

# REPORT

Yukon Delegation

## French Health Mission - Northern Ontario

December 6-8, 2016



## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to report on the activities and findings of the members of the Yukon delegation led by the Francophone Health Network during the good practices' tour held December 6-8, 2016 in the Thunder Bay and Sudbury area of Northern Ontario.

## Objectives of the mission

In order to develop a common understanding and foundation to provide access to health services in French in the Yukon, the Francophone Health Network decided to organize an exploratory mission that aims to:

- Become acquainted with French language health services' good practices in a minority setting, as identified by the partners and the Société santé en français (SSF) network.
- Meet with the Health and Social Services planning agencies to see how they **organize the French language services** in their regions.
- Meet with organizations within the Francophone community to find out the role they play in the **planning and organization** of services.
- Meet with service provider organizations (hospital and community health center) to see how they organize service delivery to the Northern Ontario Francophone community.
- Identify **findings** that describe how these planning, organizing and service delivery models could be adapted to the Yukon.

## The delegation

Hubert Gauthier	Consultant and mission leader
Régis St-Pierre	President, Francophone Health Network
Sandra St-Laurent	Director, Francophone Health Network
Raquel B. Of Queiroz	Registered Nurse Association / Health and Social Services
Sheila Thompson	Director, Yukon Department of Health and Social Services <sup>i</sup> Replaced by Julie Ménard due to an impediment

## Summary program of the mission

**Monday, December 5th** (travel day, departure from Whitehorse to Thunder Bay)

### Tuesday, December 6th (Thunder Bay)

8:30am	Meeting of the delegation members for update
10am	Meeting with L'Accueil Francophone de Thunder Bay (interpretation-navigation) - Angèle Brunelle, Director
1pm	Meeting with management and representatives of Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Center's French language services. (Thunder Bay regional Health Sciences Center) – Jean Bartowiak, Director General of Thunder Bay Hospital
3pm	Meeting with the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario at the Francophone Center - Diane Quintas, Executive Director
4:30pm	Delegation caucus to assess the day

### Wednesday December 7th, 2016 (Sudbury)

7:05am	Departure for Sudbury via Bearskin Airlines
10:15am	Meeting at the Greater Sudbury Community Health Center. Meeting with Mr. Denis Constantineau of the Community Health Center.
1pm	Meeting at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) Meeting with Danielle Barbeau Rodrigue
3pm	Travel to the offices of LHIN (health planning entity). Meeting with Mrs. Monique Lapalme of the Local Health Integration Network.
5pm	Delegation caucus to assess the day

**Thursday, December 8th** (return trip to Whitehorse)

## The meetings

**L'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay** Highlights of the Director General's presentation<sup>1</sup>. L'Accueil francophone's areas of focus:

- **Services:** Interpretation, navigation<sup>2</sup>, referrals and consultations on health services in French **at the hospital but also in non acute care settings** (pharmacy, social services, etc).
- **Representation:** To promote, facilitate and plan for the efficient delivery of French language health services, by utilizing privileged strategies of representation, consultation and active participation.
- **Special projects:** To work independently or in collaboration with other organizations towards the creation of various health-related projects in order to maximize available resources.

L'Accueil francophone's funding

- Funding provided mostly by the French Language Services Branch of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.
- All other projects are funded by a variety of available financial sources, for example: The Trillium Foundation, Health Canada, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, New Horizons, Canada-Ontario Agreement.

## Key Points

1. **Communication, including written and spoken language, are skills** that ensures quality, French language health services
2. The interpretation-navigation service is more than just translation, it requires vocational training (medical terminology, ethics, confidentiality, vulnerable person)
3. The interpretation-navigation service is a basic service which demonstrate the need for services in French and the willingness of the institutions to provide quality services
4. An organization officially recognized and financed by the government is an essential tool in the chains of healthcare services in French
5. Connecting with the community is very important.
6. Healthcare professionals' perception of L'Accueil is excellent.
7. Despite their small numbers, (2.8% in Thunder Bay and 4% in the greater Northern area) L'Accueil francophone has demonstrated its impact on health services in French.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Annex II.

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes referred to as "navigator" in English.

## Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Center (TBRHSC)

We met with hospital's senior management as well as members of the board of directors. In addition, members of the Comité des affaires francophones (Francophone Affairs Committee) presented the actions as well as challenges they face. We ended our visit with a tour of some of the Hospital's departments (emergency, oncology, etc).

### Services Provided

TBRHSC is a specialized and advanced healthcare facility for short term care, who serves the entire greater region of Ontario's Near North.

### French Language Services

We noted TBRHSC's significant commitment towards the French-speaking community. To that effect, the hospital designated 290 positions and to this date has filled approximately 70 of them. Recruiting challenges are very significant and great efforts are being deployed to reach that objective. It should be noted that the hospital also sponsors an internal project on active offer. L'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay's services are sometimes used to support French-Speaking patients in hospital facilities. The challenge is to make this service known to all departments.



### Key Points

1. Bonds with the region's French-Speaking community are strong and useful
2. French language services planning is essential
3. Board of Directors and senior management's commitment is an important element of success and having a francophone representation on the Board is key
4. Recruitment of bilingual staff is an ongoing challenge
5. The committee for French services (at the staff level) helps to better identify the needs, to understand and engage within the active offer program in healthcare
6. French services progress assessment and accountability are other essential elements

## Le Réseau du mieux-être francophone du nord de l'Ontario and regional planning body

The mandate of the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario, like other French services networks in Canada, is to ensure a continuum of healthcare services in French in order to meet the needs. Since the network is a member of the Société santé en français, and one of Ontario's three networks, it is partially funded by SSF/Health Canada, but not exclusively given its planning responsibilities with the regional LHIN (see Annex III for the presentation).

### Planning Body

A few years ago, in 2006, the network became the planning body for the Northern Ontario LHIN<sup>3</sup> and in doing so acquired important responsibilities with regards to planning French language health services for its area.

#### The network's roles are:

- Connecting with provincial government authorities (planning, direction, etc)
- Connecting with the majority community to help them understand the issues and importance of French language services in healthcare
- Connecting with the French-speaking community to ensure services provided meet the needs

### Key Points

1. Importance of having a relationship with the French-speaking community
2. Importance of having a good understanding of the community's needs with supporting data
3. Importance of healthcare professionals working together to find accessible and applicable solutions
4. Importance of implementing a clear process to ensure provision of services to the French-speaking community
5. Importance of securing financial resources to execute the work
6. Importance of having institutional leaders "buy-in" at the highest level
7. Recognition of the network's expertise to bridge the gap between needs and service planning

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<sup>3</sup> LHIN local health integration networks (Réseaux locaux d'intégration des services de santé)



## Sudbury Community Health Center

In addition to the basic services provided by most of the community health centers, Sudbury distinguishes itself by establishing and maintaining a significant connection with Sudbury's French-speaking community as all services are available in French and aimed at the French community (although bilingual families are welcome). Indeed, the center serves as a community gathering place which includes many aspects of the community. For example, we noted cultural and arts sessions, community meals, seniors' social gatherings to break down isolation, cooking workshops, plays depicting health promotion themes, etc.

Part of the discussion focused on the center's mode of governance as well as triage challenges faced when the center opened (how to prioritize French-speaking and exogamous families).

The Center focuses mostly on social factors **determinant of health** to guide its actions and programs.

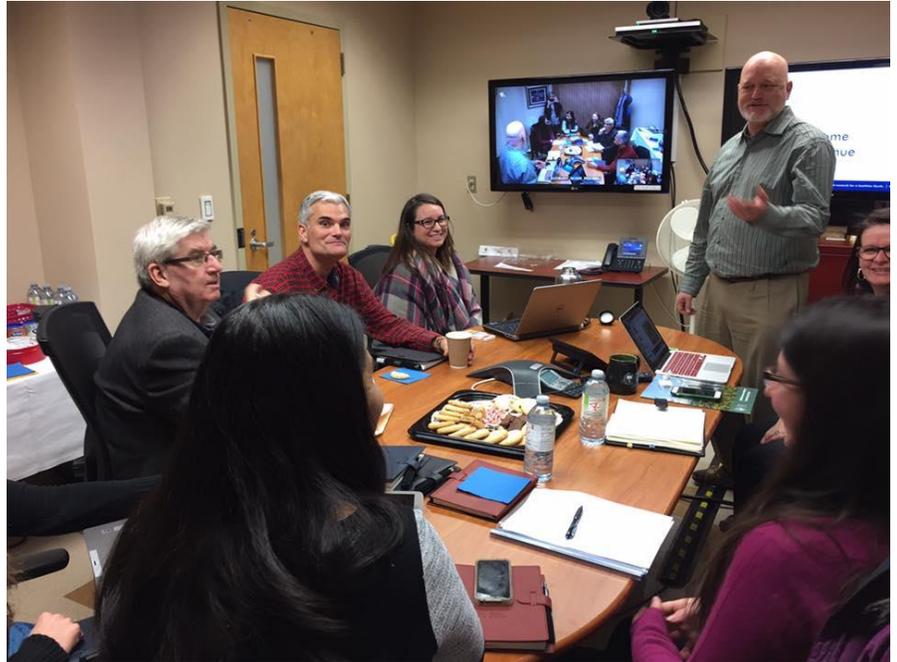


### Key Points

1. Importance of connecting with the community
2. Importance of implementing a strong and committed Board of directors
3. Importance of having one or two champions for the implementation of such a center
4. Importance of recruiting professionals who support, from the start, the center's mission and values while providing services, which sets the tone to the future of the entire organization
5. Importance of developing accessibility criteria supporting French-speaking citizens (and their family) to ensure their needs are met first
6. Importance of connecting with the community to improve services to Francophones.
7. Importance of taking steps to ensure confidentiality within the French-speaking community
8. Importance, in the long term, of having a viable funding model
9. French-speaking governance (leadership) makes a difference

## Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM)

School's mission includes the education of Northern Ontario's doctors with a focus on remote areas, as well as Aboriginal and French-speaking populations. Representatives from the school introduced their programs, selection criteria for family practice students and initiatives being developed for remote areas. Their experience illustrates the need to educate young people from an early age. To do this, they organize a summer camp to allow high school students to familiarize themselves with the different health professions. Trained health professionals also have clinical training in an Aboriginal environment.



Bilingualism is valued and the medical training program's selection process favors French-speaking candidates. Partnerships to reserve places in medical training as well as summer camps are being tested for remote areas located outside of the province (currently: Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories).



### Key Points

1. Need to raise awareness among young people from an early age
2. Willingness to enter a potential agreement with the Yukon aimed at improving access to doctors (through internships, training, etc)
3. Possibility to reserve spots at the summer camp for Yukon youth

## Réseau local d'intégration de la santé et des services sociaux (Local Health Integration Network- LHIN)

LHIN is a para-governmental organization whose mandate is to plan, organize, fund, and evaluate health and social services on its territory.

LHIN works closely with the Northern Ontario Health and Well-being Network (member of SSF) regarding all the work involved in planning healthcare services in French. Therefore, with regards to the needs of the region's French-speaking people, the network plays the role of “planning body” for LHIN for that whole area.



### Key Points

1. Need for the Network and planning body (LHIN) to work closely together to develop appropriate services meeting the needs of the region's population while being part of the range of services offered to the greater area
2. Importance of LHIN working according to the needs of the community and to be very close to the community
3. With respect to services in French, we are told that communication should come from the top of the pyramid, to provide more credibility to those in charge of implementing services (regional, local levels). Requires a strong mandate.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The trip was very instructive for all partners and helped identify winning conditions to plan and implement health services in French in a minority / remote setting.

Despite their small numbers, examples of Northern Franco-Ontarians show that much can be done and that these services have a positive impact on the health of minority communities.

During the visits, discussions among partners indicated that Northern Ontario and Yukon Territory had a lot in common, particularly in terms of populations and the difficulty to intervene in remote areas with limited resources. It is therefore quite realistic to imagine that practices listed here could inspire the development of French language health services in the Yukon. They help us identify the following winning conditions:

### Winning Conditions

#### In terms of awareness and strategic positioning

Acknowledge that language is a skill like any other health professionals' technical competency
Develop and promote the underlying values behind the development and implementation of French language health services
Importance of awareness all the way to the upper level of the organization
Recognize that a community health centre is much more than a "medical clinic". It's a way to break down isolation, to promote healthy lifestyles, etc.
Realize that the use of interpretation-support service must be done in a professional manner to reduce the risk of error. The interpretation-navigation model is a model with over 30 years of experience in Northern Ontario which seems to better meet the needs than a simple interpretation service.

## Winning Conditions (continued)

### In terms of planning

Identify the needs of the French-speaking population and develop programs to meet those needs.
Access reliable data that can be shared and used by all partners
Develop services in collaboration with the community
Base our actions on determinants of health
Establish a clear process to attain tangible results and provide mechanisms to ensure accountability
Develop procedures, programs and campaigns that question and promote participation within the French-speaking community
Recognize that the execution of projects require resources
Allow enough time to define governance

### In terms of partnerships and engagement

Create and maintain working groups or advisory groups as needed to allow the Government to work closely with the minority Francophone community
Identify and surround yourself with people who share and promote these values (members of Board of Directors, human resources providing those services, managers, etc).
Recruit champions to advance projects whether they are within the community, institutions

## Next steps

Here are a few courses of action for partners that arose from the tour:

Circulate the recommendations of this report
Join the Canadian Association of Community Health Centers
Explore the idea of recognizing PCS network as the planning body for health services in French in the Yukon and as a collaborator of MSAS
Identify the funding available to undertake a feasibility study for a bilingual health center
Create a community-government working committee for the Yukon Bilingual Health Center project
Explore a potential partnership with L'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay in order to implement an interpretation-navigation services for healthcare in the Yukon; Promote MEDinterpret (app)
Establish an agreement with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (training, internships, summer camps).

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## **ANNEX II**

### **L'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay**

See presentation attached (pdf)

(French/English)

## **ANNEX III**

### **Le Réseau pour le mieux-être et la santé du Nord de l'Ontario (et instance de planification locale pour les services en français)**

See presentation attached (pdf) (English)