

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

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ABOUT THE FACT SHEET

This fact sheet is part of the *Directory of Innovative Practices in Health and Social Services in Official Language Minority Contexts* (available at: https://www.grefops.ca/directory_innovative_practices.html)

The *Directory of Innovative Practices* (formerly the Handbook of Innovative Practices on the Integration of Official Language Minority Health and Social Services) is a complementary resource to the *Organizational and Community Resources Self-Assessment Tool for Active Offer and Social and Health Services Continuity*¹. It presents initiatives that have been put in place, most often at the local level, that respond to a community need and are perceived as innovative by the various actors involved in their implementation. The practices were identified, analyzed and classified according to an evaluation framework developed by the Health Council of Canada. This framework allowed us to distinguish between emerging practices, promising practices and leading practices. Some of these practices were suggested by the *Société Santé en français* and the provincial, territorial and regional French-language health networks, or other partners.

The reader is referred to the [Introduction and Method](#) document for information about the authors and collaborators, background on the project, a description of the methodology used to create the fact sheets, definitions of the following concepts:

- Leading Practice, Promising Practice, Emerging Practice
- Quality of evidence, impact, applicability, transferability
- Service coordination, service integration, liaison
- Active offer

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https://www.grefops.ca/directory_innovative_practices.html.

¹ The self-assessment Tool is available in English and French and can be accessed at the following Web address:
https://www.grefops.ca/selfassessment_tool.html (English version)
https://www.grefops.ca/outil_autoevaluation.html (French version)

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

This practice contributes to improving:

- Organizational resources: Active offer and second-language training for employees

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

The information contained in the first version of the fact sheet 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. This document was reviewed in April 2021 by Lorna Mansfield, Official Languages Advisor for Area 3 of the Horizon Network, Marie-Reine Doiron, Café de Paris Activity Coordinator for Area 3, and Shayna-Eve Hébert, Official Languages Activity Coordinator for Area 1.

Background

In New Brunswick, the Official Languages Act² 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 choice³, beginning with the Active Offer of services in both official languages. 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. Healthcare 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 Paris⁴ was implemented as a pilot project at the Saint John Regional Hospital.

Objective

This initiative aims to provide basic linguistic training for all employees, tailored to various needs, and offered within the workplace. This practice enables employees to practice French and to feel comfortable when greeting a person through the active offer in both official languages, either on their own or with the help of a colleague, thus ensuring that the person is served in the official language of their choice.

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 tutor leads the Café de Paris and provides personalized linguistic support according to attendees' specific requests and needs. People are welcomed 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

² Assemblée législative du Nouveau-Brunswick. (2002). *Loi sur les langues officielles* Accessed on July 20, 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.gnb.ca/legis/bill/editform-f.asp?ID=134&legi=54&num=4>

³ 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.

⁴ 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. Retrieved from : 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

the success of this initiative among staff⁵.

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 is credited to the employee's "learning" portfolio. Thus, the number of professionals who have acquired linguistic competencies by participating in the Café de Paris is recorded. Employee participation in Café de Paris is recognized as professional development by Horizon, during employees' performance evaluations.

In 2017, the Café de Paris provides support services and practical linguistic learning, tailored to the needs of employees. It is currently offered in various forms: fixed Café de Paris, theme-based Café de Paris, and mobile Café de Paris⁶. The mobile Café de Paris is very popular. This practice is now implemented in several health institutions across New Brunswick. Sessions can be available face to face in the Regional Hospitals, or by Zoom or MS Teams, allowing employees to participate from their preferred location. This also ensures that the Café de Paris is available across all Horizon facilities, and not just the regional hospitals.

In 2021, there are four tutors (Official Languages Activity Coordinators) across the Horizon Health Network, located in the Saint John's area, the Moncton area, the Fredericton area and the Miramichi area. Most tutors work full-time and try to offer sessions according to the learners' availability.

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.

In 2020-2021, the COVID-19 pandemic brought some challenges for the Café de Paris. First, most sessions were offered remotely, via teleconference, due to physical distance restrictions. In addition, some Francophone tutors were redeployed, as well as some staff who normally participated in the Café de Paris, so the number of hours offered in tutoring each month has likely changed since the beginning of the pandemic. Finally, it is not possible to offer cultural activities during the pandemic, making it more difficult to promote the sessions.

Analysis⁷

Why is this practice considered innovative?

This practice meets a need in the healthcare environment. Indeed, it was born from the lack of opportunities for health professionals and employees to attend linguistic training within health institutions, and from the difficulty for these professionals (who may work rotating schedules) to invest time outside of their schedule/workplace to receive such linguistic training. Members of the subcommittee, who implemented the practice, as well as participating staff, recognize its innovative

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ This analysis is based on criteria defined in the *Innovative Practices Evaluation Framework* designed by the Health Council of Canada. Retrieved from: https://healthcouncilcanada.ca/files/IP_Framework_Eng_final_1.pdf also outlined in the document Introduction and Method.

quality in providing terminology pertinent to the workplace.

Emerging, promising or leading: A promising practice

Quality of evidence: The practice was subject to informal observations and positive participant feedback. The Horizon Health Network worked with the Société Santé et Mieux-être en français du Nouveau-Brunswick to create a database compiling the Café de Paris activities (information about participants, their learning objectives, time and duration of sessions, mode used, activities and learning achieved). Use of the database began in December 2020 and will allow to extract data that could provide descriptive statistics of the practice.

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 patients/public in French in the course of their work.

Applicability: As of 2021, the practice was available at all facilities across the Horizon Network using MS Teams and Zoom. The quality of the training is often improved using this new option.

Transferability: The Café de Paris concept has been replicated in other healthcare facilities in different provinces and territories across Canada. In the fall of 2017, the Café de Paris was adopted at the Beach Grove Home in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Subsequently, in the Société Santé en français' programming *Parcours santé 2018-2023*, the Café de Paris was adapted by *RésoSanté Colombie-Britannique* in four facilities, by *Réseau Santé en français Île-du-Prince-Édouard* in four other facilities, by the *Réseau de santé en français du Nouveau-Brunswick (Réseau-action Organisation des services)* for the design of a management and evaluation framework for the approach and for the increase of Cafés de Paris in its virtual form, and by the *Partenariat communauté en santé de Yukon*.