



Réseau des services
de santé en français
de l'Est de l'Ontario

News Release

IMPROVING ACCESS TO FRENCH-LANGUAGE HEALTH SERVICES IN SOUTH EASTERN ONTARIO THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING

For immediate release

Kingston, October 20, 2017 – Over a hundred healthcare and social and community service professionals, executives, managers and local system planners took part in Kingston's first **French-Language Health Services Capacity Building Day**. This training day, which aimed to promote French-language services in South Eastern Ontario and to enhance patient-centered care, was presented by the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario (the *Réseau*), as part of the Salon Santé Kingston.

With over 10 workshops tailored to professionals and health agencies in minority language situations, this bilingual event focused on current issues pertaining to French-language services, such as: active offer, language as a factor in quality of care and equity, the Francophone patient's perspective, hiring bilingual human resources, and supporting designation under Ontario's *French Language Services Act* as a mechanism for maintaining a permanent and guaranteed offer of French-language health services.

Participants had the opportunity to hear great keynote speakers, such as **Tim Hadwen**, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health System Accountability, Performance and French Language Services Division (Ministry of Health and Long Term Care), **Paul Huras**, Chief Executive Officer, South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), and **Dr. Jeffrey Turnbull**, Chief, Clinical Quality, Health Quality Ontario.

For **Jacinthe Desaulniers**, Chief Executive Officer of the Réseau, this Capacity Building Day's first goal was to support agencies looking to consolidate their provision of French-language services: *"French-language health services are crucial for Francophone patients. When we are ill, we are not bilingual. Access to health services in one's mother tongue ensures safety and quality of care. This is why the Réseau fosters collective accountability and collaborative ties with the health care system. We are here to support the LHIN and health providers who are looking to develop or improve their offer of French-language services. There is currently a will to enhance French-language health services, as is shown by the attendance to this event."*

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The Kingston Health Sciences Centre is one of the agencies who took part in this Capacity Building Day. As a Réseau corporate member and an agency working toward designation under the *FLSA*, the Kingston Health Sciences Centre has, these past few years, undertaken many steps to improve its offer of French-language services: “*Our organization is constantly looking to improve patient experience. We are happy to work with the Réseau to support access to high-quality patient-centered care for Francophone patients*”, explains **Elizabeth Bardon**, Vice President Missions, Strategy and Communications, at the Kingston Health Sciences Centre.

The full program for the Salon Santé Kingston 2017 is available online: salonsantekingston.ca

The Réseau is a Francophone organization that engages the Francophone community in all its diversity and the healthcare community to improve the active offer and the access to a continuum of quality health care services in French.

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