



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

Annual Report

Evolving Together: Engagement Planning, and Innovation



2024
2025

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Message from the Chair

Isabelle Charbonneau

Serving as Chair of the Réseau over the past year has been marked by a strong commitment to faithfully representing the Réseau's interests and defending the needs of Francophones in our region. As the representative for Northern Ontario on the Board of Directors of the Société Santé en français, I have had the opportunity to bring our community's voice to the national stage, while ensuring consistency in our actions at the regional level.

Reaching the end of the third year of our strategic planning cycle has also been a significant milestone. This important step allows us to recognize that we are meeting our targets and that our approach is yielding results. Our continued efforts demonstrate the relevance and necessity of actively offering health services in French. However, such recognition is not a given. Raising awareness remains an ongoing struggle. It is imperative to continuously emphasize that Francophones must be clearly identified as a priority group in all work plans and reports. Our presence cannot simply be assumed, it must be asserted, supported, and documented. The year was also marked by a pause in the progress of the healthcare system due to the provincial elections.

This political context delayed certain processes, including the evaluation of the French Language Health Planning Entities, which we are still awaiting more than a year and a half after its completion. We remain vigilant and committed to obtaining clear answers from the Ministry of Health, while respecting the essential role played by the Entities in planning services adapted to the needs of Francophones.

I would like to sincerely thank the members of the Board of Directors for their continued dedication, as well as our Executive Director, Diane Quintas, and her entire team for their rigorous and passionate work on the ground. Thanks to their commitment, the Réseau continues to move forward, foster connections, and promote French language and culture in Northern Ontario.

I would also like to highlight the valuable contributions of our partners, members, and the community as a whole. Your support and commitment are the driving force behind our progress towards more equitable, accessible health services that reflect our linguistic needs.

Isabelle Charbonneau

Message from the Executive Director

Diane Quintas

Evolving Together – that’s what we’ve done throughout this busy year. The 2024–2025 theme, *Engagement, Planning, and Innovation* reflects the Réseau’s trajectory over the past several months.

While our funding agreement with Ontario Health ended in March 2024 and has not yet been renewed, our mandate has been extended by the Minister of Health until August 2025. This extension allows us to continue playing our essential role as an Entity within the health system. We look forward to receiving guidance from the Ministry regarding the renewed model for French language services planning. In the meantime, we continue to collaborate actively with Ontario Health to ensure that French language health services are fully integrated into service planning and annual business plans. Although progress has been made, we remain fully committed to ensuring that the needs of Francophone communities are consistently taken into account.

An additional 10% in funding from Société Santé en français allowed us to intensify our networking efforts through the *Winning Strategies* project. Moreover, we were able to enhance our engagement resources with the launch of the *Question of the Month*. Furthermore, we were able to increase our data collection capacity and strengthen collaboration with our partners.

This year has been especially productive in the area of active offer training: 2,682 certificates were issued, bringing the cumulative total to over 14,400. We are also seeing growing demand at both the provincial and national levels, as well as strengthened capacity through a new group registration dashboard.

We actively supported health care providers in their efforts around designation and identification, as well as in the preparation of their annual French language services reports, achieving an impressive submission rate of 98%.

All of our actions, both in the field and beyond, have helped to elevate Francophone issues. Our active contribution confirms the Réseau’s legitimacy as a key player in improving access to French language health services.

I would like to warmly thank our team, our Board of Directors, and all our partners for their unwavering commitment. Together, we are advancing French language health services, one step at a time.



Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027

Three years have already passed since the launch of the [2022–2027 Strategic Plan](#). This plan remains focused on the fundamental objective of ensuring the active offer of French language health services and promoting equitable access to French language health services (FLHS) for Francophones in Northern Ontario.

This report highlights the main projects the *Réseau* has worked on over the past year, either as a leader or as a collaborator. These projects clearly illustrate the implementation of the strategic plan and the progress made to meet the needs of Francophone communities in Northern Ontario.



Our projects

Winning Strategies for Serving Francophone Clients

This year we focused our efforts on developing several [resources](#) to support health service providers in their understanding and implementation of the six actions of the Winning Strategies initiative.

We engaged 147 Health Service Providers (HSPs) using a common reporting tool to capture the current state of French language health services (FLHS) in relation to the six identified priority actions. 30 HSPs confirmed their participation in the Winning Strategies initiative, thereby demonstrating their willingness to actively collaborate in improving FLHS. This number continues to grow as we proceed with the rollout of the strategy.

We also consolidated the data collected into regional profiles that were shared with the Ontario Health Teams (OHTs).



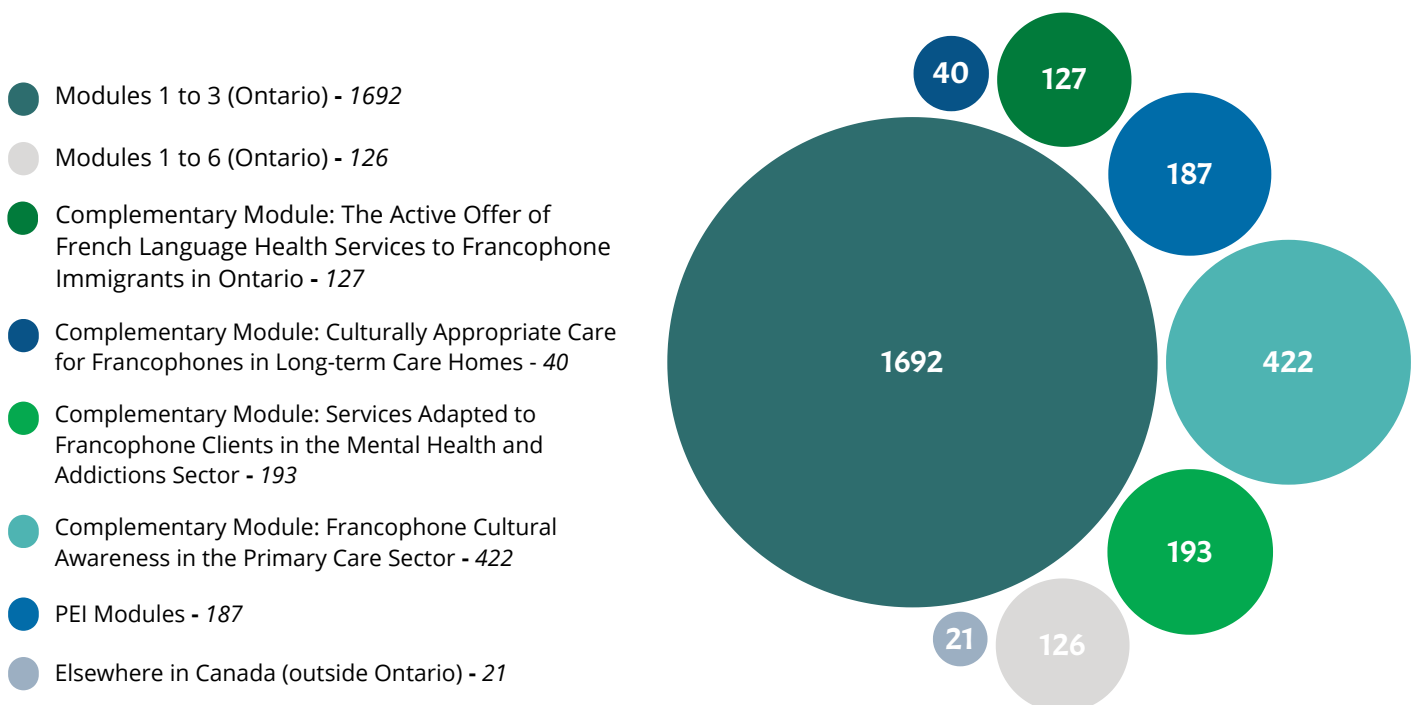
Active Offer Training

New Developments in the Training

In 2024, the Réseau officially launched the group registration system for HSPs as part of the Active Offer training. This initiative enabled the registration of 18 groups and the creation of 33 new sub-groups. These improvements provide HSPs with greater autonomy by allowing them to directly track their employees' progress in completing the Active Offer training, while also enhancing the overall effectiveness of the training process. The majority of certificates awarded are now issued to users who were registered within a group.

Certificates Issued in 2024–2025

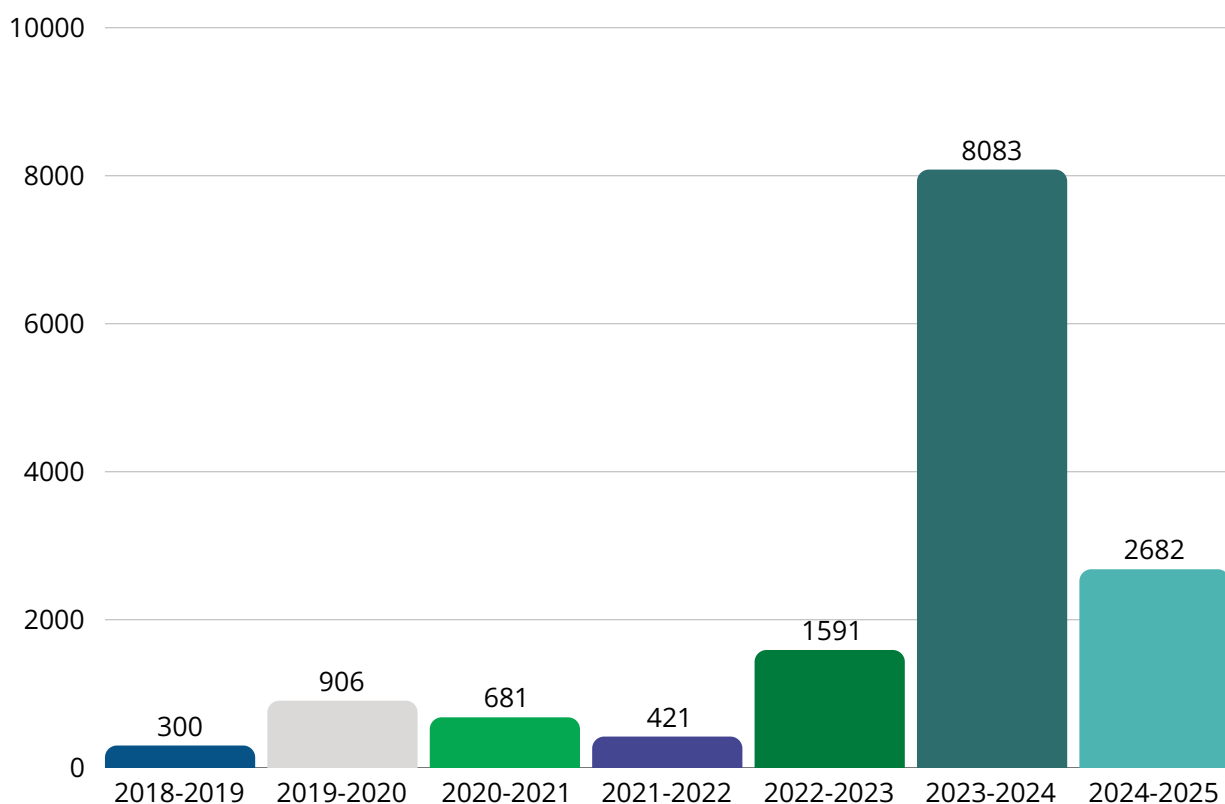
A total of 2,682 certificates were issued, reflecting an ongoing commitment to the Active Offer of FLHS training. The breakdown of these certificates is presented in the table below. Note that the "PEI Modules" category includes results from two training modules tailored to the needs and realities of Prince Edward Island: *Active Offer and Culturally Appropriate Care for Francophones and Acadians in Long-Term Care*, and *The Active Offer of French Language Health Services: Why it matters and How to Put It Into Practice* (PEI-adapted version).



Summary of Results

In May 2024, the Réseau awarded a certificate of completion to all staff of Home and Community Care Support Services, now known as Ontario Health atHome, for having completed the Active Offer training, totaling 8,467 employees. This mobilization contributed to a significant increase in the number of certificates issued in 2023–2024, as illustrated in the graph below. In 2024–2025, despite a decrease in volume, the results remain very encouraging thanks to the continued engagement of HSPs.

Furthermore, three OHTs, Cochrane District, Algoma and Nipissing Wellness, achieved a 100% completion rate.



Staff Awareness

In 2024–2025, three hospitals in the region reached an important milestone by adopting an internal policy requiring all employees in management positions to complete the Active Offer training.

User Satisfaction

The results of the training evaluations are very positive. A total of 91.4% of users recommend the training, while 91.9% did not perceive any bias. Regarding the achievement of learning objectives, 99.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the training met its goals. The complementary modules were also well received, with a satisfaction rate of 88.1% among participants.

Evaluation of the Active Offer Training

This second year of the project achieved a high response rate, with 1,150 responses to the pre-training questionnaire and 489 to the post-training questionnaire. The analysis of the collected data will be available in the fall of 2025.

New Accreditations

In January 2025, the Canadian College of Health Leaders accredited all six complementary modules, highlighting the high quality and relevance of the material and enhancing the training's credibility among Health professionals.

Recommend the training



No perception of biases



Training meets its goals



Satisfaction - complementary modules



user testimonials :

« The information is valuable and important for all healthcare professionals. » (translated from French)

« As a healthcare professional, it's important to make an active offer in our daily practice to ensure quality health services. » (translated from French)

« This training made me aware of the importance and how to engage in an active offer with my patients. I believe this will improve patient care and I believe all healthcare professionals should be aware of this. »

Healthy Early Years

As part of the Healthy Early Years project, additional funding made it possible to launch activities this year related to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Since last April, the Réseau has supported Health Nexus and the Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (AFÉSEO) by monitoring their projects, facilitating partner engagement, and sharing their resources through our platforms and with other networks.

The Réseau also updated the 2024-2029 Community Services Plan for Early Childhood in Health, in collaboration with the promoters.



Franco-Santé

Franco-Santé is a project designed to assist Francophone and Francophile learners pursuing health education in English language post-secondary institutions. As part of the project's programming, the Réseau facilitated two training sessions on the importance of active offer for students in the Social Work program at Northern College and the Health Sciences program at NOSM University, reaching a total of 39 participants.

French Language Services Annual Reports

Each year, HSPs are required to complete a French Language Services report. With the support of the Réseau, 98% of providers submitted their 2023–2024 French Language Services Annual Report.

Francophone Immigration Health

The Réseau collaborates with the Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario (RSSFE) and the Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario (RFSSO) in the provincial project: Francophone Immigration Health, led by the RFSSO.

As part of this project, the Réseau supported the RFSSO by contributing to various components of the project, including communications, promotion, and the development of training modules.

As a result, six new modules were created, along with numerous tools and resources now available on the [eQUITY Link](#) platform.

Designation and identification

The Réseau supported four Northeastern Ontario HSPs as they progressed through the designation application process.

In collaboration with Ontario Health North, the Réseau conducted 12 triennial designation evaluations, of which 7 were deemed compliant and 5 are currently being supported toward compliance.

In early 2025, the Réseau celebrated the success of 23 health service providers that had been evaluated over the past three years. The recognition was shared via our social media channels and newsletter in order to meet the directive received from the Ministry of Health.





The Réseau in the Community

Community Engagement

Over the course of the last year, the Réseau initiated the development of a community engagement plan.

The main objective of this plan was to validate the following priorities:

- Create navigator positions in regional hospitals
- Develop internship opportunities with local HSPs and welcome Francophone interns from outside the region into Northern health care institutions
- Increase the offer of French language services (active offer, training, retention, referrals)
- Make the training *"Active Offer of French-Language Health Services: Why and How to Put It into Practice"* mandatory for HSPs
- Provide a virtual care clinic
- Create positions for FLS and human resource leads to ensure the FLS file is prioritized and designated positions are filled

The Réseau organized **12 community engagement sessions** over the year, gathering a total of **104 participants**.

In addition, the Réseau took part in over 50 engagement initiatives with various organizations across the region, covering a wide range of topics such as the importance and implementation of active offer for both learners and health professionals, Winning Strategies, culturally appropriate care, active offer in mental health services, active offer in primary care, and understanding the reality of Francophones in Northern Ontario.

Community Engagement Activities

Presentations

Over the course of the year, the Réseau delivered 11 presentations that raised awareness among 375 participants about various aspects of Francophone communities in the health care sector. These presentations covered key topics such as the importance of active offer during placements, the cultural diversity among Francophone communities and its impact on service delivery, as well as the positive impacts of offering services in French on quality of care and client satisfaction.

Question of the Month

The Question of the Month aims to engage the general population and raise awareness about various issues related to French language health care in Northern Ontario. The details and results of the nine questions are available on our [website](#). Some of the topics covered include: participation in a patient and family advisory council, sources of information on French-language mental health services, and the most beneficial health and wellness resources for Francophone seniors in Northern Ontario.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO)

The Réseau collaborated with the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO) on several health-related files, including:

- Participation in AFO's Health Day
- Contribution to the validation of their health report
- Develop a document on the state of French-language services in long-term care homes in Northern Ontario, in preparation for the Minister of Long-Term Care's visit to the region
- Input on AFO's position paper on home care in Ontario, regarding best practices in French-language health services
- Contribution to the validation of the priorities in the white paper on aging

Expansion of Pharmacists' Scope of Practice

The Réseau contributed to a consultation on the expansion of pharmacists' scope of practice. Following a letter sent to the Minister of Health regarding this legislation, the AFO was invited to a virtual meeting with the Ministry at which our Executive Director was invited to participate as a member of the AFO Health Committee to represent the Northern realities on this matter. The Réseau also provided recommendations in the revision of AFO's position on this matter.

Collaboration with Government Authorities

The Réseau actively participated in several consultations and roundtables. It was involved in an early consultation on Ontario Health's work plan. In addition, by taking part in the consultation on the draft dashboard of the Ministry of Health's French-language health services database, the Réseau was able to provide valuable insights and contribute to the ongoing development of this key tool.

Collaboration with Researchers

In 2024–2025, the Réseau had the opportunity to participate in a research project on the alignment between Francophone patients and bilingual professionals in collaboration with the Groupe de recherche sur la formation et les pratiques en santé et service social en contexte francophone minoritaire (GReFoPS).

Society Of Canadians Studying Medicine Abroad (SOCASMA)

A collaborative effort was undertaken with the Society of Canadians Studying Medicine Abroad to explore the possibility of launching a pilot project aimed at recruiting internationally trained Francophone physicians. The goal of this initiative is to strengthen the integration of these professionals into Francophone communities in Northern Ontario.

Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario (FARFO)

The Réseau actively participated in the FARFO collaboration tables for the Far North and Mid-North regions. This involvement helped strengthen ties with community partners and contributed to discussions aimed at improving access to French-language services for seniors in the region.

University of Ottawa - Pharmacy Program

The Réseau is collaborating on the development of an Active Offer training module tailored to the pharmacy sector.

This project is part of a grant from the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS), awarded to the University of Ottawa's pharmacy program in partnership with the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR) at Laurentian University.

Other Collaborative Initiatives

As a member of the Francophone Reference Group at NOSM University, the Réseau contributed to meetings focused on integrating the Francophone lens in medical education.

Amongst its various collaborations, the Réseau also provided key recommendations for the development of the Health 811 roadmap as well as for the online appointment booking system co-designed by Ontario Health.

Finally, the Réseau participated in the strategic planning process of Hôpital Montfort, with the aim of identifying health priorities for Northern Ontario and possible collaborations.







Visibility

Newsletters


The Réseau continues to distribute the *Info Newsletter* to its 1,060 subscribers. This year, 14 editions, full of Francophone news, updates from the Réseau, and relevant resources, were shared.


Articles/Interviews


 May 21, 2024 (Le matin du Nord)
[Only one French-language palliative care centre in Northern Ontario](#)
(available in French only)


 May 21, 2024 (Radio-Canada)
["Partir en paix" in French, a major challenge for end-of-life patients](#)
(available in French only)

 June 10, 2024 (Radio-Canada)
[NOSM University opens the Dr. Gilles Arcand Centre for Health Equity](#)
(available in French only)

 February 6, 2025 (Le matin du Nord)
[Elections: The need for access to French-language healthcare services](#)
(available in French only)

 February 21, 2025 (Le matin du Nord)
[Sylvie Sylvestre recognized as an advocate for French-language healthcare](#) *(available in French only)*

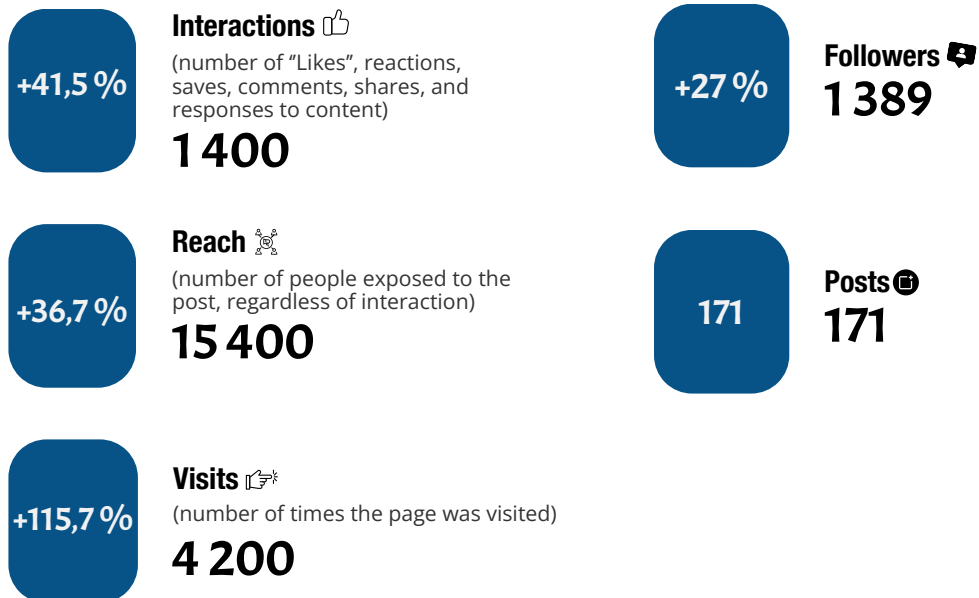
 March 2, 2025 (Journal Le Nord)
[The challenges of Francophone communities in Ontario with Diane Quintas](#) *(available in French only)*

 March 4, 2025 (Le matin du Nord)
[Difficulties in accessing mental health services in Northern Ontario](#)
(available in French only)



Social Media

Over the past year, the Réseau prioritized the use of Facebook for its communications and promotion. This platform allowed the Réseau to reach a more diverse audience, foster direct interaction with the community, and increase the visibility of its initiatives through effective dissemination tools.



follow-us!



 facebook.com/rmefno

 linkedin.com/in/rmefno

The achievements of the Réseau are made possible thanks to the financial contribution of Health Canada under the Official Languages Action Plan – 2023–2028: Protection-Promotion-Collaboration, as well as Ontario Health North and the Ministry of Health.

The Healthy Early Childhood project is made possible through funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Société Santé en français, Ontario Health, or the Government of Ontario.



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