

March 16, 2020

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Government of Ontario
777 Bay Street – College Park 5th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Deputy Premier and Minister of Health:

We sincerely thank you for your letter of March 6, 2020. We welcome very positively your commitment to working together with the French Language Health Planning Entities and Ontario's Francophone community to improve the patient experience and health outcomes for our province's Francophones, and we offer you our collaboration.

As you noted, the proposed Regulation under section 44 of the *Connecting Care Act, 2019*, as written, does not allow for implementation of the recommendations presented in our document entitled *Recommendations regarding French Language Health Planning Entities' Regulation, previously O. Reg. 515/09* (November 2019).

We regret this, but we accept your proposal to use other administrative tools to achieve these ends.

Although we realize that there are limits to the changes that can be made to the Regulation, we believe it is in keeping with the spirit and logic of the Regulation to require that, **in its annual report, Ontario Health be obliged to report on its activities, pursuant to section 3**. We respectfully request that your government adopt this regulatory change.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the Regulation, we reaffirm the importance of giving the Entities the mandate to act as principal advisors to all stakeholders in the health care system on the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of French language health services at the provincial, regional and local levels. In light of the ongoing restructuring, it is evident that the provincial dimension is taking on increasing importance and that the Entities will be called upon to play a greater role at the provincial level. Therefore, structural adjustments will be necessary.

Among the tools you mentioned, we are eager to work in collaboration with your Ministry and your Advisory Council on:

- Development of a relationship agreement that defines roles and responsibilities with regard to French-language services and the collaborative relationships between the Entities and key partners

like the Ministry of Health, the Advisory Council, Ontario Health, Ontario Health Teams, health service providers and public health;

- Improvement in the use of data for French language health services planning;
- Application of a Francophone lens in the health care transformation notably, in major documents like mandate documents, accountability agreements, guidelines and other tools at your disposal across the health care system.

You can count on our collaboration and active participation in all these areas. As health system transformation is moving along at a blistering pace, it is essential that this work move forward at the same speed as the health system transformation. Otherwise, Francophones will be playing catch up. To this effect, we expect to see significant progress over the next six months.

To ensure concrete, timely and successful follow-up, and to facilitate the implementation of the objectives mentioned in your letter, we recommend that a **working group be set up quickly and tasked with completing the work proposed in your letter of March 6, 2020** and detailed above. We think it would be both efficient and effective for this working group to be created as a space where representatives of your government, senior officials of your ministry, the six planning entities and members of Ontario's Francophone community via the Advisory Council work together to deal with all the matters mentioned in our recommendations of last November and set out in our recent correspondence.

We are delighted with the sincere interest you have shown in this matter and we commit, at your request, to keeping you informed about the progresses made.

In closing, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, we thank you for your commitment to the health of Francophones.

Sincerely yours,



Paul Lachance, président
Entité de planification des services de santé en français
Érié St.Clair / Sud-Ouest



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Cc : Hon. Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Francophone Affairs
Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
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Mariette Carrier-Fraser, Chair, French Language Health Services Advisory Council
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