

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

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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](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*<sup>1</sup>. 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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<sup>1</sup> 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](https://www.grefops.ca/selfassessment_tool.html) (English version)  
[https://www.grefops.ca/outil\\_autoevaluation.html](https://www.grefops.ca/outil_autoevaluation.html) (French version)

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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 fact sheet 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. The fact sheet was updated in February 2021 in collaboration with Natalie Gagné, Manager of Programs and Operations, for Santé en français Manitoba.

### 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.<sup>2</sup>

Since its inception in 2014, the event has been held annually until 2019. Through the use of questionnaires and videos, in a fun atmosphere, the time spent on the bus was an opportunity for the students to learn about active offer. The 2018 and 2019 regional tour had been modified to include a visit to one or two non-designated health centers, resulting in a bilingual format of the Regional Tour.

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<sup>2</sup> Société Santé en français et Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario (2015). *Cadre de référence pour le recrutement et la rétention des ressources humaines bilingues en santé*, p.16.

The addition of visits to non-designated centers was in response to requests from the Université de St-Boniface to explore the possibility of additional internships in the region. Included in the 2018 and 2019 tour was a guided tour of two designated bilingual and two non-designated health centers. The guided tours were offered in French. The pandemic caused by COVID-19 did not allow for a tour in 2020.

## 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).

## Analysis<sup>3</sup>

### 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. The practice was replicated in Southern Ontario in March 2017 as part of an initiative called the *Autobus carrière-santé*, developed by the Niagara Interagency Table's Health and Seniors Subcommittee. Approximately 20 students in nursing, social work, psycho-education and elderly care, visited health service providers identified or designated to provide services in French. Based on the results of the evaluation questionnaire, 60% of the participating students were able to choose one of the service providers visited for a practicum, and 70% of the participating students subsequently considered a career in the Niagara region<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> 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](https://healthcouncilcanada.ca/files/IP_Framework_Eng_final_1.pdf) and also outlined in the Introduction and method document.

<sup>4</sup> Bonjour Niagara. (2017, mars 28). A group of around twenty students visited a number of French language health services providers. Bonjour Niagara - Ressources Communautaires Francophones. Retrieved from : <http://www.bonjourniagara.com/vivre/en/articles-en/health/une-vingtaine-detudiants-visitent-des-fournisseurs-de-soins-de-sante-en-francais/>