

Your essential guide to promoting equitable access to health services

INSTITUTIONAL BROCHURE - MAY 2022



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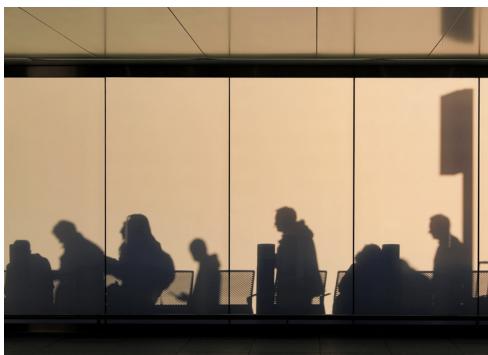
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Growing Needs

"I envision a world in which everyone can lead healthy and productive lives, regardless of who they are or where they live." These words of Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization, resonate in Canada where lack access to service in their language impact the care minority communities receive from the health system.



Demographic issues facing Canada

For over a century, immigration has been one way of maintaining Canada's demographic, economic and cultural growth. As a destination country, Canada has set ambitious immigration targets in response to the demographic and economic issues it faces: increase Francophone immigration to 4.4% of French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec by 2023 (18,500 people)¹. There are 10 million French speakers in Canada, and 2.7 million of them live outside Quebec². Nevertheless, there are gaps at several levels in the reception and care they receive from the health system: lack of bilingual professionals, inadequate active offer, undeveloped or underdeveloped psychological support structures for Francophone populations, etc. A challenge we must overcome if we are to continue to attract Francophones and ensure their physical and mental wellbeing.

Sources:

1 <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/francophone-immigration-strategy.html>

2 <https://fcfa.ca/carte-interactive/>

"Health is a right, not a privilege"

In early 2000, a number of social, cultural, economic and political issues drove the issue of French-language health care services to the forefront. The federal Minister of Health at the time, the Honourable Allan Rock, set up an advisory committee on the needs of Francophone minority communities. In a report submitted to the Minister in September 2001, that committee proposed a strategy for improving French-language services for Francophones across the country. It revealed the rather striking fact

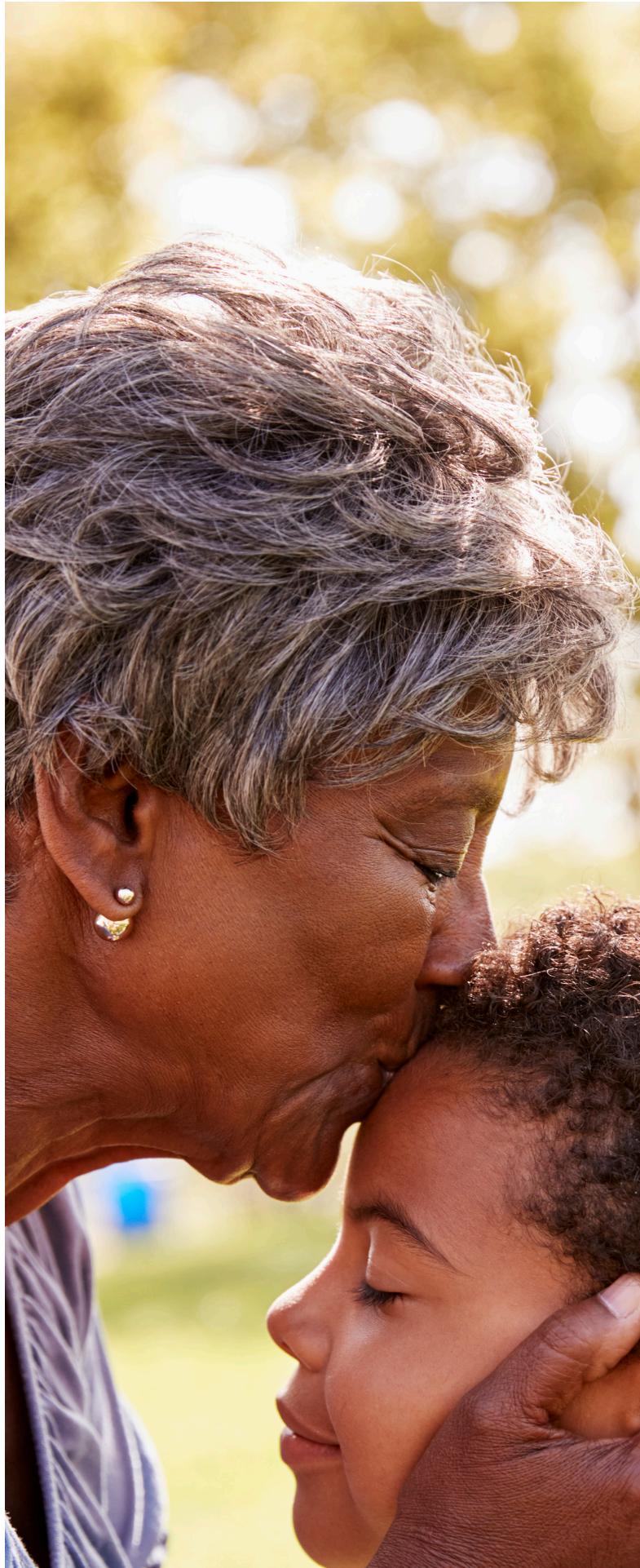
that **55% of Francophones outside Quebec had little or no access to health care services in their language**.

The advisory committee then prioritized three of those: networking, service organization, and training.

Some twenty years later, the **eQUITY Link site fits in perfectly with this approach by addressing these three areas of focus from the perspective of an essential long-term tool.**

Needs specific to health service managers and providers

- I want to recruit and/or retain qualified bilingual staff
- I want to motivate my teams and raise their awareness of the importance of providing bilingual services
- I want to evaluate the level of the French language services I provide
- I need guidance on implementing my French language services active offer strategy
- I need quality information and proven practical advice
- I want to meet French language services accountability requirements and/or standards



Negative effects of language barriers on service safety and quality

Research suggests that language barriers may influence quality of care and health outcomes in many ways. Patients who experience language barriers face increased risk of medication errors, complications and adverse events. Often, the safeguards of informed consent and confidentiality do not protect patients with a limited knowledge of English. According to the Joint Commission (2012), communication is the underlying cause of 59% of adverse events. The research also shows that patients with limited English proficiency are more likely than Anglophone patients to experience incidents affecting their safety following communication errors (Wasserman et al., 2014) and that patients facing language barriers are far more likely to return or be readmitted to the emergency department (Karliner et al., 2010; Regalbuto et al., 2014; Gallagher et al., 2013). Language barriers may also lead to increased caution with respect to treatment: more lab tests and imaging, longer stays, increased probability of admission and higher triage level (Hampers et al., 1999; Hampers & Nutley, 2002; Waxman & Levitt, 2000). While these actions increase patient safety, they nevertheless work against health system efficiency.

Source : Source: “The Impact of Language Barriers on Patient Safety and Quality of Care”, Sarah Bowen, 2015. Click [here](#) to access the full study.

What is “eQUITY Link”?

“eQUITY Link” is an online resource that helps build the capacity of health, social and/or community service institutions to implement French language services.

You progress at your own pace with support from experts to reach your personalized objectives.



FREE

Platform accessible to all and funded by Health Canada



ONLINE

You have access at all times on all devices



VALIDATED TOOLS

Validated evidence-based modules and strategies



PERSONALIZED SERVICES

You set your own objectives and track your progress



CONFIDENTIAL

Your data is protected and confidential



ASSISTANCE

Our experts are available to answer your questions



Are you ready for eQUITY Link?
Register today!

www.equity-link.ca

Just One Click!

A platform that combines tools, advice, and strategies to build your institution's services and capacity.

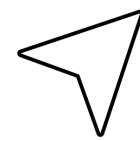
Your strategy, activity tracking and training all in one place

Implementing French language services is a societal issue and, above all, a matter of equity. As managers of health, social and/or community service institutions, choosing to offer bilingual services of equal quality comes down to:

- Building your staff's capacity to provide quality, safe, person-centred health care;
- Working to include members of your institution from minority and immigrant communities;
- Ensuring your institution has a positive image as an actor promoting inclusion of linguistic and cultural diversity;

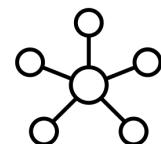
- Benefiting from resources and support;
- Having staff able to raise their colleagues awareness of the realities faced by Francophones in a minority setting, even in the workplace.

This change of mindset is a virtuous circle that goes beyond the institution: communities can continue to grow, to develop and to contribute to a prosperous country. Finally, the institution will be able to demonstrate greater transparency and commitment to continuous improvement of service quality, essential factors in a key sector like health.



Guide

health care, social and/or community service planners and managers through the various steps in dealing with language barriers and implementing proven solutions.



Assemble

validated evidence-based tools to help organizations understand the process for instituting active offer of French language services.



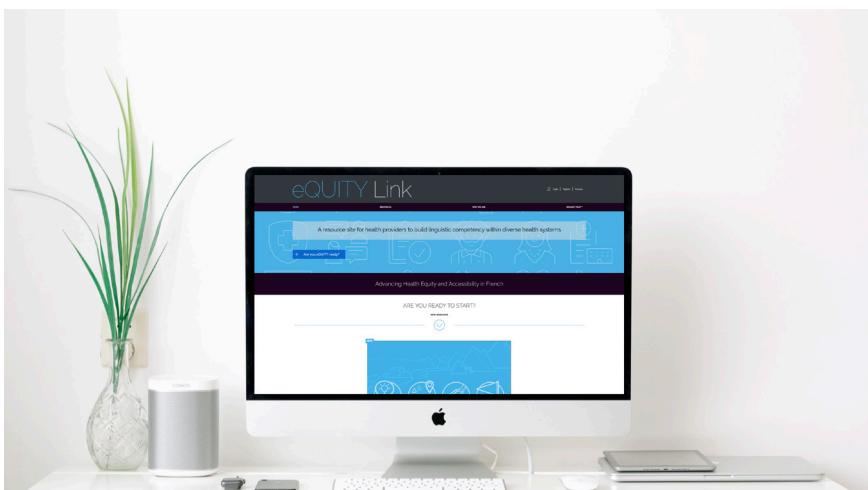
Empower

users by enabling them to evaluate their current capacity to provide French language services and improve service delivery by implementing the exemplary approach proposed, at their own pace and with support from experts.



Perpetuate

the provision of French language services by applying and adapting the lessons learned to meet the needs of under-served communities.



The eQUITY Link platform is your gateway to building your strategy for equitable access to health services.

National Strategy

The eQUITY Link platform brings together proven measures in Canada and abroad to help health managers provide better access to French language health services within a structured yet flexible process.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE

eQUITY Link offers a full range of resources to guide you in using a tailored approach for offering services in French adapted to your progress no matter where you are in this journey. However, we also recognize the added value of personalized support to provide you with more advice on your actions and speed up the process. We have a network of specialists in capacity building and mentoring ready to help you. This network is constantly growing in numbers and knowledge thanks to the training workshops offered by the eQUITY Link team and experts. Visit our web site for more information and complete the support request form if required.

RECOGNITION OF YOUR EFFORTS

eQUITY Link is part of a national continuous quality improvement process and positions you

as a leader in access to health and social services in official languages as set out in the CAN/HSO 11012:2018 Standard. This standard, developed by the Health Standards Organization (HSO) and Société Santé en français provides a leadership framework for improving health outcomes for patients, communities and health systems. A guarantee of quality and excellence in the health care industry.

Accreditation Canada's Official Languages Recognition Program (OLRP) is based on the CAN/HSO 11012:2018 Standard, "Access to Health and Social Services in Official Languages". It sets out a continuous quality improvement process to support and reward health and social service organizations in their journey to better access to services in official languages.

eQUITY Link incorporates the criteria of CAN/HSO 11012:2018 and provides resources to help organizations grow their capacity and fulfill the

requirements of Accreditation Canada's Official Languages Recognition Program. Together, these tools offer concrete strategies and tools to increase access and tangible measures for tracking the progress of French language health services over time.

The Official Languages Recognition Program – Level 1 (Discovery) is now available from Accreditation Canada's E-Store.

In partnership with:



**16 regional,
provincial
and territorial
networks to
support you**



Key figures and testimonials

eQUITY Link is updated daily, thanks to its users. Launched in the spring of 2021, it already has over a hundred practitioners who contribute on an ongoing basis.

+12 hours of guided and theme-based learning	20 specialists in capacity building and mentoring	126 active user accounts
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Data March 31st, 2022



Jacqueline Higgins

Director, Réseau Santé en français de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador

“eQUITY Fundamentals really helped me understand some of the more complex elements of the process such as policy development or standards. It has a lot of examples of communication plans, recruitment policies, and so on, from other organizations or provinces that served as inspiration”.

Click here to watch the video: <https://bit.ly/3xDTEh5>



Lynne Rousseau

Program Manager, Community Support Services of Niagara

“Often the immensity of the task can be daunting - seemingly impossible to achieve - and therefore not prioritized by agencies. The self-assessment allows you to set manageable goals and prioritize work. It essentially lays out a workplan for you. It also allows you to identify things that you’re doing well as an agency. Just having access to the tools and videos will ease some of the work and allow me to reinforce the importance of an active offer within my organization”.



Heather Gillespie

Director Service Quality & Capacity, Canadian Mental Health Association, Niagara

“This is a brilliant tool! I downloaded absolutely every resource, every link. I really liked the invitation to just explore it. The pressure was totally taken off and made it a lot easier to engage with the material. The platform has also afforded an opportunity for me to share insights and understanding with the rest of the organization. And there is a commitment to engage this year in identifying language preference and first language”.

Come grow the ranks of institutions offering quality French language health services!

Visit www.equity-link.ca

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