

WINNING STRATEGIES

for serving francophones



User Handbook

For the Implementation of
The Winning Strategies for Serving Francophones



Santé
Canada

Health
Canada

Réseau des services
de santé en français
de l'Est de l'Ontario



Kids Enfants
Come First | avant tout

archipel.

Équipe Santé Ontario | Ontario Health Team

Ottawa Valley
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



L'ÉQUIPE DE SANTÉ DE
la Vallée d'Ottawa

Great RIVER
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



ÉQUIPE SANTÉ
ONTARIO DU
Grand FLEUVE

**Ottawa West
Four Rivers**
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



FLAOHT
Frontenac Lennox & Addington
Ontario Health Team

ÉSOFLA
Équipe Santé Ontario de
Frontenac, Lennox et Addington



Lanark, Leeds & Grenville
Ontario Health Team
Working together to improve care in our communities



Hastings Prince Edward
Ontario Health Team

Ottawa Health Team
Équipe Santé Ottawa



WINNING STRATEGIES:

You're not bilingual when you're sick.

Communication is fundamental in healthcare relationships. When a person communicates in their mother tongue, it is much easier for them to explain their condition and experience as well as express their needs. It's also easier to understand and follow the prescribed treatment, which in turn has an impact on their recovery and health.

**Ce guide est aussi disponible en français
sous le titre :**

*Guide de l'utilisateur pour la mise en œuvre
des Stratégies gagnantes pour servir les Francophones*

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Background

The *Winning Strategies for Serving Francophones* project aims to improve the active provision of French-language services by equipping healthcare, social, and community service providers. By choosing to adopt one or all six easy-to-implement strategies, organizations can improve patient safety as well as the quality and efficiency of services for their Francophone clientele.

This project is led by Kids Come First and brings together eight Ontario Health Teams and the Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario (RSSFE).

The project stems from an initiative launched in 2022 by the Kids Come First Francophone Committee. The initiative aims at systematically offering patients the option of receiving services in French at first point of contact, and is based on a recommendation from the report:



Portrait of health service needs for Francophone children and youth and their families.

The six Winning Strategies

- are :
- ▶ Identify a champion
 - ▶ Promote awareness
 - ▶ Identify employees
 - ▶ Identify Francophones
 - ▶ Match or refer Francophones
 - ▶ Measure results

In Ontario, every organization is likely to receive requests for French services from people who are more comfortable receiving them in that language. Not all Francophones are bilingual, especially when it comes to expressing their emotions or symptoms when they are sick. They may often refrain from requesting service in French for fear that it will negatively affect their access to treatment options, wait times, or quality of services.





Who is this guide intended for?

This guide is intended for people who are responsible for implementing the *Winning Strategies for Serving Francophones* within their organization. It describes the six strategies and the different steps for implementing them.

In addition to this guide, you will find a library of tools and resources online at [Winning Strategies](#).

Did you know that adopting the Winning Strategies can also help your organization prepare an application for designation under the [French Language Services Act](#)?

Role of the board of directors and senior management

Although the implementation of Winning Strategies is part of an organization's day-to-day operations, as a board member, you have an important role to play in their adoption.

Best practices for directors of a board:

- Take the training entitled *The Active Offer of French Language Health Services* to fully understand the issues related to language barriers.
- Adopt policies that support best practices related to the Winning Strategies.
- Receive reports and monitor performance indicators for training on the The Active Offer of French Language Health Services.
- Ensure that your local francophone community is consulted regularly to better understand their needs in terms of French language health services.

What is the Active Offer in the context of health, social and community services?

The Active Offer is a set of services available in French and offered proactively without clients having to request them. Officially, the Active Offer includes nine measures prescribed by [Ontario Regulation 544/22](#) and applies to designated organizations and third parties providing publicly funded services in Ontario.

Even if your organization is not designated, improving the Active Offer enhances patient and client safety, and the quality of services.





The Active Offer of French Language Health Services online training



This training is intended for all staff members, volunteers, health professionals and physicians who work directly with clients. It was created by the [Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario](#) (Northern Ontario Francophone Wellness Network).

- Free training available online in French and English.
- Three modules for a total of approximately 3 hours to be completed at your own pace.
- Three additional modules for managers.
- Additional modules for different health sectors (mental health and addictions, primary care, immigration, long-term care).
- Certificate awarded to those who successfully complete the training.
- Professionals and leaders can earn professional development credits (Canadian College of Health Leaders, College of Family Physicians of Canada, and Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada).

Link to online training [The Active Offer of French Language Health Services: Why It Matters and Why Put It Into Practice.](#)

Identify a champion

A step by step approach for a successful implementation of your Winning Strategies.

Choose your champion. Champions are people in leadership positions who have the ability to influence and motivate your organization at all levels. This person will be responsible for selecting and implementing the winning strategies within your organization. They will also be responsible for ensuring their continuity. A champion doesn't have to be French-speaking to take on this role, but they do have to believe in the project. Francophiles can make excellent champions!



Identify a champion

A step by step approach for a successful implementation of your Winning Strategies.

Assess what your organization is already doing. Your organization may already have some of the Winning Strategies in place to serve your French-speaking clients. To find out, use the Organizational Self-Assessment Survey. It only takes about 10 minutes to complete and the results of this tool will guide you to the next steps. [Go to the online Organizational Self-Assessment Survey \(Microsoft Form\).](#)

Train your champion. Several training sessions for champions were offered during the active phase of the project. The training helps champions understand their role and ensure the successful implementation of the winning strategies. A recording of a training session is available online in the [Resources/Training](#) section.

Build your work plan. We can help you create a work plan for your organization through free, virtual coaching sessions. Please request this service by filling out our [online form](#).

Put your winning strategies into action. Using your work plan, the tools at your disposal, and free coaching from a French-language services expert, implementing the Winning Strategies will be simple and effective.

Promote organizational awareness on the value of the active offer

This strategy aims at promoting high-quality, safe and person-centred care by helping your staff understand the importance of their role in actively offering health services in French.

Here are the best practices that your various groups can use to implement this strategy.

Best practices for	Healthcare professionals and physicians	Managers and executives
Training on The Active Offer of French Language Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete modules 1 to 3 or the supplementary module specific to your healthcare sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete modules 1 to 3 or the complementary module specific to your healthcare sector. Ensure that all team members complete modules 1 to 3.
Policies and procedures (P&P)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop P&P that support staff awareness of the value of actively offering services in French. Promote awareness of P&P by including them in the employee handbook and employee orientation sessions.
Performance indicators and reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and monitor indicators related to staff training on the active offer. Report performance indicators to governance, as applicable.

To facilitate the implementation of the Winning Strategies, check out the tools available on our website in the [Resources/ Practical Tools](#) section.

Identify staff members with French language skills

This strategy will help your organization identify the language skills of your staff and teams, enabling you to better align them with the needs of your Francophone clientele.

Here are the best practices that your various groups can use to implement this strategy.

Best practices for	Healthcare professionals and physicians	Managers and executives
French language proficiency level (FLP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess your FLP level by completing a self-assessment and sending the results to your supervisor. Inform customers and colleagues of your FLP level with a bilingual voicemail message and email signature. Show your language skills by wearing a “I speak French” or “I am learning French” pin. Greet customers in both official languages when you do not know their language, for example by saying “Hello! Bonjour!” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that your employees self-assess their FLP every year by completing the form. Indicate the FLP level of staff members in their profiles. Organize data to match people’s language skills to job types and give managers access to this information. Ensure that employees display their FLP by wearing a pin and using a bilingual email signature and voicemail.
Policies and Procedures (P&P)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop P&P that support best practices related to identifying employees who have FLP. Promote awareness of P&P by incorporating them into the employee handbook and employee orientation sessions.
Performance indicators and reporting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and monitor performance indicators related to the identification of staff members who have FLP. Report on indicators to governance, as applicable.

To facilitate the implementation of the Winning Strategies, check out the tools available on our website in the [Resources/ Practical Tools](#) section.

Identify Francophones

This strategy will help your organization identify clients whose mother tongue is French or who are more comfortable receiving care and services in French.

You can improve the safety of care as well as the experience and outcomes of your Francophone patients and clients by reducing or eliminating language barriers.

Here are the best practices that your various groups can use to implement this strategy.

Best practices for	Healthcare professionals and physicians	Managers and executives
Welcoming clients and gathering information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet clients in both official languages when you do not know their language preference, for example by saying “Hello! Bonjour!” • Ask, upon first contact, about the client’s mother tongue and the language in which they are most comfortable receiving services, and record this information in their file. • Check which language your client is most comfortable with before beginning treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure registration forms collect information on the mother tongue and the language in which clients are most comfortable receiving services. • Ensure that all staff members collect the required information about clients’ language needs. • Give healthcare professionals access to clients’ language information.
Policies and Procedures (P&P)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop P&P that support the identification of Francophones. • Promote awareness of P&P by incorporating them into the employee handbook and employee orientation sessions.
Performance indicators and reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and monitor indicators related to the identification of Francophones. • Report performance indicators to governance, as applicable.

To facilitate the implementation of the Winning Strategies, check out the tools available on our website in the [Resources/ Practical Tools](#) section.

Matching Francophones

This strategy will enable your organization to equip your staff to match Francophone clients with individuals who have French language skills without those clients having to request it.

By ensuring that Francophones can receive services in the language they are most comfortable with, you improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of care. By reducing language barriers, you provide optimal and equitable care.

Here are the best practices that your various groups can use to implement this strategy.

Best practices for	Healthcare professionals and physicians	Managers and executives
Matching Francophones with professionals who have French language skills (FLS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify colleagues who have FLS and can help you serve Francophones. Inform your Francophone client of the steps you are taking to pair them with a professional who has FLS. Ask for assistance from a colleague who has FLS to help you serve the Francophone client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that a sufficient number of professionals with FLS are available on each shift. Ensure that pairings are made.
Policies and Procedures (P&P)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop P&P that support the matching of Francophones with staff who have FLS. Promote awareness of P&P by incorporating them into the employee handbook and employee orientation sessions.
Performance indicators and reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and monitor indicators regarding the number of francophones served in French. Report performance indicators to governance, as applicable.

To facilitate the implementation of the Winning Strategies, check out the tools available on our website in the [Resources/ Practical Tools](#) section.

Refer Francophones

This strategy will enable your organization to ensure that Francophones have access to the same quality of care when you are unable to provide care and services in French.

Here are the best practices that your various groups can use to implement this strategy.

Best practices for	Healthcare professionals and physicians	Managers and executives
Referral agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn about referral agreements developed with external partners who offer services of the same quality in French. Inform your clients when the required service is not available in French and refer them to a partner with whom a referral agreement has been established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish formal referral agreements with external partners for all your services that are not available in French and ensure that the services are of the same quality and have similar wait times. Ensure that your staff is aware of referral agreements developed with external partners who offer services of the same quality in French.
Policies and procedures (P&P)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop P&P that support external referrals for Francophones. Promote awareness of P&P by incorporating them into the employee handbook and employee orientation sessions.
Performance indicators and reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and monitor indicators for external referrals for services in French. Report performance indicators to governance, as applicable.

To facilitate the implementation of the Winning Strategies, check out the tools available on our website in the [Resources/ Practical Tools](#) section.

Measure results

This strategy will enable your organization to measure improvements in client experience and satisfaction. You will also be able to identify gaps and improve planning for French language services.

Here are the best practices that your various groups can use to implement this strategy.

Best practices for	Healthcare professionals and physicians	Managers and executives
Satisfaction survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Francophones to complete your organization’s customer satisfaction survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that questions regarding customer satisfaction with the quality and accessibility of services in French are included in all customer satisfaction surveys conducted by your organization.
Policies and Procedures (P&P)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop P&P that support the measurement of results for the Francophone population. Promote awareness of P&P by incorporating them into the employee handbook and employee orientation sessions.
Performance indicators and reports		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and monitor indicators of customer satisfaction with the quality and accessibility of French language services. Report performance indicators to governance, as applicable.

To facilitate the implementation of the Winning Strategies, check out the tools available on our website in the [Resources/ Practical Tools](#) section.

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