

Practice #7: The Tour of Francophone Institutions (Manitoba)

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This practice contributes to improving:

- The organization's resources: hiring, retaining and training bilingual staff in the health sector.

The organization implementing this practice: Santé en français Manitoba.

The information contained in this file was mainly acquired from a telephone interview conducted on June 21, 2017, with Lise Voyer, Recruitment and Career Promotion Manager for Santé en français Manitoba. It was complemented by documentary research, and these sources are cited as references.

Background

In the health sector, recruiting bilingual professionals is a major issue. This is the background against which the Regional Office Southern Health/Santé Sud contacted the Réseau Santé en français du Manitoba to initiate a collaborative process with two nursing programs at the Université de St-Boniface. The need for an initiative aimed at facilitating the recruitment of bilingual professionals was expressed in February 2014. Eight months later, in October 2014, a pilot project was set in motion. Before the implementation of the pilot project, a review of the literature had revealed that, for health students, a placement setting often became their first workplace.

Objectives

The project aimed at increasing access to health professionals in rural areas through better retention. This practice pursues the following objectives: a) demystify rural areas; b) attract future Francophone graduates to these areas; c) encourage them to do a clinical placement in these areas and to work there afterward; d) create links between institutional managers, the community and future graduates of French-language programs.

Features of the practice

During the first tour, 20 students and health professionals travelled more than 200 km by bus to tour three Francophone health institutions in the rural area served by the Regional Office Southern Health.¹

Since its inception in 2014, the Tour of Francophone Institutions has evolved. By using questionnaires and videos in an entertaining atmosphere, the time that students spend on the bus has now become a training opportunity in active offer. It is a well-established yearly event in the St-Boniface community: schools, health institutions as well as the community all recognize its relevance and look forward to it.

¹ Société Santé en français and Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario. (2015). *Cadre de référence pour le recrutement et la rétention des ressources humaines bilingues en santé*. Accessed on February 20, 2018, p.16. at: <http://santefrancais.ca/wp-content/uploads/fr-cadrerh-3.pdf>

Challenges

The challenge in implementing this practice related to the context surrounding university studies. Mobilizing a whole school day for visits could conflict with the already quite demanding academic curriculum. Following collaborative efforts, the Tour of Francophone Institutions has become a compulsory practice for students and the day reserved for visits is credited to them (equivalent to four hours of placement).

Analysis²

Why is this practice considered innovative?

This practice meets a need in the milieu, and it is perceived as innovative by involved stakeholders. Indeed, it was born out of the need to improve the recruitment and retention of bilingual health professionals in rural areas. Actors who contributed to the development of the practice recognize its innovative nature.

Emerging, promising or leading: A promising practice

- **Quality of evidence:** Participant satisfaction and results that are compiled yearly (number of placements and hires in rural areas among trainees) have shown its usefulness.
- **Impact:** Results reveal that this practice has positive impacts on the performance of the healthcare system by facilitating the recruitment of employees who possess linguistic competencies in both official languages in rural areas where people feel a need to provide French-language services.
- **Applicability:** Thanks to a collaborative effort between seven institutions, the practice has been ongoing since 2014, which attests to its applicability.
- **Transferability:** The same results have been observed in several institutions in Manitoba. Although it has recently been replicated in Southern Ontario, this new practice context has not yet been evaluated.

² 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.