



News Release

First health care agency in the Kingston area designated under the *French Language Services Act*

For immediate release

Kingston / Ottawa, November 15, 2021 – The **French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario** (“the *Réseau*”) and **VON** (Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada – Ontario Branch) are pleased to announce a major step forward for French language health services in South Eastern Ontario: VON’s Kingston site was recently partially designated under Ontario’s *French Language Services Act*.

This means that the following programs will henceforth be offered in French in the Kingston area:

- Assisted Living Services
- Meals Delivery
- Homemaking
- Congregate Dining

The designation of VON is an important milestone: this is the first time a health care agency has been designated in the Kingston area.

Becoming designated under the *French Language Services Act* is a long-term endeavour as designated health service providers must carefully and fully develop and structure their French language services.

Currently, designated health care agencies must comply with 34 requirements that ensure they have the capacity to provide French language services that are available at all times, offered in an equitable fashion, and equivalent to the quality of services offered in English. Designated agencies must also submit a statement of compliance every three years to



demonstrate that they still meet designation requirements. As legal recognition, designation is rather like a seal of quality for French language health services.

Quotations:

“We are proud that VON’s Kingston site is the first designated health care organization in Kingston. As a partner and corporate member of the *Réseau*, this designation will enhance access to exceptional home and community care through VON to Francophone clients and their families in the Kingston area.” – **Jo-Anne Poirier, President and Chief Executive Officer, VON Canada**

“The *Réseau* would like to congratulate VON on the scope of the work accomplished. This excellent news for the local community, which will henceforth be able to count on receiving home care in French! Access to care in French is a fundamental issue for us: when we are sick, we are not bilingual. And as we all know, miscommunication can lead to complications. French language services are therefore a factor in the quality and safety of care for Francophone patients.” – **Jacinthe Desaulniers, Chief Executive Officer, French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario**

To learn more about designation and the benefits it offers the Francophone community, please consult the *Réseau*’s [FAQs on designation under the *French Language Services Act*](#).

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