

# Refer clients who are more comfortable receiving their services in French to another provider who offers the same quality services in French



For a Francophone client, receiving services in a situation of language discordance can greatly affect the quality of care they receive, as well as their safety. This is why it is essential to ensure a referral to a provider who can offer health services in French.

When clients who are most comfortable receiving their health services in French are referred to another provider, it is important to:

- Ensure that they will receive the same quality of service in French as they would in English;
- Ensure that the client is not penalized time wise (e.g., increased waiting time for the service requested) or in terms of the effort to be expended (e.g., repeating all personal information with the new provider, or having to retell their entire health history).

To achieve this, health service providers need to identify and develop formal referral agreements with one or more partners who offer the same quality services in French. Here is a template of such an agreement provided by the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario.

## **BEST PRACTICES IN REFERRAL OF CLIENTS WHO ARE MOST COMFORTABLE RECEIVING THEIR SERVICES IN FRENCH**

### **FORMAL REFERRAL AGREEMENT**

#### **BETWEEN**

(Name of your agency)

#### **AND**

(Name of agency providing services in French)

#### **FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:**

(Program names)

The (Name of your agency) and (Name of agency providing services in French) agree to adhere to the following principles:

1. Inform all Francophone clients that they have the right to receive services of equal quality in English or in French;
2. Capture, from the very first contact, the mother tongue and official language of Canada in which the client is most comfortable receiving services by asking the following questions:
  - What is your mother tongue?
  - If your mother tongue is neither French nor English, in which of Canada's official languages are you most comfortable?
  - In which language are you most comfortable receiving your health services?
3. Inform all Francophone clients of the formal referral agreement with (Name of the agency providing services in French) for the services concerned;
4. *(Describe the measures taken to prevent the referral from penalizing the client with respect to waiting time);*
5. *(Describe the measures taken to prevent the referral from penalizing the customer in terms of the effort to receive the desired service).*

(Signature and date)

(Signature and date)

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