

H1N1 FLU PREVENTION CAMPAIGN: THE GOVERNMENT'S NEW COMMUNICATIONS IN FRENCH DIRECTIVE LEADS TO POSITIVE CHANGES

TORONTO, May 25, 2011 – The French Language Services Commissioner has released an investigation report on the serious communication errors made during the province's H1N1 flu prevention campaign in September 2009. The document, entitled *An Investigation Report regarding an English-only H1N1 flyer: From communication crash to communication coup*, outlines a situation that penalized Ontario's 600,000 Francophone residents by failing to provide them with information designed to protect their health.

After having analyzed a sequence of multiple errors, the report outlines the corrective measures taken by the Government of Ontario, including the adoption of a mandatory Communications in French Directive. This Directive, which takes into account the needs of Francophone citizens, has been in place over the past year and applies to all Ontario ministries and classified agencies.

QUOTE

"Following the adoption of this Directive, rather than declare victory and publish our report, we decided to take the time necessary to study its implementation. As a result, we've come to the conclusion that, one year after its adoption, this Directive and its implementation can be improved upon, as it is not fully understood by the government's communication teams," said Commissioner François Boileau.

"Indeed, despite certain improvements, we continue to receive complaints, particularly about Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) websites."

QUICK FACTS

- The new Communications in French Directive, which was adopted in May 2010, refers to a set of clear guidelines on the best practices to use when communicating with Francophone citizens.
- The Commissioner's investigation has revealed the poor integration of French-language services in the government's strategic and operational communications planning prior to adopting the new Communications in French Directive.
- The investigation report presents four recommendations made by the Commissioner aimed at improving government services for Francophones.

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This report can be accessed online at www.flsc.gov.on.ca in the PUBLICATIONS section.