

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINING THE CONTINUUM OF CARE FOR FRANCOPHONE POPULATIONS IN CENTRAL, SOUTH-WEST REGIONS OF ONTARIO

Project Summary

A Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario's project conducted between January 25th and March 31st, 2013 in partnership with the Rifssso, the four French Language Health Planning Entities (Entities) and the collaboration of the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) of the region and with the support of Sultrem Inc. consulting firm.

Expected results – A collaborative project contributing to increase the knowledge baseline and provide a framework for targeted actions in the area of FLS. Findings and observations are based on front line service provider data captured via surveys and interviews.

Objectives

1. Reach a better understanding of the needs of English and bilingual HSPs with regards to French language service delivery in the Central, South-West regions of Ontario :
 - Identify barriers, needs, facilitating components, perceptions, etc.
 - Understand success factors of establishments that have implemented French language services (FLS)
 - Identify the features that can be replicated elsewhere
2. Increase cultural and linguistic health competency awareness of participating HSPs
3. Identify tools and best practices in order to enable knowledge exchange

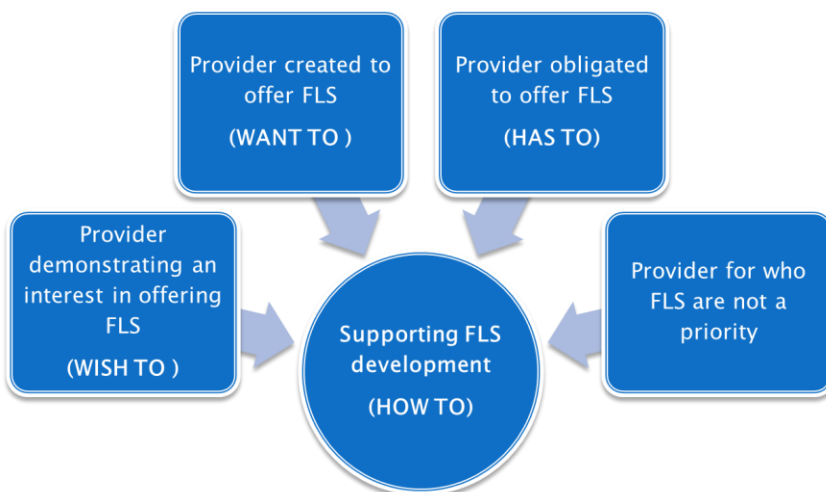
Core activities

- ▶ Review of surveys recently carried out in the Central, South-West regions of Ontario
- ▶ Targeted interviews with HSPs in the regions
- ▶ Identification of best practices and tools in connection with the project.

The review of complete or partial data from four (4) recent surveys carried out by the LHINs and the French language Health Planning Entities demonstrates the importance of data collection and suggest actions for improvement. It also highlights some observations regarding active offer and FLS demand.

Suggested actions for data improvement:

- Standardize surveys in order to generate comparable data
- Develop and implement FLS indicators



Interviews and exchanges during this project enabled the identification of best practices in connection with: the active offer of services, issues concerning FLS demand, methods and tools for linguistic accessibility as well as recruitment of bilingual human resources.

Observations from this project resulted in the development of a model describing four (4) HPS engagement levels regarding FLS (see graph) as well as service provision and issues related to each engagement level.

Some Best Practices Identified via Interviews and Literature Review:

- Governance model : *Chigamik Community Health Centre*
- Approach based on the active recruitment of clients: *Credit Valley Family Health Team*
- Advisory Committee to the CEO for FLS : *Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre*
- Bilingual staff Recruitment Fund in Manitoba

Suggestions for Potential FLS Actions

- ▶ Acting on all levels of the health care system
- ▶ Raising awareness and increasing commitment of HSP leaders with regards to FLS
- ▶ Pursuing combined action in the area of active offer and FLS demand
 - Increasing the collection of data on clients’ linguistic preferences
 - Developing approaches based on personalized support for establishments, to build best practices and increase the active offer of FLS
- ▶ Acting on the recruitment of human resources
 - Increasing the capacity in human resources with linguistic skills
 - Identifying the language skills of professionals in order to improve the planning of services
- ▶ Harmonizing data, comparing and encouraging an approach based on continuous improvement
- ▶ Increasing community participation
- ▶ Building on successes and achievements in the area of FLS

“It’s important that Francophones hear the French language spoken in order to feel comfortable disclosing that they are Francophones. Services must be visible and offered actively.” – Interview participant

The Major Human Resources Challenges:

- Recruitment of bilingual human resources
- Balancing between shortages of professionals, professional skills and linguistic competency in both official languages
- Capacity of the post-secondary education system in the Central, South-West regions to produce a sufficient number of bilingual professionals

Adopted Strategies and Next Steps

The Consulting Committee has confirmed its interest in pursuing collaboration based on the work and results of the *HR Strategies* project. Two regional themes were chosen:

- ▶ **Recruitment of human resources – Acting on: HOW TO**
 Understanding and acting on factors that impact on the recruitment of bilingual human resources
 Developing strategies to increase capacity and facilitate the recruitment of bilingual human resources
- ▶ **The business case – Acting on: WHY?**
 Developing a business case for FLS, in order support awareness at all levels

“When FLS are not available, specific mechanisms such as French health navigators, formal partnership agreements between establishments, etc. should be created to ensure coordination and access to FLS.” – Interview participant

A work plan will be developed with suggested actions and regional themes, in order to lay out the next steps as well as the sources of potential financing.

Project Impact

The project demonstrated that the *Réseau, Rifssso* and the Entities are positively invested in collaborating in order to obtain global improvement of FLS in the Central, South-West regions of Ontario. Conceptual models, best practices emerging from interview and literature review will also serve as basis for further discussions.

Some best practices highlighted in the project have already attracted interest from organizations within our region as well as in other parts of Ontario.