

MEDIA RELEASE

North East LHIN Supports the Government's Announcement To Create New French Language Health Planning Entities

Monday – February 8, 2010 – The NE LHIN's *Interim French Language Health Services (FLHS) Planning Committee* has met to discuss how they could support Ontario's creation of at least five new French language planning entities. The province announced the new planning entities in January, 2010 to help provide Francophone communities with more input into the planning and integration of French language health services in local communities. These entities will be selected by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and will work with the province's 14 LHINs to ensure that the needs for Francophone communities are reflected in local health planning.

The Interim FLHS Planning Committee has been supporting Francophone health planning and needs at the regional level since the fall of 2008. This committee is comprised of 15 members, representing the community, academic institutions, health professionals/managers and advisory groups such as the Réseau francophone de santé du Nord de l'Ontario, Réseau de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario and the Northern Team of French Language Health Services of the ministry. Early on, the committee developed their objectives which included:

- Continuous improvement of quality, accessibility and integration of French language health services.
- Community empowerment and continued community engagement in order to impact the overall health system and improve health status.
- Accountability of health service providers to the community they serve.

Effective engagement with Francophone stakeholders is a high priority of the NE LHIN. One of the nine priorities outlined in the recently published **Integrated Health Service Plan** is: an *integrated approach to French Language Health Services*. (Please refer to attached *Backgrounder* for a full list of NE LHIN Francophone initiatives to date.

QUOTES:

Marc Dumont, NE LHIN Interim Vice Chair noted that, "The news of at least five planning entities is well received. The NE LHIN is poised to continue to move forward and support the minister with the establishment of these entities. We will also continue to support our Interim FLHS Planning Committee who has laid a strong foundation to continue to meet the health care needs of Francophones in North Eastern Ontario."



Yves Barbeau and Nicole Fournier, Co-chairs of the NE LHIN Interim FLHS Planning Committee stated, “With close to 24% of the NE LHIN region population being Francophone, the health care needs of the citizens served by our LHIN can be unique. Our job is to work closely with the NE LHIN and the ministry to ensure that local planning and integration of French language health services continues.”

QUICK FACTS

- According to the 2006 census, there are 125,030 Francophones in the NE LHIN region comprising 23.1% of the total population; the largest number of Francophone’s, by region, in the province.
- Under the provision of the Local Health System Integration Act, 2006, LHINs must respect the requirements of the French Language Services Act, 1986 (FLSA) in planning, funding and monitoring health care services in the local system.
- As Crown agencies and local health system planners, LHINs are accountable for ensuring access and accessibility to French language services in their geographic area.
- Within the NE LHIN region, all designated and identified health service providers are accountable for French language services as part of their service accountability agreement within the NE LHIN.

LEARN MORE

For more detailed information on this release please contact: Cynthia Stables, NE LHIN Senior Corporate Advisor, (705) 845-1887.

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Backgrounder

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Since its inception in 2007, the NE LHIN has been involved in ongoing French language health service activities with the *Northern Team of French Language Health Services* of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and community partners. A highlight of initiatives managed to date includes:

- Implementation of an *Interim French Language Health Service Planning Committee* (October, 2008).
- Development of a *French Language Health Service Policy* to assist the NE LHIN in meeting the health care needs and services of the Francophone population it serves.
- Implementation of a *French Language Service Report* across all health service providers. To date 97% of NE LHIN health service providers have completed their reports.
- Inclusion of a *French Language Service Equity Index* in all NE LHIN health service provider accountability agreements.
- Ongoing organization of Francophone community engagement activities (four events were held in 2009 alone, in conjunction with the development of the 2010-2013 *Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP)*).
- Engagement of the *Northern Team of French Language Health Services of the ministry* in the NE LHIN hospital accountability planning process.
- In collaboration with the *Northern Team of French Language Health Services of the ministry* and community partners, the NE LHIN developed a draft action plan outlining FLHS activities as they relate to the results-based planning process. The goals of this draft action plan are to: (1) improve quality, access and accessibility of FLHS; (2) develop an integrated approach to addressing French Language Health Services (FLHS); (3) maximize the contribution of the Francophones in community engagement activities; and (4) develop FLHS accountability mechanisms with the NE LHIN health service providers. The action plan will be reviewed and approved by the FLS planning entity.
- Development of a priority (one of nine) within the 2010-2013 *NE LHIN Integrated Health Service Plan* which focuses on an *integrated approach to French Language Health Services*.
- Creation of a *NE LHIN French Language Senior Advisor* position whose main responsibility will be to advise the NE LHIN CEO on how best to engage Francophones in NE LHIN-led initiatives and projects (planning for the position is underway).

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