

SPEAKER'S NOTES
for Commissioner François Boileau

Board Meeting
Association of Ontario Health Centres (AOHC)

Tuesday, September 16, 2013
2:30 p.m.

AOHC's Offices
Toronto, Ontario

50 minutes



PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

- Ms. Jocelyne Maxwell

Jocelyne Maxwell, Executive
Director, *Centre de santé
communautaire du Témiskaming*
and President, Association of
Ontario Health Centres (AOHC)

Adrianna Tetley, Executive
Director, Association of Ontario
Health Centres (AOHC)

- Ms. Adrianna Tetley
- All board members of the
AOHC.

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- It is an honour for me to be here today.
- Thank you to Jocelyne Maxwell for her invitation.



- I am aware that the AOHC “affirm[s] that [...] Francophone communities have distinct and specific histories, needs and constitutionally protected rights” in its own Health Equity Charter, as posted on your website.
- I am glad to go over a few of these very important aspects with you today.



- Before I start, I would like to do an overview of my presentation and the topics that I will be discussing:
 1. History of Francophones in Ontario;
 2. Quick overview of the OFLSC;
 3. French Language Health Planning Entities;
 4. Health sector related issues for Francophones and
Priorities in the health sector from my point of view;
 5. French Language Services Advisory Council to the
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.



- It has been almost 400 years that Francophones have been established in Ontario.
- The French were the first Europeans to unveil the economic resources of the territory that would become Ontario.
- In 1610, Étienne Brûlé is the first European explorer in the Huronie Area. He will be followed by Samuel de Champlain and others.
- The 18th and 19th century saw waves of French immigration coming to work on forestry, mines and railways.



- In 1910, the ACFÉO , the Canadian Education Association of Ontario, was founded (ACFÉO later became ACFO, and then AFO).
- After the Canadian confederation in 1867, Ontario experienced a period of Francophone immigration and prosperity due to railway construction and industrialization.
- In 1910, the ACFÉO, the French Canadian Education Association of Ontario, was founded (ACFÉO later became ACFO, and then AFO).



- In 1912, Regulation 17 made English the sole language of instruction in Ontario public schools, and provoked a conflict.
- It was believed at the time that the use of French in Ontario schools threatened the province's integrity as an Anglophone and Protestant enclave.
- By suppressing French public schools, Regulation 17 sparked a national controversy and did much to forge a Franco-Ontarian identity.
- By reacting forcefully, Franco-Ontarians sparked a major Canada-wide crisis that had an impact on the language rights of other minorities in Canada.
- The crisis abated in 1927 with the re-establishment of bilingual schools.
- In 1969, Ontario legislation authorized French-language schools at the elementary and secondary levels.



- More recently, from 1910 to 1960, the number of Franco-Ontarian institutions grew: the first *caisse populaire* in 1910, the daily newspaper *Le Droit* in 1913, French-language private radio and television networks in the 1950s.

- Then many different institutions: *Théâtre du Nouvel-Ontario*, Franco-Ontarian Festival, FESFO, FAFO, AJEFO.

- Creation of the French-Ontarian flag in 1975.



- In 1986, the Ontario legislature unanimously adopted the *French Language Services Act* (Bill 8), an act which guaranteed an individual's right to receive services in French from Government of Ontario ministries and agencies in designated areas across the province with significant numbers of Franco-Ontarian residents.
- Today, provincial government services are offered in French in 25 designated areas.
- French Ontario consolidated its institutional base with self-governance of TFO in 2006 and the creation of the OFLSC in 2007.



- Now let me talk we've talked about the establishment of the Francophone community, I would like to talk about my work and my Office.
- As French Language Services Commissioner, my mandate is to conduct independent investigations under the *French Language Services Act*, either in response to complaints or on my own initiative, to prepare reports on my investigations, and to monitor the progress made by government agencies in the delivery of French-language services in Ontario.



- Working independently of the Office of Francophone Affairs, the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner' primary roles are:
 - To listen to the Francophone population;
 - To receive and handle complaints and to follow up on them;
 - To increase the public service's awareness of the public's expectations;
 - To exercise its powers of investigation and to make recommendations with respect to the delivery of French-language services;
 - To advise the Minister and make recommendations to her.



- The Office of the French Language Services Commissioner works to ensure active, integrated delivery of French-language services in support of the development of the Francophone community and Ontarian society.
- Its mission is to ensure that the public receives high-quality French-language services from the Government of Ontario.
- It strongly encourages government ministries and agencies to proactively design policies and programs that are adapted to their Francophone clientele, notably through its power to make recommendations



- My office conducted an investigation on the French Language Health Services Planning in Ontario. I would like to go over the key recommendations made in this Special Report.

- Recommendation 1: The Commissioner recommends that, in the development and implementation of their health policies and social policies designed to improve the health of the population, the ministries and officials in the health care system take the defining characteristics of the Francophone community into account.

- Recommendation 2: The Commissioner recommends that the government and officials in the health system make access to French language health services a factor in the system's quality of service, efficacy and efficiency.



- Recommendation 3: The Commissioner recommends that the government develop and implement specific strategies, while involving the Francophone community, to promote the training, identification, recruitment, retention and mobilization of Francophone health human resources.
- Recommendation 4: The Commissioner recommends that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care amend the proposed regulation to make it consistent with the wording of the LHSIA and to ensure that it provides for true French language health planning entities for each LHIN or group of LHINs.
- Recommendation 5: The Commissioner recommends that principles of governance be developed in partnership with the Francophone community and that they be made public and submitted to a public consultation.



- Recommendation 6: The Commissioner recommends that greater emphasis be placed on identifying the specific needs of the Francophone population and that the performance measures and the results be validated by the target population and evaluated by an independent entity.
- Recommendation 7: The Commissioner recommends that the LHINs' organizational structures be modified in order to provide for the addition of a French-language services coordinator position within each LHIN. This position must be filled by a senior manager.
- Recommendation 8: The Commissioner recommends to the government that clear guidelines be issued to the LHINs about establishing a complaint procedure, as part of the accountability and performance evaluation measures, that is clear and easy-to-follow by any member of the public who feels that a service provider failed to provide adequate access to French language services or that the quality of such services was deficient.



- All this brings me to my next point about the French Language Health Planning Entities.
- On January 1, 2010, a new regulation under Section 16 of the *Local Health System Integration Act, 2006*, came into effect to support coordinated and effective engagement of French-speaking communities on French Language Health Services issues.
- This regulation outlines how the ministry is to select French language health planning entities to work with the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs).
- The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care selected two planning entities on June 30 and four on December 15, 2010.
- Each LHIN also now has a French-language services coordinator.



- One or more LHINs shall engage the French language health planning entities. The entities will advise the LHINs on:
 - the methods of engaging the French-speaking community in the area;
 - the health needs and priorities of the French-speaking community in the area, including the needs and priorities of diverse groups within that community;
 - the health services available to the French-speaking community in the area;
 - the identification and designation of health service providers for the provision of French language health services in the area;
 - the strategies to improve access to, accessibility of and integration of French language health services in the local health system; and
 - the planning for and integration of health services in the area.



- There are other health sector related issues for Francophones that need to be addressed which are priorities for our Office.
- Partnerships: Integrate partnerships in plans; improve communication between all organizations serving Francophone citizens, share human resources, etc.
- An availability of resources (know who offers the resource needed by a Francophone and where in the province + be able to refer the Francophone citizen in need of that resource to the proper organization).
- An active offer of French Language Services.



- I have elaborated our priorities in the health sectors in the 2012-2013 Annual Report, notably there need to be (1) consideration of the Francophone community's specific characteristics, (2) issues surrounding HIV/Aids sector and (3) regulated health professions.
- I will start by talking about the need for consideration of the Francophone community's specific characteristics.
- As part of its response to the first recommendation in the 2009 *Special Report on French Language Health Services Planning in Ontario*, the Ministry included funding for the *Réseau de recherche appliquée sur la santé des francophones de l'Ontario* (RRASFO) in the Applied Health Research Networks Initiative (AHRNI).



- The RRASFO's objective is to observe, measure, document and evaluate health conditions and access to health services for the Francophone population of Ontario.

- Though laudable, these efforts have not yet translated into the acquisition of reliable data for use by the LHINs in planning health services.

- All too often, the results of studies conducted by and for Francophones are not translated into French and are therefore not incorporated into the knowledge community.



- For example, there are still no data on the number of Franco-Ontarians who have diabetes.
- Similarly, there is no consensus on how to identify Francophones in the planning and delivery of health care services. The data of some agencies are still based on language spoken or language preference, while others, including the Commissioner's Office, want the Inclusive Definition of Francophone (IDF) to be used.
- The development of *Open Minds, Healthy Minds*, Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, is an example of how the Ministry is careful to consult the Francophone community but in some cases neglects to follow up with Francophone communities on how their feedback has been used. As a result, many in Ontario's Francophone communities feel wrongfully marginalized.



- There are also many issues when it comes to dealing with HIV/AIDS in the Francophone community.
- While the Ministry has maintained that organizations operating in the HIV/AIDS sector have no legal obligation to provide service in French (since they are not government agencies and do not provide services on the government's behalf), it has nevertheless taken a more active role to ensure that Francophones living with HIV have access to HIV-specific services in French.
- The Ministry has contributed to the funding of community organizations operating in the HIV/AIDS service sector to help them make their resources available in French and train their employees.
- In my view, the fact that consultations on the renewal of the provincial strategy on HIV/AIDS have been held in French is also promising. I am hopeful that the specific needs and characteristics of the Francophone community will be taken into account.



- Finally, a word on regulated health professions.
- Under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, Schedule 2, section 86, a person has the right to use French in all dealings with, in particular, the College of Nurses of Ontario.
- Despite this explicit provision, however, the College still seems to have difficulty complying with it, a recurring problem that the Commissioner raised in his 2008-2009 Annual Report and his 2009-2010 Annual Report.



- In 2012, a French-language health services provider asked the Commissioner's Office to intervene in the case of a Francophone nurse practitioner whom it had hired more than a year earlier but who had still not been able to obtain her licence to practise in Ontario.
- She had apparently waited more than seven months for the translation of her file alone, and each time she contacted the College, she was unable to obtain service in French.



- Before I conclude, I would like to touch on the French Language Health Services Advisory Council to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.
- The council provides advice to the Minister (Deb. Matthews) about health and service delivery issues related to francophone communities and priorities and strategies for the provincial strategic plan related to those communities.
- Council members represent the views of the French-speaking community, prepare reports, and analyze research and information for the purpose of bringing to the attention of the Minister critical issues emerging in the French-speaking community.



- The following organizations are prescribed for the purposes of appointing members to the French Language Health Services Advisory Council:

1. *Alliance des réseaux ontariens de santé en français*
2. *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO)*
3. *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario (AFMO)*
4. *Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario (FAFO)*
5. *Groupe francophone de l'Association des centres de santé de l'Ontario*
6. *Regroupement des intervenantes et intervenants francophones en santé et en services sociaux de l'Ontario (RIFSSSO)*
7. *Union Provinciale des Minorités Raciales et Ethnoculturelles Francophones de l'Ontario (UP-MREF)*

- Thank you for your time and attention.
- I look forward to answering you questions.
- Merci.



APENDICE A

Current Council members*:

1.	CHAIR	CARRIER-FRASER, MARIETTE	OTTAWA
2.	MEMBER	RIVARD, SYLVIE	SUDBURY
3.	MEMBER	ROY, JEAN	TORONTO
4.	MEMBER	DALLAIRE, CHRISTINE	OTTAWA
5.	MEMBER	BISSON, MARC JEAN	CORNWALL
6.	MEMBER	BRUNELLE, ANGÈLE	THUNDER BAY

*as of September 2012