



**Equity and Inclusiveness in Health Services:
En français SVP!**

**2022-2023
Annual Report**



**LE RÉSEAU DU MIEUX-ÊTRE
FRANCOPHONE
DU NORD DE L'ONTARIO**

Table of Content

- 1 Message from the Chair
- 2 Message from the Executive Director
- 3 Strategic Planning
- 5 Cultivating and Enhancing Information and Data
- 8 Advising and Supporting the System
- 10 Results - activeoffertraining.ca
- 11 Developing, Leading and Evaluating Progress
- 13 Strategically Coordinating the Engagement
- 14 Informing Francophones

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Legend

aféséo: Association francophone à l'éducation et des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario

AFO: Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario

OHT: Ontario Health Teams

Réseau: Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario

SSF: Société Santé en français

OHN: Ontario Health North

Together we can go farther

I am delighted to present our annual report for this year, which highlights the achievements of the Réseau's team in line with the new 2022-2027 strategic plan. This plan highlights the need to ensure equitable access to a continuum of quality French-language health services. We are focusing on four strategic axes that promote strategies to ensure the financial, human and technological resources necessary to maintain and grow Northern Ontario's Francophone communities, in health.

This means that we seek to cultivate better data to support and develop a better health system for Francophones, adopt a strategic approach that aims to evolve community knowledge, evaluate the progress of our projects and interventions in support of priorities, and strategically coordinate the engagement and mobilization of Francophone partners and health system collaborators.

Our interventions with decision-makers support our ongoing efforts to ensure models of care that respond to the challenges faced by Francophones, namely the lack of a bilingual workforce, an aging population and equitable access to French language health services.

We are grateful for our many partners with whom we share a common understanding of the needs of Northern Ontario's diverse Francophone community and the health status of Francophones and their needs. Without them, it would not be possible to pursue and progress in our work.

I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and work of the Board of Directors, who have always been attentive to the needs of Francophones. A special thank you to the Réseau's Executive Director and her team for their continued support and commitment to the Francophonie.



Collin Bourgeois
Chair
Board of Director

Disrupted equity

This year, we have put considerable effort into developing an operational plan based on our new strategic plan that will guide our actions for the coming years. We are committed to promoting equitable, safe and culturally appropriate access to French language health services for Francophones.

To this end, we continue to work to cultivate evidence-based data on Francophones, their health and their use of the health system, in order to be better informed and to support our recommendations to the health system. Following the 2021 census, as well as a request to Statistics Canada for data on Francophones, this work is already underway.

The return to working in-person has allowed us to reinvigorate our relationships with health service providers as well as with Francophone communities and our partners, whether it be for meetings or presentations. We would also like to share the success of our new complementary modules to the active offer training, which allow for broader access to training for different health sectors. In addition, the adoption of active offer training in various provinces and territories will help inform even more people about the importance of active offer and hopefully improve access to French-language services for Francophones across Canada.

That being said, the setbacks in health services as a result of the pandemic and the ongoing transformation of the system make equitable access for Francophones difficult. In addition to our health care system is being transformed, it is suffering from a serious shortage of human resources. Despite this, we remain optimistic and will continue to work at the regional, provincial and federal level with our partners and Francophone communities to find innovative solutions that meet the needs of Francophones and providers. We are listening to our communities and we are determined to continue our mission to ensure active offer and equitable access to French language health services.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors, my dedicated team, our partners and our members for their unwavering commitment to the health of Francophones.



Diane Quintas
Executive Director

Our New Strategic Plan 2022-2027

This year, the Réseau launched its new strategic plan for 2022-2027. This plan aims to ensure active offer and equitable access to French language health services for Francophones in Northern Ontario.

Vision

Francophones in Northern Ontario have access to a continuum of quality French language health services that are equitable, safe, culturally appropriate, and actively offered in French.

Mission

The Réseau relies on evidence-based data, the community and the Francophone movement, as well as its collaboration with the healthcare system to ensure active offer and equitable access to French language health services.

Values

- ❖ Equity
- ❖ Partnership with the Francophone community
- ❖ Collaboration with the healthcare system
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Innovation

Our New Strategic Plan

2022-2027

Strategic Directions

- ❖ Cultivate and enhance the information and data of the RMEFNO to inform, advise and support the healthcare system in the development and delivery of French language health services.
- ❖ Advise and support the regional healthcare system in the development and delivery of French language health services
- ❖ Develop, lead and evaluate the progress of evidence-based projects in support of the RMEFNO's strategic priorities.
- ❖ Strategically coordinate the engagement and mobilization of Francophone partners and healthcare system collaborators.

Results

- ❖ Amplification of the organization's resources, capacity and impact
- ❖ Collaboration and mutual accountability between RMEFNO and Ontario Health, Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) and service providers.
- ❖ Conceptualization and understanding of the health status of Francophones, their needs, as well as what constitutes equitable access to French language health services to them.
- ❖ Improved organizational knowledge and skills.

Final result

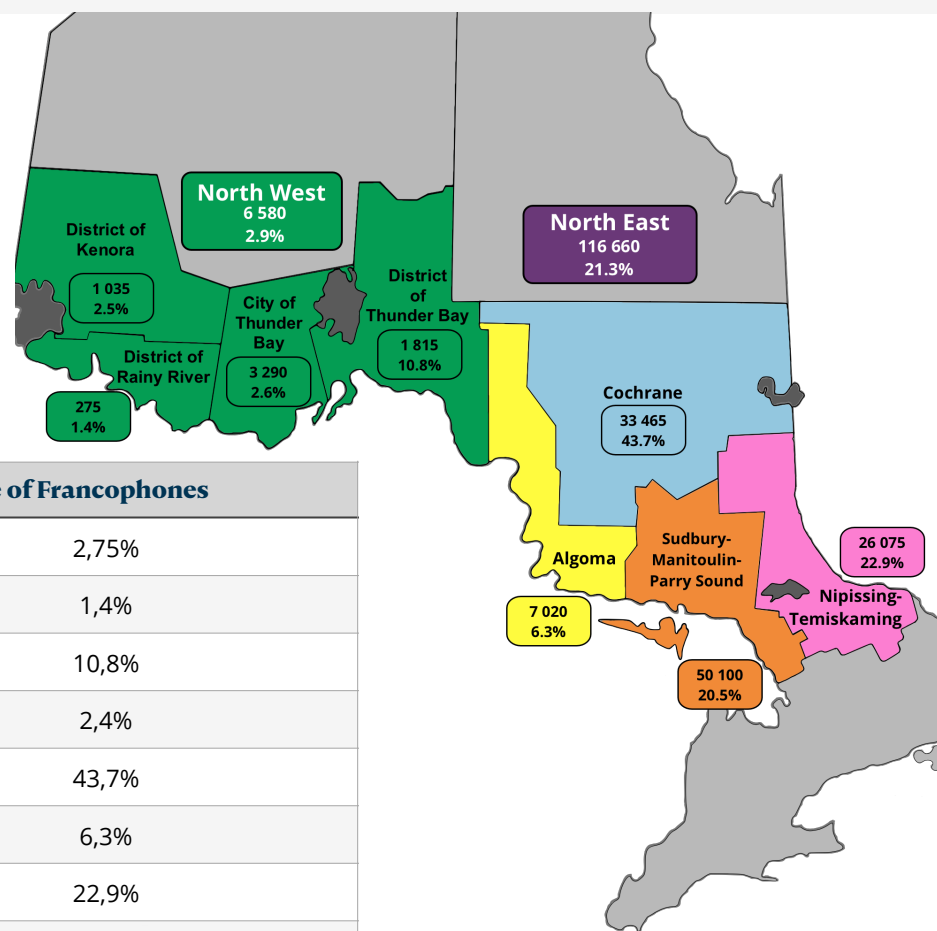
Equitable access to quality French language health services.

Data to drive progress

One of the Réseau's priorities is to obtain data on the health of Francophones. The Francophone community is under-represented in research due in part to a lack of data. Access to data and the resulting research enables us to better identify the unique health needs and challenges that the population may face. Quantitative data allows us to support the testimonials and stories of individuals that we have collected over the years to support our planning, education, outreach and information sharing work in the field.

New demographic data for the North

Thanks to the 2021 Census, we have updated the demographic data on Francophones in Northern Ontario. This first step allowed us to target the Francophone populations of Northern Ontario.

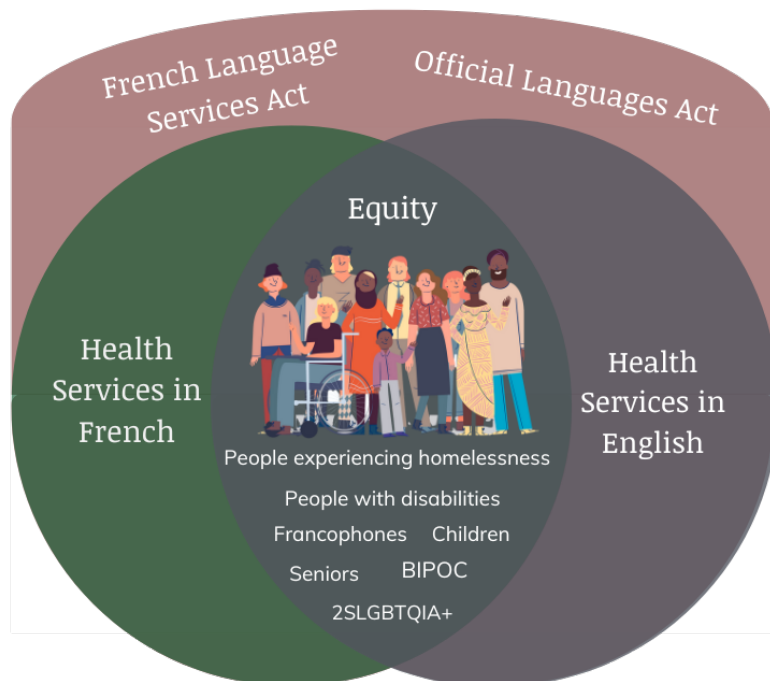


Region	Number of Francophones	Percentage of Francophones
Kenora District	1035	2,75%
Rainy River District	275	1,4%
Thunder Bay District	1815	10,8%
City of Thunder Bay	3290	2,4%
Cochrane	34 465	43,7%
Algoma	7020	6,3%
Sudbury-Manitoulin-Parry Sound	50 100	22,9%
Nipissing-Temiskaming	26 075	20,5

What is equity for Francophones?

That is the question the Réseau has been pondering. In order to have a common discourse, we undertook the work to define what equitable access for Francophones is. Following brainstorming workshops with the team and the Board of Directors, a first definition was developed as well as a visual to help better conceptualize the definition.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES FOR FRANCOPHONES



*This list is not exhaustive and includes any community deserving of equitable access to health care



About the visual

In order to explain what equitable access is for Francophones, this visual was created. To ensure equitable services for all, **communication is the first step**. On the legislative side, provincial and federal legislation encompasses all the elements involved in providing services in French. In the field (green and purple circles), services must be offered in French and English in accordance with the provincial and federal legislation. At the centre is **equity of access for all vulnerable populations who require services appropriate to their specific needs** in their intersectionality, which also includes Francophones at the cultural level. To ensure true equity, these adapted services must be offered in both official languages.

*Note that this visual has the potential to change as the definition is finalized.

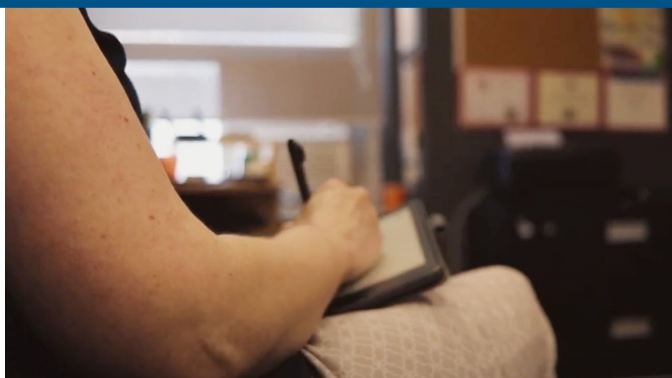
New videos to raise awareness

The creation of videos not only raises awareness and informs Francophones and providers, but has allowed us to collect stories from individuals and testimonials from health professionals that have validated and supported the health data of Francophones.

This year, four videos were shot covering different health sectors.

*To view the videos, click on the thumbnails.

The Importance of French Language Services in the Mental Health Sector



The Positive Impacts of Virtual Mental Health and Addiction Services for Francophone Clients



Active Offer for Francophones in Minority Situations



Barriers to Healthcare for Francophone Immigrants in Ontario



Our work in the field

The work of the Réseau continues in the field to advise and support the regional system in the development and delivery of French language health services. A new initiative has been developed to implement active offer with specific sectors and providers. Booster sessions on the implementation of the active offer were offered on two occasions and were very well received.

Presentations and webinars

This year, the Réseau reached over 500 students, health professionals, partners and government officials through presentations, booster sessions and webinars.



Themes	Number of presentations
The Active Offer of French Language Health Services	3
Complementary Module on Long-Term Care and Accompanying Toolkit	6
Complementary Module on Immigration	2
Booster Session on Active Offer	2
Franco-santé Project	4
Others	4

Presentations
21

Participants
510



Carrefour Santé de Sault Ste. Marie

New logo of the carrefour de Sault Ste. Marie.



Pierrette Ouellette, President of the carrefour de Chapleau-Foley-Sultan and Sylvie Sylvestre, Planning and Community Engagement Officer at the Réseau.

Involvement of the carrefours and tables santé

The *carrefours* and *tables santé* have, for the most part, resumed their face-to-face meetings and are still active. They are also doing work on their own in collaboration with the Réseau.

Here are some highlights for the carrefours this year:

- ❖ The *carrefour* santé de Sault Ste. Marie was formed and is already very active in the community. The members of the carrefour have also created a logo to represent them.
- ❖ The *carrefour* de Chapleau-Foley-Sultan celebrates 10 years.
- ❖ The *carrefours* have supported us by informing, evaluating and validating our work with status reports and with the complementary modules to the active offer training on primary care and on mental health and addictions.

Support for designation and identification

This year, the Northeast has two new designations. In addition to these designations, the Northeast also has four long-term care homes newly identified by OHN based on recommendations from the Réseau. Of the providers we assessed this year, five are compliant with all the designation requirements, including two who have already received their letter from the Ministry of Health stating that they are compliant.

New
designations
2

New
identifications
4

French-language health service reports

This year, despite the new French-language service reporting platform, 99% of northern providers submitted their reports.

Results 2022-2023

April 1st, 2022 to March 31st, 2023



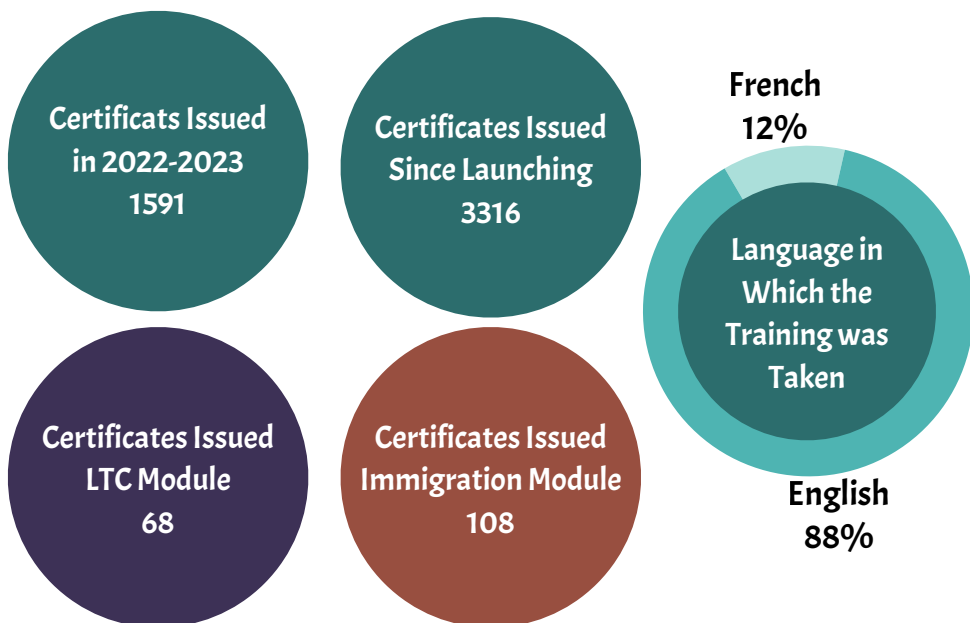
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What's New in the Training

The Réseau has officially launched the complementary module to the active offer training: Culturally Appropriate Care for Francophones in Long-Term Care Homes, as well as an accompanying virtual toolbox. Thanks to the provincial project "*Santé immigration francophone*" financed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, we were able to create and launch another complementary module: The Active Offer of French Language Health Services for Francophone Immigrants in Ontario.

Platform Users



Group registrations for organizations

We have seen an increase in the number of organizations that have made the training mandatory for their staff. We are pleased to have partnered with Home and Community Care Support Services who have made the training mandatory for their 8900 staff members in 14 branches across the province who will have to complete the training by December 2023.

Six providers have received certificates stating that 100% of staff have completed the training and 12 providers have made the training mandatory.



National Adaptation

Nationally, we continue to work with Saskatchewan, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Newfoundland and Labrador on adaptations of training specific to their provinces and territories. Adapted versions for Nunavut and Prince Edward Island on active offer were also launched this year.

Franco-Santé Project

The Franco-santé project is an initiative for Francophone and Francophile students enrolled in post-secondary health training programs in English.

As part of the project, the Réseau offered four activities:

- ❖ Medical terminology: History taking in French, How to go about it with Dr. Meghan Cusack
- ❖ Health care for the 2SLGBTQ+ community with Paul-André Gauthier, RN, PhD Nursing
- ❖ Active Offer of French Language Health Services, the Why and the How - National webinar hosted by the RMEFNO
- ❖ The Importance of French Language Services and Active Offer - Activity in partnership with the NOSM University

4 Webinars

24 Participants

Healthy Early Years Project

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada through the SSF, the Healthy Early Years Project continues to gain momentum in Ontario. Although the Réseau is responsible for the Ontario project, the two project promoters, Health Nexus and the Association francophone des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (aféséo), have been able to carry out all of the activities in the field.

This project aims to improve access to early childhood health promotion programs to reduce inequities in early childhood health.

For a complete overview of the promoters' activities over the past year, we invite you to visit their respective websites:

Health Nexus : [Mieux être des jeunes enfants francophones = adultes outillés](#)

Aféséo : [Mieux-être des jeunes enfants francophones = adultes outillés](#)



Evaluating our Impact

In order to assess the impact of our interventions and ensure that we are meeting the needs of organizations and professionals, we implemented the first phase of an evaluation strategy: a questionnaire to assess the satisfaction of participants in our webinars and presentations.

This questionnaire provided us with preliminary data from the Franco-santé project activities as well as the two active offer booster sessions with the Home and Community Care Support Services North West.

- ❖ On average, 95% said they were better informed about the topics presented.
- ❖ On average, 89% of participants in the review sessions said they were better informed about how to find help and resources to support them in their role with Francophone clients.

95%
Better Informed

89%
Better Equipped



Status Report for the Mental Health and Home and Community Care Sectors

A comprehensive data analysis was conducted based on the annual French language service reports completed by providers. Best practices and statistics were also collected to identify needs and resources in the North East and North West in the mental health and addictions sector as well as in the home and community care sector. The results of this study are being used to guide the Réseau, providers and policymakers in their outreach to various decision-makers and stakeholders in the health care system.

Improving the Coordination of Engagement and Mobilization

In an effort to strategically coordinate and optimize the engagement and mobilization of our partners and health system collaborators, the Réseau actively seeks their support and contributions. We aim to ensure a cohesive approach toward our shared goals by fostering strategic alliances and collaboration.

Overview of Key Moments

Provincial

- ❖ Fabien Hébert, former Chair and founding member of the Réseau, was elected as Chair of the AFO. He has professional expertise in the health care system and, coming from the North, his presence ensures that the voice of Francophones in Northern Ontario will be heard at the provincial political level.
- ❖ The Réseau had the opportunity to promote the importance of active offer and the active offer training to over 70 MPPs, government officials, community leaders and professionals during a panel at the AFO's *Journée de réflexion: la santé en français en Ontario*.
- ❖ The new active offer regulation was adopted on December 6, 2022 following the modernization of the *French Language Services Act* in 2021. This new regulation makes it incumbent on any government agency or institution of the Legislature, as well as any organization that provides services on their behalf, such as health services, to actively offer services in French.

Ontario Health Teams

As one of the key resources for French language services, the Réseau provides support and expertise to ensure access to French language services within OHTs and to promote equity of access for Francophones. We support eight OHTs and sit on over 16 decision-making committees across Northern Ontario.



Diane Quintas, ED of the RMEFNO; Fabien Hébert, Chair of the AFO and Jacinthe Desaulniers, CEO of the Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario

Federal

- ❖ The Réseau supported the SSF in the conceptualization of their new plan "*Convergence 2028 - Agir ensemble pour la santé et le mieux-être en français*" which will increase access to safe, equitable health services in French.
- ❖ We also participated in the government's Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations related to the new Action Plan for Official Languages. The report on the consultations is now available.

Media Presence

[Access to Health Services in French](#)

Radio interview on Le Matin du Nord about the availability of French language services and the importance of access - December 8, 2022

[Getting Treated in Your Own Language Is One of the Best Remedies](#)

Radio interview on Le Matin du Nord to discuss the results of the study: Patient-physician language concordance and quality and safety outcomes among frail home care recipients admitted to hospital in Ontario, Canada - July 14, 2022

[Provincial election: There's no shortage of issues for the North](#)

The article includes an excerpt from an interview with the Réseau's Executive Director about the decline in French-language health care - May 24, 2022

[Radio-Canada News Report](#)

Doctor shortage a major concern for Northern Ontario communities - May 19, 2022

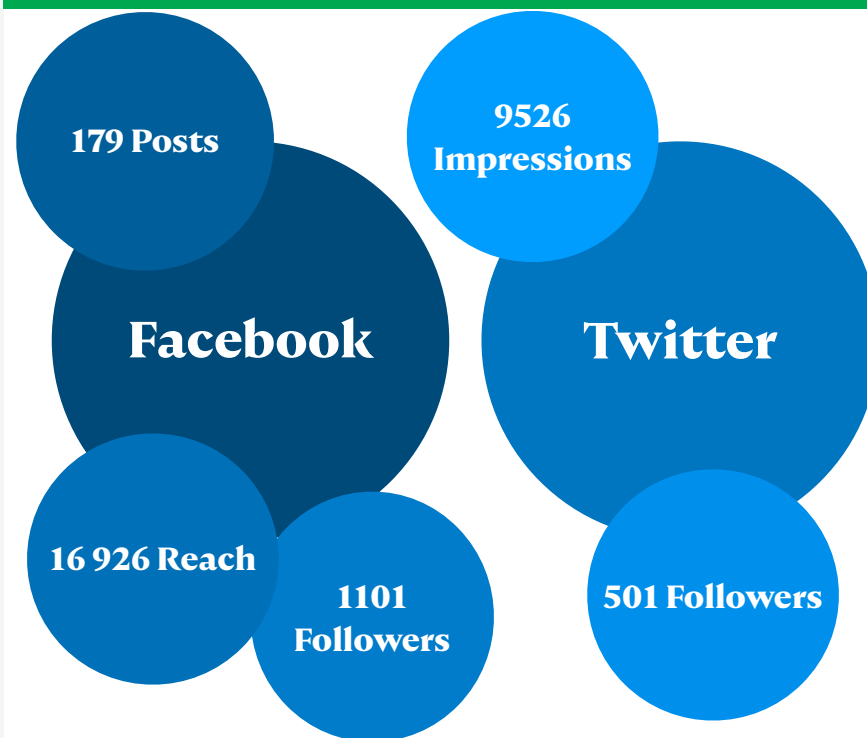
[Doctor Shortage: Northern Ontario Awaits Solutions from Political Parties](#)

The article includes a quote from the Réseau's Executive Director regarding the northern doctor shortage - May 19, 2022

[Téléjournal de Radio-Canada](#)

Interview to discuss the effects of the weakening of the health system caused by the pandemic and the repercussions for Francophones - April 22, 2022

The Réseau continues to publish the Newsletter to its **980 subscribers**. This year, **20 newsletters** filled with Francophone news, Réseau news and interesting resources were shared.



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LE RÉSEAU DU MIEUX-ÊTRE FRANCOPHONE DU NORD DE L'ONTARIO

This initiative is funded by Health Canada under the Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future.

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The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, the Société Santé en français, Ontario Health or the Government of Ontario.

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