How to engage Francophones when you don’t speak French!

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Today’s Webinar

Purpose:
• To build your capacity to meaningfully engage Francophone communities—even if you don’t speak French!

Objectives:
• Increase your knowledge of the Francophone contexts in Ontario
• Learn strategies to engage Francophones when you don’t speak French
• Learn what resources and supports are available to you
Why are we here?

Equity, inclusion and a sense of belonging contribute to a healthier population, better social cohesion, stronger communities and a more equitable and prosperous society.
Why is this important?

Clients receiving services in their language follow health advice and instructions more closely, have less need for hospital services and stay healthier.

They also have a stronger sense of community belonging – which is an indicator of individual AND community well-being.

Culture – of which language is a part – is one of the 12 Canadian Social Determinants of Health.

If you are trying to affect the health of your community (and the people within it) you must consider language and culture!
What do we want?

For an Anglophone or bilingual organization, partnerships with Francophones and the institutions representing them can be the key to successfully setting up services in French.

These partnerships will develop greater visibility in the community, increase demand for services in French, and build relationships based on trust.

For Francophones, these partnerships can lead to better access to quality services that are relevant to their needs and priorities, and are appreciated because they have contributed to their planning and implementation.
You CAN engage Francophones in your community work – even if you don’t speak French.
Three simple steps...

1. Be clear about your motives
2. Understand Francophone contexts
3. Find people to work with
Step 1: Be clear about your motives

- Define the objectives for the engagement strategy
- Identify what you will be doing with the results of the engagement process
Holding Consultations

• Do not consult unnecessarily!
• Set realistic attendance/participation objectives
• Remember it’s a first step and you are building your relationship with the community
Step 2: Understand the context

• Understand the Francophone context not only in Ontario but also in your region

• Where are the Francophone communities in your region?

• Understand the Francophone context/history in your own organization

Do your homework!
Understand the context
Not only the general context ...

• History: The French presence in Ontario dates back nearly 400 years.

• Legislation
  – French Language Services Act (FLSA), 1986
  – Local Health System Integration Act (LHSIA), 2006
“French has special status in Ontario under the **Constitution** and a number of provincial statutes... Over the last centuries, the latter have fought long and hard, with courage, determination and conviction, to gain political and legislative recognition of their rights. Furthermore, there is often a tendency to forget that French is a langue d’accueil or second language for many newcomers.”

François Boileau (2009)
Office of the French Language Services Commissioner
(LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO)
Understand the context
Not only in Ontario but in your region

Francophone community profile is really different in different regions of the province

Resources:
Trillium/OFA: Profile of Ontario’s Francophone community
Understand the context
There is not ONE francophone community

« I am from Russia, my mother tongue is Russain, I lived in France, I speak French, English and Russian at home and I live in Kingston. I am an Ontario Francophone »

« I am from Quebec, my mother tongue is French, I live in Toronto. I am an Ontario Francophone »

« I am Nigerian, my mother tongue is Haoussa, I married a woman from Quebec, I speak french at home and I live in Kingston. I am an Ontario Francophone »

« I am from Marocco, my mother tongue is Arabic, I speak french at home, I live in Windsor. I am an Ontario Francophone »
Understand the context
Where can you find the Francophones in your region?

• There are Francophones in every area of the province but Francophone neighbourhoods are rare
Understand the context
In your own organization

• What is your organization’s history with Francophones?

• Have your organization ever tried:
  – to engage the francophone community? how did it work?
  – to partner with francophone organizations?
  – to offer FLS? How were they received?
Step 3: Identify stakeholders

1. Within your own organisation
2. Build ties to existing networks, structures and initiatives
3. Establish trust relationship
4. Identify French speakers to liaise with Francophones
Identify stakeholders
1. Within your own organization

• Is there REALLY no one that speak French? Take the time to ask!

  BUT

• Be clear on what you expect from your Francophone staff
• Don’t overwhelm your Francophone staff
• If no one speaks French...
Identify stakeholders

2. Build ties on existing network and initiatives

• Connect with institutional support
  – Office of Francophone Affairs
  – French Language Services Commissioner
  – Ministries and Government French Services Coordinators
  – Regional Advisors and LHIN’s French Language Services Coordinator
  – Health planning entities
  – French Language Health Services Networks
2. Build ties on existing network and initiatives

- Establish partnerships with Francophone stakeholders
  - Francophone Community Health Centres
  - French school boards
  - Francophone community groups (Senior, faith, cultural, rec centres)
  - Settlement agencies

- Collaborate with other organizations planning to engage with Francophones

- Build on existing initiatives / events
Identify stakeholders

3. Establish trust relationship

As for any collaborative work, the factors of success remain the same. A partnership does not build itself. It takes work, resources, support mechanisms and time, as well as the necessary will and patience from all partners.

Define:

• What do you expect from your partners?
• What is your contribution?
Identify stakeholders
3. Establish trust relationship

• Creating a shared vision
• Having the right individuals at the table
• Creating a trust-based relationship and demonstrating openness and flexibility
• Working together in an approach toward consensus and consultation
• Establishing roles, responsibilities and expectations
• Respecting the mission of the organization, the limitations and expectations of each partner
• Sharing leadership, risks and responsibilities. Sharing power among equals within a group
• Joint investment in resources
• Encouraging commitment and permanence of the parties involved
• Celebrating and making known the success stories of the partnership
Identify stakeholders

4. Identify one person to liaise with Francophones

Even if YOU don’t speak French you need someone to liaise with Francophone communities and yes it helps if this person speaks French!
Putting the pieces together....
Avoiding common pitfalls

1. Avoid unnecessary consultations!
2. Demonstrate that decision-makers are involved in the process
3. Be clear on what’s going to be in French and in English
4. Don’t make it a one person project - Make all employees aware of your initiative (will show the organization commitment)
Keys for success

1. Understand the context and environment
2. Define the target groups according to the goals of community engagement
3. Start with the number of people you have
4. Involve Francophones in each step of the process (needs assessment, planning, consultation…)
5. Advertise in French in Francophone media
6. Take into account the different culture of the participant
7. Have a coordinator / facilitator who speaks fluent French
8. Report back to the Francophone community
9. Develop the capacity of your organization to be a viable potential partner on various francophone projects
Questions
Welcome to HC Link's Refreshed Website!

HC Link works with community groups, organizations, and partnerships to build healthy, vibrant communities across Ontario.

We offer consulting services, learning and networking events, and resources in both English and French. Our services are funded by the Government of Ontario and are provided free of charge where possible.

Policy Learning Community

Our policy learning community has moved to a new online platform with many new features and benefits.

Watch this video to learn more about us!
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Resources

- **Working Together with Francophones in Ontario: Part 1 - Understanding the Context** [HC Link](#) (5 pages, 235KB PDF, 2012)
- **Work Together With Francophones In Ontario: Understanding The Context And Using Promising Practices** [HC Link](#) (1.9MB PDF, 2011)
- **At a Glance: Community Engagement** [Lorna McCue, HC Link](#) (464KB PDF, 2011)
- **Engaging Francophone Communities** [Christiane Bouchard, Ontario's Heart Health Resource Centre](#) (636KB PDF, 2010)
Resources

• The French Language Services Act: An overview, Office of Francophone affairs (2010)

• Profile of Ontario’s Francophone community, Trillium Foundation / Office of Francophone affairs

• Annual Report Open to solutions, French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario (2009-2010)

• Annual Report Open to solutions, French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario (2007-2008)

• Making your organization bilingual, Heritage Canada Website

• Offering bilingual services in Francophone communities: Important elements to consider, OHPE Bulletin 582 (2008)