

## Media Release

### The North West Local Health Integration Network and the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario Release the New Joint Action Plan on French Language Services

**Thunder Bay, June 24, 2016** - In celebration of the Francophone heritage and culture on this St. Jean Baptiste Day, the North West Local Health Integration Network (North West LHIN) and the *Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario (Réseau)* is pleased to release the French Language Services (FLS) Health Action Plan. The plan was developed in partnership with the North West Local Health Integration Network (North West LHIN), North East LHIN and the *Réseau*.

This new three-year plan incorporates the collaborative work between the two LHINs and the *Réseau* to: enhance care coordination and improve the patient experience; improve access to services in French and reduce inequities; and strengthen the sustainability of French Language Services by better leveraging technology.

The plan is well aligned with the North West LHIN's Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP) IV 2016-2019 and the *Réseau*'s strategic plan. It includes actions to:

- Implement activities related to an active offer of FLS;
- Improve the collection of data on Francophones to better inform planning activities; and
- Optimize access to FLS resources at the Integrated District networks (IDN level).

“It is important that Francophones be able to express themselves in their mother tongue, especially when they are not feeling well,” indicated Diane Quintas, Executive Director of the *Réseau*. “The collaborative partnership with the North West LHIN demonstrates the leadership and commitment of the partners in ensuring access to quality health services in French across the continuum of care.”

“We are pleased to be able to collaborate with the *Réseau* on a plan to enhance access to French Language Services in the North West,” said Laura Kokocinski, CEO of the North West LHIN. “This will enable us to explore how best we can meet the needs of Francophones in our area.”



*The active offer of French language services can make a difference for a person. The Mary Berglund Community Health Centre is able to ensure that Francophone patients have a better understanding of their health care by offering interpretation services by OTN through l'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay. (L to R): Chantal Bohémier, Réseau; Gloria Pronger, Mary Berglund Community Health Centre; Angèle Brunelle, Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay; Diane Soucy-Manaigre, Carrefour santé Ignace; Tracy Stanley, Mary Berglund Community Health Centre*

**Facts:**

- The largest proportion of Francophones in the North West live in the designated areas: District of Thunder Bay (Towns of Geraldton, Longlac and Marathon and the Townships of Manitouwadge, Beardmore, Nakina and Terrace Bay) and the Township of Ignace in the District of Kenora. We also find a concentration of Francophones in the communities of Red Lake and Thunder Bay.
- The Réseau and the North West LHIN have worked together, along with local health service providers, since 2012 to improve access to quality health services in French. This is the fifth joint action plan and the first to cover a three-year period.
- As part of the health services planning process, the Réseau works in partnership with the LHINs to better meet the needs and priorities of Francophones.
- The plan is available on the [Réseau website](#) or on the [North West LHIN website](#).

**For more information:**

Monique Rocheleau  
Associate Executive Director  
Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario  
Tel: 705-477-0160  
[mrocheleau@rmefno.ca](mailto:mrocheleau@rmefno.ca)

Karl Oczkowski  
Corporate Communications and Community Engagement Consultant  
North West LHIN  
Tel: (807) 684-9425 ext. 2024  
[Karl.Oczkowski@lhins.on.ca](mailto:Karl.Oczkowski@lhins.on.ca)