

Frequently Asked Questions



I do not offer services in French. Do I still need to implement the linguistic protocol?

Yes. The linguistic protocol applies to all health service providers and agencies. In order to offer safe, ethical and equitable health services to French-speaking minority communities, the protocol brings together a set of winning strategies. These include identifying, at first contact, the clients who are most comfortable receiving their health services in French, and matching them with health care professionals with French language skills, or referring them to providers or agencies that can provide care of equal quality in French. It is important clients feel comfortable requesting services from your agency in the official language of their choice. If you do not offer services in French, the linguistic protocol's winning strategies will help you put in place policies and procedures that will facilitate the referral of clients who wish to receive their health services in French to other agencies.

Is training available to support organizations in implementing the language protocol?

Yes. the French Language Services Network of Eastern Ontario will offer training on the implementation of the winning strategies (a major component of the linguistic protocol) to the governance and the person in charge of implementing the linguistic protocol for each organization. The training will provide a clear understanding of the context surrounding French-language health services and each of the winning strategies proposed in the linguistic protocol. The training will guide you in the development of an organization-specific work plan that will facilitate the implementation of the winning strategies.

In addition, a free training session on the Active Offer of French-language health services is offered virtually to all staff members of the Kids Come First Health Team partner providers/agencies. Its objectives are to raise awareness among people working or studying in the healthcare field of the benefit of the active offer of health services in French, to create awareness of the important role they can play in ensuring an improved offer of health services in French, and to promote the safety and quality of person-centered care.

Is there a community of practice where people can practice their French?

No. However, some educational institutions and community organizations offer language training to learn or improve your French language skills. For example, the [Alliance Française Ottawa](#) offers French as a second language courses for adults. The [Consortium national de formation en santé \(CNFS\)](#), which brings together sixteen colleges and universities in Canada's French-speaking communities, as well as four regional partners, offers health training programs. In addition, a [reimbursement program for French language training](#) is available to healthcare professionals working for a designated organization or for organizations in the process of obtaining their designation and want to improve their communication skills in French, have already reached the intermediate level, and work directly with patients, clients, families or members of the public in a healthcare environment.

What are the main steps in implementing the linguistic protocol?

1. Identify a staff member responsible for implementing the linguistic protocol:

This person is not required to be fluent in French, but should be in a position that puts him or her in direct contact with clients, employees and governance. This person must be sensitive to the importance of actively offering services in French and demonstrate leadership in this area.

2. Train staff members on the Active Offer of French language services:

Active offer training is provided virtually and free of charge by the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario. Several professional associations accredit this training as a source of professional development, and a certificate is issued upon completion.

3. Train the person responsible for implementing each organization's linguistic protocol and the governance:

Training is offered by the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario on Implementing winning strategies.

4. Develop an organization-specific work plan:

During the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario's training session on Implementing winning strategies, the governing body and the person responsible for implementing your organization's protocol will develop a work plan tailored to your organization to maximize your chances of success. This will enable you to determine whether you are already employing some of the winning strategies, define the order in which you wish to implement them, and how you will go about incorporating them into your organizational practices.

Are there other resources available to assist us?

Yes. The French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario provides a toolbox to support your activities in implementing each winning strategy.

Does the linguistic protocol replace our other obligations with regard to French-language services?

No. The [French Language Services Act](#) and the designation constitute the legal framework for French-language services in Ontario. All existing contractual obligations with your funders regarding French-language services remain in effect. The linguistic protocol brings together a set of actions that are essential to maintaining an active offer of French-language health services, but their implementation alone is insufficient to meet all the requirements of the designation with regard to French-language health services.

Where can I get more information?

The French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario has championed the winning strategies to help organizations meet the linguistic needs of Francophone clients, and worked closely with the Comité francophone of Kids Come First Health Team in the development of the linguistic protocol. The French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario is a Francophone organization that engages the community in all its diversity and the healthcare system to improve access to a continuum of quality health services actively offered in French. The province recognizes it as the French-language Health Services Planning Entity for Eastern and Southeastern Ontario since 2010. To this end, the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario advises local health authorities on all issues affecting the health of Francophones. As such, it can answer any questions you may have regarding the linguistic protocol. You can contact the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario by telephone at (613) 747-7431 or by e-mail at reseau@rssfe.on.ca.

Become a corporate member of the Réseau to help improve French-language health services

Corporate members are organizations that offer or plan to offer French-language health services in Eastern or Southeastern Ontario. In addition to receiving regular news about access to French-language health services in Eastern and Southeastern Ontario, corporate members have a unique opportunity to make their organization's point of view known, to participate in recommendations for improving French-language health services, and to support issues that will improve the health of Francophones. Each organization designates its representative, who is granted voting rights at the French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario's Annual General Meeting and the opportunity to sit on the Board of Directors. Membership is free of charge. Visit the [Corporate Members section](#) of our website to find out more and to complete the membership form.

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