



December 14, 2020

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

Mr. Renato Discenza
Regional Transitional Lead
Ontario Health Region - East
4200 Labelle Street, Suite 100
Ottawa ON K1J 1J8

Dear Mr. Discenza

Re: Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) serving designated areas: a recommendation for their identification for the provision of French Language Health Services (FLHS)

We are pleased to attach our official recommendation for the identification of the following OHTs which serve a designated area:

OHTs	Designated area	Entité
Scarborough OHT	City of Toronto	Entité 4
Ottawa Health Team	City of Ottawa	RSSFÉ
Ottawa East Health Team	Champlain *	RSSFÉ
Kids Come First	Champlain**	RSSFÉ
Frontenac Lennox & Addington OHT	City of Kingston	RSSFÉ

The Government of Ontario and the Ministry of Health have proposed a critical transformation from the current state to a mature health system that can:

- Provide a comprehensive and coordinated continuum of care for a specific population in a geographic region; and
- Provide patients with 24-hour access to the health care system's coordination and navigation services and ensure smooth transitions throughout their care journey.

*Champlain: City of Ottawa – all and the five counties of Eastern Ontario (Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry)

**Champlain: City of Ottawa – all, the five counties of Eastern Ontario (Prescott, Russell, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry), and Renfrew County (City of Pembroke and Townships of Stafford and Westmeath)



Mr. Renato Discenza
December 14, 2020
Page 2

OHTs will have an incredibly powerful impact on the health and well-being of the communities they serve, including members of the Francophone community. The Ministry of Health has made it clear that OHTs must demonstrate that they respect the role of Francophones in the planning, design, delivery, and evaluation of services for these communities.

Please see the attached background document (Appendix 1) supporting our recommendation.

We thank you for taking our recommendation into consideration and remain at your disposal should you have any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

Jacinthe Desaulniers
President & Chief Executive Officer
Réseau des services de santé en français de L'Est
de l'Ontario
South East, Champlain

Estelle Duchon
Executive Director
Entité 4
Central, Central East, North Simcoe Muskoka

c. c. Stewart Sutley, Vice-President, Central East LHIN
Farrah Hirji, Director, Central East LHIN
Cynthia Martineau, Vice-President, South East LHIN
Deb Goulden, Director, South East LHIN,
Darryl Tooley, Director, South East LHIN
James Fahey, Vice-President, Champlain LHIN
Marc Bourgeois, Director, Champlain LHIN
Lise Racicot, Coordinator, Champlain LHIN
Lisa Gotell, Director, Entité 4
Arlynn Bélizaire, Director, RSSFE

att.



Appendix 1

Identification of Ontario Health Teams serving designated areas for the provision of French Language Health Services

Background

More than 622,000 Francophones call Ontario home, and they represent the largest French-speaking community in Canada outside of Quebec¹. Francophones face the same challenges in navigating and accessing health services as Ontarians at large, but with additional obstacles: the lack of services in French and the difficulty to identify what services are available in French.

The Ontario Health Team (OHT) model encourages providers to improve the health of an entire population, reducing disparities among different population groups. As part of this approach, OHTs will be enabled to locally redesign care in ways that best meet the needs of the diverse communities they serve. In particular, creating opportunities to improve care for Francophones, and other population groups in Ontario. As part of the approval process, OHTs were required to describe how they have and will continue to engage francophone communities in service planning, design, delivery, and evaluation and how they will improve care for francophone communities.

Ontario Health Teams are groups of providers and organizations that are clinically and fiscally accountable for delivering a full and coordinated continuum of care to a define geographic population.

(Source: http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht/docs/guidance_doc_en.pdf)

In order to complete their application, many OHTs drew on the assets and resources developed by health-system partners; including the French Language Health Planning Entities (FLHPE), often referred to as Entités. The Entités are mandated to improve access to French Language Health Services (FLHS) in Ontario as described by the Ministry of Health's Guide to Requirements and Obligations Relating to French Language Health Services (2017 – under review). Providing care in the patient's official language is an integral part of a health system based on compassion and inclusiveness.

¹ *As per the Inclusive Definition of Francophones (IDF): Francophones are “persons whose mother tongue is French, plus those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English but have a particular knowledge of French as an Official Language and use French at home.” (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/profile-francophone-population-ontario-2016#section-0>)



Recommendation

In order to assist OHTs in meeting the Ministry's commitment of ensuring Francophone communities have equitable access to health care services:

- Entité 4 is recommending that Scarborough OHT serving the designated area of the City of Toronto become identified for the provision of FLHS
- The Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario is recommending that:
 - The Ottawa OHT serving the designated area of the City of Ottawa become identified for the provision of FLHS;
 - The Ottawa East OHT serving the designated areas of the City of Ottawa and parts of the five counties of Eastern Ontario become identified for the provision of FLHS;
 - The Kids Come First OHT serving the designated area of Champlain become identified for the provision of FLHS;
 - The Frontenac Lennox and Addington OHT serving the designated area of the City of Kingston become identified for the provision of FLHS

Entité 4 and RSSFE also recommend that additional OHTs should be identified as they are selected by the Ministry of Health when they serve a designated area under the French Language Services Act.

French Designated Areas in Ontario

Presently, there are [26 designated areas](#) across the province. For an area to be designated, at least 10 per cent of the population must be Francophone. In urban centres the Francophone population must number at least 5,000 individuals. Designation of an area under *French Language Services Act, 1990* (FLSA) in Ontario gives a community the right to receive services in French from the provincial government. Currently, more than 80 per cent of Ontario's Francophones are in one of the 26 designated areas.²

What is identification?

After the adoption of the *FLSA*, the Ministry of Health, in partnership with the former District Health Councils, undertook an extensive planning exercise that identified over 300 transfer payment agencies to implement FLHS. Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) took on oversight for the identified Health Service Providers (HSPs) and, as health system planners, are responsible to build a basket of services available in French.³ With the enactment of the *People's Health Care Act*, this responsibility falls under Ontario Health regions.

This mechanism allows LHINs (Ontario Health) to plan FLHS to address the needs of Francophone communities and render the local health system more efficient.

² (Boileau, F. (2012) <https://csfontario.ca/en/rapports/ra1617/bilan/services-directs-communaute/7-5-enjeux-courants/designation-des-regions>)

³ Identifying Health Service Providers to Provide Services in French – A Guide for LHINs- August 2015



Currently, Ontario Health regions base the need to identify HSPs for FLHS based on criteria set out in the guide *Identifying Health Service Providers to Provide Services in French*⁴:

- Health needs of Francophone populations
- Demographic data
- Where Francophones live in relation to location of HSPs
- Accessibility of services
- Gaps in the French Language health service continuum

When only one HSP provides a service, what we call **a unique service**, the HSP is **automatically identified** to provide FLHS.

Additionally, when the catchment area of an HSP includes areas in other LHINs, what we call **a regional or provincial service**, the HSP is automatically identified to provide FLHS.

As OHTs take on responsibility for the provision of a comprehensive and coordinated continuum of care, the criteria for identifying HSPs should then apply for the identification of OHTs serving designated areas. The OHTs will be responsible for providing navigation and care coordination of services for a geographic area.

These navigation and care coordination services will be unique and for this reason should be identified for FLHS.

Identification of OHTs for FLHS

With an identification for FLHS, OHTs will start working to meet the requirements for designation under the FLSA to improve FLHS delivery and incorporate a systematic, sustainable approach to enhancing the Francophone patient experience across the continuum of care.

The identification process for OHTs does not change the fact that HSPs and services that are already identified or designated will remain identified or designated under the French Language Services Act.

Identified OHTs would also have access to translation services and the French language training reimbursement program to assist in better meeting the needs of the Francophone population.

Roles and Responsibilities of Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health in the Identification Process

- Notify OHTs of their identification
- List current identified and designated HSPs and services (this includes home and community care services) and ensure they remain designated within the OHT model
- Include FLHS requirements for identified OHTs in accountability documents
- Within OHT reporting, include FLHS indicators within performance measures across each of the objectives outlined in the quadruple aim

Roles and Responsibility of the Entités

⁴ Identifying Health Service Providers to Provide Services in French – A Guide for LHINs- August 2015



- Raise awareness and educate providers on active offer of French language service
- Assist identified OHTs in:
 - Developing a community engagement plan that includes Francophone representation on committees and consultations
 - Identifying FLHS gaps and extending partnerships for care pathways covering a full continuum of services, facilitating system navigation and care coordination for Francophones
 - Planning for the delivery of health services including patient identification and referral pathways
- Actively participate at OHT planning tables to bring a francophone perspective

Roles and Responsibility of the OHTs

- State shared commitment to serve Francophone populations, implement an active offer of FLHS collaborate with FLHPEs in foundational documents
- Develop a plan outlining how navigation, case management, care coordination and other priority services are available in French
- Identify Francophone patients using the two [questions recommended](#) by FLHPEs
- Develop bilingual visual identity and communications to the public, including the OHT website
- Work towards meeting requirements for designation

The anticipated outcomes of implementing these measures include (but are not limited to) increasing:

- OHT's ability to analyze and *understand the health needs of Francophone individuals and communities*
- OHT's ability to *organize care to meet the needs* of the Francophone communities they serve
- Utilization of French language services is increased and access to *bilingual care coordination and navigation services* will improve *care transitions* across OHT partners
- ***Equitable access to health care services in an official language***

Identifying OHTs for the provision of FLHS when they serve a designated area would be a first step to respecting the role of Francophones in the planning, design, delivery, and evaluation of services for the community and clearly states the Ministry's and Ontario Health's expectations with respect to French Language Health Services.