gaudreault 2019). While coercive measures can provoke strong opposition, Bill 20 nonetheless produced measurable gains, even without the complete application of penalties. At the same time, the bill generated unintended consequences. Its coercive and punitive nature made family medicine less attractive to new medical graduates, thereby increasing the difficulty of attracting and retaining physicians in the field. Over the past decade, the pay gap between FPs

and specialists has also widened, further undermining the appeal of family practice (Laberge and Gaudreault 2019).

Since 2013, Quebec has expanded the prescribing and diagnostic powers of other health professionals, such as pharmacists and nurse practitioners, to improve access to care and free up physicians' time to manage more complex cases. This approach has been adopted in other provinces, such as Alberta and the Atlantic provinces, with demonstrated efficiency and relatively low-cost gains in improved access to primary care (Richards 2024).

Quebec's recent legislation, Bill 106 and Bill 2, represents a significant attempt to use “stick” again to change physician behaviour. Introduced in May 2025, Bill 106 proposed shifting family physicians from FFS to a blended model combining capitation, hourly rates, and performance-based compensation. The bill tied 10 percent of physician pay (initially 25 percent) to meeting government-set targets for patient volumes, particularly those with vulnerability codes, while automatically registering all Quebecers to clinics regardless of capacity. Physician groups are collectively responsible for meeting access goals. If targets are not met, everyone in the group faces pay reductions, regardless of individual effort or patient complexity.

When contract negotiations with medical professional organizations stalled, the government passed Bill 2 in October, aiming to end the labour dispute. The law incorporates most Bill 106 proposals but adds strict penalties for “concerted action” by physicians, prohibiting collective withdrawal from activities or teaching stoppages to challenge government policies. The move sparked widespread outrage. At the time of writing, the situation remains volatile: at least 125 doctors have completed processes to practice in Ontario, with 200 more in progress. The medical directors of regional departments of family medicine have also refused to comply with parts of Bill 2, stating they will not assign 1.5 million orphan patients to already overburdened physicians and clinics. Given past failures and ongoing physician resistance, this approach seems unlikely to succeed in improving access.

Quebec has been active in pursuing health reforms over the past two decades, along with other organizational innovations, yet these efforts have had limited impact on improving access to care. Despite many attempts to influence physician behavior, Quebec continues to report the highest proportion of residents without a regular healthcare provider among Canadian provinces. Several reforms, most notably coercive quota and penalty-based measures such as Bill 20 and Bill 2, remain unique to Quebec. To date, evidence shows that these approaches have strained physician morale and relationships, with little demonstrable improvement in access.

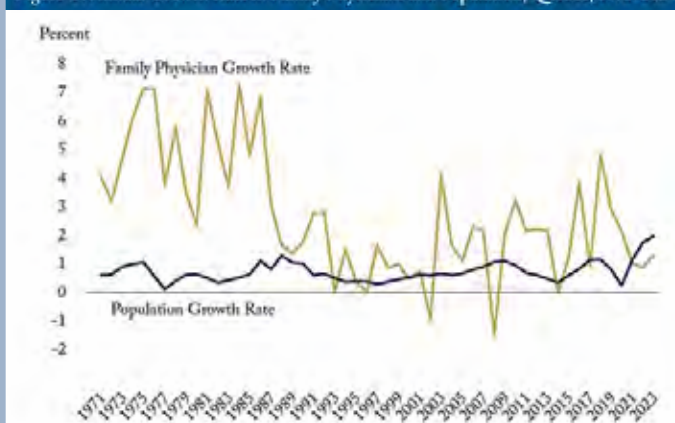
Figure 5: Family Physicians in Quebec by Age Group, Percentage of Total, since 1971



Notes: In 2019, the College des Médecins in Quebec changed its policy on what personal physician information it makes publicly available. Since then, the number of FPs with “unknown status” has increased. For this reason, data from 2019 onwards should be interpreted with caution.

Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information. Supply, Distribution and Migration of Physicians in Canada, 2024 - Historical Data.

Figure C: Annual Growth Rate in Family Physicians and Population, Quebec, 1972-2024



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information. Supply, Distribution and Migration of Physicians in Canada, 2024 - Historical Data.

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# HOROSCOPE

Week of January 25 to 31, 2026

The luckiest signs this week:  
CANCER, LEO AND VIRGO



## ARIES

Before making a major purchase, review your budget and decide if the expense is truly necessary. Be patient and you'll be more satisfied and find a better price.



## TAURUS

Be prepared for a busy week ahead full of unexpected events. You'll earn a promotion at work. This could provide you with either valuable security for the future or the chance to begin an exciting new phase filled with promise and motivation.



## GEMINI

Taking a step back will give you the momentum you need to accomplish something remarkable. Your artistic side will shine through this week. You'll be brimming with creativity. You may also choose to get involved in a meaningful social cause.



## CANCER

Your friends will invite you on an enjoyable outing or a trip. You'll come up with an ingenious idea that could help alleviate some of your financial concerns. Trust the sound advice of financial experts and professionals.



## LEO

You'll be in charge of organizing an event that will bring many people together. You'll easily handle urgent situations, both at work and at home. An opportunity to celebrate a success may also present itself.



## VIRGO

You'll acquire new knowledge this week, which will inspire you profoundly and spark a personal transformation. You may explore your spiritual side or establish a simple but meaningful ritual that brings happiness to your daily life.



## LIBRA

Your emotions will be running high this week. This will prompt you to strengthen your relationships with your loved ones. You may have an epiphany, which could awaken in you a desire to explore and embrace new enriching experiences.



## SCORPIO

You'll have to make an important decision this week that will require careful consideration. If you want to achieve your professional goals, you must make certain adjustments to move in the right direction and find true satisfaction.



## SAGITTARIUS

You'll have heavy responsibilities at work and home this week. You'll keep your space neat and tidy, which will bring you happiness and increase your efficiency and productivity in your daily life.



## CAPRICORN

Your growing self-confidence will spark significant professional and personal growth. This assurance will help you stand out from the crowd and earn considerable recognition from those around you.



## AQUARIUS

Whether you're single or in a relationship, love at first sight could turn your world upside down and spark an irresistible fascination. You and your relatives will be thrilled by a birth announcement in the family.



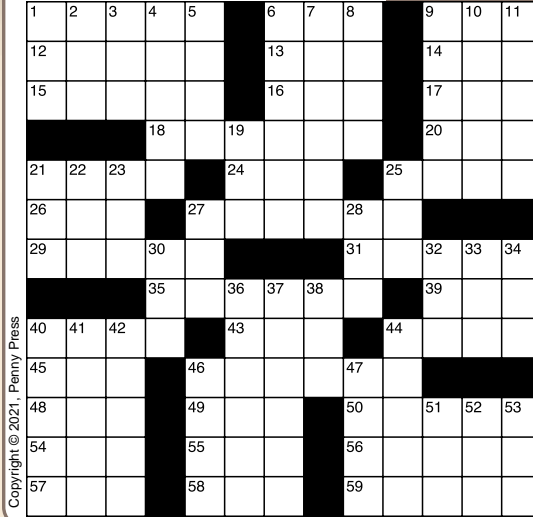
## PISCES

You'll form new friendships and professional relationships this week. Your strong communication skills will help you reach fair agreements and ease tensions, creating a more peaceful and productive atmosphere.

# Coffee Break

## CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 296



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### ACROSS

- Dancing spot
- Health resort
- Circle section
- Oak source
- Peak
- Dove sound
- Bus station
- Have being
- Skedaddle
- Fellow lead performer
- Hen output
- Emit fumes
- Toolbox
- On the Pacific
- "Look \_\_\_\_ ye leap"
- Friendliest
- Worth
- Southern nut
- Boggy
- Pasture mother
- Cook, as a cake
- Rival
- Liquefy

- Fearful wonder
- Blazing
- Happy
- Fishing gear
- Honolulu greeting
- \_\_\_\_ out (barely make)
- Bad humor
- Marry again
- Headed
- Put two and two together
- Squeals

### DOWN

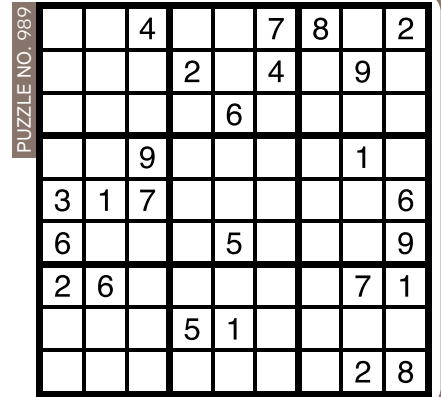
- Father, informally
- Freezer abundance
- Food for dipping
- Earthenware pot
- Atop
- TV interference
- Blackbeard, e.g.
- Copycat
- "Green \_\_\_\_"
- Cheek makeup
- Cuban dance
- Go down the slopes
- Gun a motor
- Generation
- Slippery as an \_\_\_\_
- Devoured
- Just out
- Agent
- Take advantage of
- So-so grade
- Hole punch
- Mesh fabric
- Be able to pay for
- Shaped
- Small vegetable
- Roll with a hole
- Attentive
- \_\_\_\_ up (tense)
- Riot
- Operatic melody
- Lamb owner
- Bird that hoots
- In the know
- Station break airings

# Sudoku

## HOW TO PLAY:

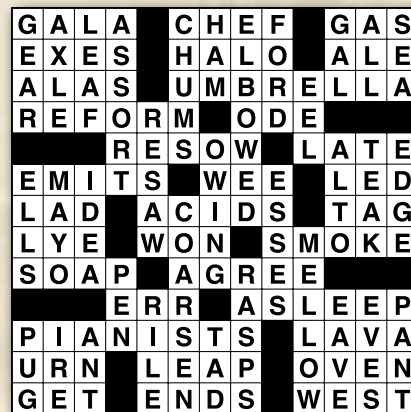
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

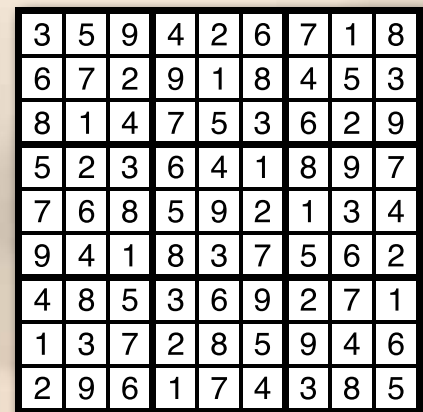


## Last Issue's Answers

### CROSSWORDS



### Sudoku



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- Broccoli
- Nectarines (3)
- Butternut Squash
- Cantaloupe
- Bananas (4)
- Oranges (3)
- Garlic (Spain)
- Rutabaga (3-4)
- Romaine Lettuce
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Avocados (2)
- Large Red Onions (2)
- Red Peppers (2)

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