

## **For the freedom of prescription of physicians, against the establishment of a state science**

**Object: The proposal for a Parliamentary resolution, tabled by Daniel Fasquelle MP and 93 of his colleagues and seeking to make the recommendation of the National Authority for Health legally binding and give legislators the power to decree what is scientific “truth”.**

Dear colleagues, physicians, friends

Daniel Fasquelle MP has initiated a [Proposal of a resolution](#) on autism, which should be voted on by the French National Assembly on 8 December. This may seem a marginal question to some of you, but the petitioned change is in fact an underhanded attempt: a demand that, in the name of our respect for people with autism, the legislators make “the 2012 HAS [French National Authority for Health] recommendations legally binding for professionals working with autistic children”. If it passes, this proposal would establish a precedent and there is no reason why the obligation should not be extended to other pathologies. In the future, the National Authority for Health could thus dictate to each of us what to think and how to carry out our profession.

This is a major transgression and an unacceptable attack against our profession; until today, the recommendations of the Authority have functioned as an aid to the decisions made by the physician, who alone holds the responsibility for his acts, which depend on the singularity of the patient. This new approach effectively places physicians under the supervision of various interest groups and disrupts the very nature of our work.

The demand is also at odds with the very text of the 2012 recommendations, where the preface states the following:

*“The good practice recommendations (GPR) are defined in the field of health as proposals systematically developed to help the practitioner and patient look for care solutions that are most suitable in the given clinical circumstances.*

*The GPR are rigorous syntheses of the state of the art of science and scientific facts at the given time and are described using scientific arguments. They cannot absolve the healthcare professional from showing discernment in the choices he makes to care for his patient, which must be those he deems most appropriate, according to his own observations.”*

How do we try to make a text binding, when this would mean ignoring its preface, which defines the spirit that has presided over the entire text?

Mr Fasquelle’s reading of the 2012 recommendations is in fact both incomplete and partisan. From the nearly 500-page-long argument of the National Authority and the ANESM [National Agency for the Evaluation of Social and Health Care], he only focuses on the fact that certain behavioural methods have been graded B, based on the number of publications that concern them. However, only grade A is recognized as scientific proof.

Mr Fasquelle is desperately trying to push through a resolution on dated recommendations, because he is well aware that some of these recommendations are already obsolete and might soon be revised.

In fact, the recent [evaluation of 28 state-funded](#) experimental facilities, which function according to the methods which Mr Fasquelle would like to make mandatory everywhere and for all, has recently revealed that, at a cost twice to four-times higher than traditional establishments, these facilities have by no means obtained better results.

President Hollande has also recently become conscious of the problem and has called for the 4th Autism Plan, which should be focused on easing the tensions and working together.

Finally, the UK equivalent of the National Authority, [NICE](#), no longer recommends these methods and in Quebec, which consecrated all public funds to them for 15 years, the situation today is worrisome for autists.

In other words, regardless of your opinion on the highly controversial question of autism, we ask you, dear colleagues and friends, to sign this petition and interpellate the National Council of the Order of Physicians, in order to maintain our freedom of prescription and the families' freedom of choice. We call on you to block a project that threatens the fundamental freedoms and tries to establish a "State-run science", a project which will prove harmful to autists and will impose on them a single type of methods, even though autism is a polymorphous syndrome in terms of both its clinical expressions and its etiology.

With collegial regards,

Dr Christine Gintz, Psychiatrist in Grenoble, formerly of the University Hospital in Grenoble, former Assistant Head of the Clinic at the Faculty of Grenoble, mother of a young autist, Secretary of the [RAAHP](#)

Pr Fabrice Bonnet, Head of the Department of Endocrinology at the University Hospital in Rennes, father of a young autist

Dr Jean-François Havreng, Director, Child Psychiatrist, APEI Sèvres, Chaville and Ville d'Avray, Director of the Day Hospital for Children 'Les Lierres' in Sèvres, father of a young autistic woman

Prof David Cohen, MD, PhD, Professor, University Pierre and Marie Curie CNRS UMR 7222 "Institute of Intelligent and Robotic Systems", Head of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Service, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France

Prof Michel BOTBOL Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University Hospital in Brest

Prof Jérôme TONETTI, Hospital surgeon and university professor, University clinic for Orthopedic surgery and sport traumatology, Michallon Hospital in Grenoble

Prof Thierry BAUBET, Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University of Paris 13, INSERM U1178, Head of the Child Psychopathology service, Avicenne Hospital, Bobigny

Dr Charles BOELEN, International health systems and HR consultant. Former coordinator of the WHO human resources in health care programme (Geneva)

Dr Moïse Assouline, Director of the UMI Centre Paris Hauts de Seine (Complex situations in Autism and TED) and of the CRG (Regional Genetic Consultation run by Prof Arnold Munnich), Coordinator of the Section for autism of the Foundation 'Elan Retrouvé'

Dr Fabien JOLY, Doctor of Psychopathology, former Coordinator of the Ressource Autisme in Bourgogne and former Vice-president of the AN CRA National Scientific Council

## **TEXT OF THE PETITION**

We, the physicians undersigned, considering that:

1. It is against the nature of and dangerous to the exercise of our profession that a recommendation of the National Authority for Health should become legally binding,

2. It is against the nature of and dangerous to the exercise of our fundamental freedoms of thought, expression and research that the Parliament arrogates the power to decree where to locate

scientific “truth”.

We specifically demand:

1. That the National Council of the Order of Physicians and the Academy of Medicine play their full role and firmly oppose the proposal of the resolution No 4134 initiated by Daniel Fasquelle MP.
2. That all Members of Parliament reject this proposition, which threatens our freedoms.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**

Please feel free to make comments, otherwise your name will not appear on the Change.org website. Do include your functions and affiliations. It is very important to show that most physicians, regardless of their speciality, are opposed to their freedom of prescription being undermined.

[to sign the petition click here](#)