



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec
Environmental Health Association of Québec

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PRESS RELEASE

INSPQ Report harms people experiencing Multiple Chemical Sensitivity disability

Saint-Sauveur, Québec, October 25, 2021 - On June 29, 2021, the INSPQ published a report on Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). This report failed to consult experts in MCS including physicians, researchers, and people with lived experience of this disability. The resulting report omitted concepts and research papers critical to the scope of the research and resulted in an erroneous conclusion that will cause real harm to people experiencing MCS. We are affirming that this Report must be taken down from the INSPQ website immediately, and revised and updated with involvement of experts in the field of MCS. [A citizen's action can be found here.](#)

According to physician Dr. John Molot, expert in environmental medicine and MCS, 'The authors and peer reviewers of the INSPQ report had no training or experience with MCS and refused the offer of experts to participate in this process. They have erroneously arrived at a conclusion that the cause of MCS is anxiety, despite the fact that the evidence in support of their theory is very low in comparison to the neglected evidence of chemical receptor sensitization.' Dr. Molot adds, 'These receptors are widespread, found on cells of the nervous and respiratory systems. When stimulated, they induce reactions by these cells. Most important is that these receptors are capable of becoming sensitized from repeated stimulation, meaning that they respond to much lower levels of chemical exposure, with a greater response by the cells.' [A more detailed résumé can be read here.](#)

Multiple chemical sensitivity is a recognized disability protected by the Canadian Human Rights Act. Over one million people in Canada are diagnosed with MCS (CCHS, 2016; CCHS, 2020). This population faces high rates of rejection, abuse and stigmatization. Since the publication of this report people with MCS have reported an increased vulnerability. People experiencing MCS already face disproportionately high rates of unemployment, homelessness, and low socioeconomic status.

Michel Gaudet, executive director, ASEQ-EHAQ states, 'We were very concerned when the INSPQ was mandated by the Minister of Health and Social Services of Québec to carry out a literature review on MCS, since there is no expertise in this field in Québec. However, we received written assurances from the Ministry of Health and Social Services that they would consult with experts in the field and our Association during the process of this report. This was not done and has resulted in the conclusions of the report being skewed. In view of a huge

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time lapse to produce this report, and the suffering endured by people experiencing MCS, we reiterate that the Ministry of Health and Social Services of Québec must act responsibly on the question of recognizing MCS as a medical condition in Québec and to provide appropriate health and social services for this population. It is unfathomable that our citizens are ignored and stigmatized because of a government's unwillingness to act.

The Environmental Health Association represents over a million Canadians with MCS and works on issues related to environmental health with the participation of doctors, researchers and specialists in the field. Our goal is to address the health condition of MCS, and to stop the rising prevalence of MCS through healthy, least-toxic, ecologically sound strategies for everyday living.

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