

Practice #6: The Café de Paris (New Brunswick) February 2019

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Practice #6: The Café de Paris (New Brunswick)

This practice contributes to improving:

- Organizational resources: Active offer and second-language training for professional resources.

The organization implementing this practice: Horizon Health Network, New Brunswick.

The information contained in this file was mainly acquired from a telephone interview conducted on June 9, 2017, with Pauline Babineau, Director of Official Languages at Horizon Health Network. It was complemented by documentary research, and these sources are cited as references.

Background

In New Brunswick, the *Official Languages Act*¹ defines the rights of members of the public regarding healthcare. In this context, an institution must conform to its overall obligation to provide services and to communicate with the public in the official language of their choice.² However, this requirement concerning bilingualism for all health services managed by the province does not mean that every professional who works in these services is bilingual. Health professionals in the area served by the Horizon Health Network expressed a need for training to improve their French-language competencies. Yet, these professionals did not have enough time to pursue such training. It was the main obstacle that prevented them from enrolling in linguistic training. Hence, in 2013, the Café de Paris³ was implemented as a pilot project at the Saint John Regional Hospital.

Objective

This initiative aims to provide basic linguistic training tailored to various needs, in health professionals' workplace. This practice enables unilingual professionals to feel comfortable when greeting patients in French or referring them, when needed, to a colleague.

Features of the practice

Initially, a small unoccupied corner of the Saint John Regional Hospital cafeteria was converted into a friendly area, welcoming staff who wanted to practice French: it was called the Café de Paris. A teacher leads the Café de Paris and provides personalized linguistic support according

1 Assemblée législative du Nouveau-Brunswick. (2002). *Loi sur les langues officielles* Accessed on July 20, 2018 at: <https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/editform-f.asp?ID=134&legi=54&num=4>

2 Foucher, P. (2017). French-Language Health Services in Canada: The State of the Law. (Chapter 3). In Drolet, M., Bouchard, P. & Savard, J. (Eds.), *Accessibility and Active Offer: Health care and Social Services in Linguistic Minority Communities* (pp. 65-86). Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

3 Société Santé et Mieux-être en français du Nouveau-Brunswick, Réseau de santé Horizon, Association régionale de la communauté francophone de Saint-Jean Inc. (Autumn 2017). *Le Café de Paris : une approche innovatrice pour l'apprentissage ou le maintien du français afin d'appuyer l'offre active. Feuillelet d'information*. Accessed on July 20, 2018, at: http://www.ssmefnb.ca/images/Documents_%C3%A0_t%C3%A9l%C3%A9charger/Document_de_mod%C3%A9lisation_Caf%C3%A9_de_Paris_FR.pdf

to attendees' specific requests and needs. People are welcome during lunchtime or breaks to converse in French, or they can simply walk in with specific questions. The relaxed and non-judgmental atmosphere contributes to the success of this initiative among staff.⁴

Professionals are more prepared to respond to users' needs in a safe and satisfactory manner. They can also refer users to relevant resources. In addition, the Professional Development Service at Horizon Health Network provides a certificate (450 hours) that will be credited to a professional's personnel file. Thus, the number of professionals who have acquired linguistic competencies by participating in the Café de Paris is recorded.

In 2017, the Café de Paris provides support services and practical linguistic learning, tailored to the needs of health professionals. It is currently offered in various forms: fixed Café de Paris, theme-based Café de Paris, and mobile Café de Paris.⁵ The mobile Café de Paris, described in the challenges section, is very popular. This practice is now implemented in several health institutions across New Brunswick.

Challenges

The main challenge in implementing the Café de Paris was coordinating service delivery with the availability of health professionals. In order to encourage maximum participation, a mobile Café de Paris was put in place: a language instructor visits the unit where a request was expressed instead of professionals having to move around the hospital.

Analysis⁶

Why is this practice considered innovative?

This practice meets a need in the milieu. Indeed, it was born from the lack of opportunities for health professionals to attend linguistic training within health institutions, and from the difficulty for these professionals to invest time outside of their workplace to receive such linguistic training. Members of the subcommittee, who implemented the practice, as well as participating staff, recognize its innovative quality.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ This analysis is based on criteria defined in the *Innovative Practices Evaluation Framework* designed by the Health Council of Canada, available at: https://healthcouncilcanada.ca/files/IP_Framework_Eng_final_1.pdf also outlined in Appendix 1.

Emerging, promising or leading: A promising practice

- **Quality of evidence:** The practice was subject to informal observations and positive participant feedback. A formal evaluation is ongoing, according to the resource person.
- **Impact:** Testimonials show that by developing linguistic competencies among health and social service professionals, this practice has positive impacts on healthcare system performance. Those who participated in the Café de Paris suggest that this type of training has a tangible effect on their confidence level when addressing users in French in the course of their work.⁷
- **Applicability:** The practice is implemented in at least nine institutions across New Brunswick.
- **Transferability:** The Café de Paris was set up in 2017 by the recently established Beach Grove Home in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Project initiators heard of the interest generated by the project and it appears that between 2018 and 2023, the Café de Paris concept will also be taken up in other institutions in various Canadian provinces and territories.

7 Ibid.