

CHSSN COMMUNITY NetLink

FALL 2017 | VOLUME 27

- + “Cultural Comfort is Key” P2
- + Building Resilience Online P3
- + A Big Week for Little Kids P4
- + Respite for Children & Mothers P4
- + Richard Walling Retires from the CHSSN Board P5
- + YES Montreal P6
- + Jim Carter Honoured P6
- + Taking Some Stress out of Travel for Health Care P7
- + New Director at Health Canada P8



Above: Empowering Parents and Families at ACDPN

Ministry Supports Community Recommendations FOR HEALTH CANADA FUNDING IN QUEBEC

In an October letter to the CHSSN, the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services formally endorsed the recommendations for new federal funding in a report to be tabled shortly with Health Canada by the CHSSN and its nineteen community health network partners.

The Ministry opinion is in response to a CHSSN request inviting it to consult the public system on a working document identifying the health priorities of English-speaking Quebecers. In its opinion, the Ministry noted (among other comments) that the proposed priority areas of community part-

nership with the public system were in accord with those identified by the Ministry and its public institutions.

One priority area is the adaptation of human resources, which is perceived as the most important challenge facing institutions, particularly in regions with a small English-speaking population. The institutions judged that training and supporting human resources was essential to efforts to recruit and retain English-speaking personnel.

Another priority area addresses the need for information in English. The Ministry has proposed a CHSSN partnership with the public system to create a provincial virtual library of translated information. The public network also emphasized the importance of support for its institutions to meet the needs of very vulnerable and marginalized English-speakers such as seniors, the homeless, or those with mental health or substance dependency problems.

In supporting the community recommendations, the Ministry expressed its wish

“One priority area is the adaptation of human resources”

that Health Canada take into account the successful Quebec partnership model for implementing the new federal investment. This model will ensure that a new program will respect Quebec’s jurisdiction in health and social services and be aligned with the renewal of new access programs of services in English.

“The formal support of the Quebec Ministry and its institutional network is a demonstration of the collaboration we have had with them over the last decade”, says **Jim Carter**, CHSSN program and policy advisor. “This pivotal relationship will play an essential role in supporting the community networks and the public system in new partnership initiatives founded on a shared commitment to improving access to services for our English-speaking communities.” **N**



“Cultural Comfort is KEY”

The Empowering Parents and Families (EPF) program, hosted by the **African Canadian Development and Prevention Network (ACDPN)** and in partnership with Batshaw Youth and Family Centres, is meant to address the over-representation of Black children in youth protection services in Quebec.

The program consists of five workshops and a graduation ceremony extending over six weeks. The EPF program aims to work with parents and their children to develop healthy approaches to intergenerational communication, discipline and family bonding.

Each workshop includes a family style dinner and transportation and babysitting services are offered to participating families as well. The ACDPN works hard to ensure that barriers to attendance are reduced as much as possible so families can easily access the program.

“With this kind of program, ACDPN becomes a bridge between Quebec’s youth protection system and families and helps create a situation where trust can develop,” explained **Tania Callender**, Executive Director of ACDPN. “We’re working

together because we all agree that what we want is whatever is best for the kids.”

At each EPF session, parents and children start by meeting separately. They focus their learning and discussion on the same topic touching on family dynamics and then come back together at the end of each session to make a family plan for the week. These plans are then followed up on during the next week’s session.

“Once they’re in the fold and are comfortable working with us, they often let us into their lives, where there are typically a lot of things going on,” Tania said. “We did not know what to expect when we began and one of the most unexpected developments has been that we now have families who self refer as a preventative measure, families who are not involved in the Youth Protection system.”

The program is coming to the end of a three year pilot period and participants have given the program great reviews. Fortunately, although the pilot program ends in the spring, ACDPN is actively working with partners to ensure the sustainability of the program. Callender noted how once participants have established a connection through the EPF program, they often remain within the ACDPN network.

“This is somewhere they want to be,” Callender explained. “What I call ‘cultural comfort’ is key — in a public system that’s too often designed to be one-size-fits-all, partnering with community organizations like ours can be the magic formula for success.”

ACDPN can be reached at 514 737 3213 and more information can be found at www.acdpn.org.

BREAKING DOWN ISOLATION & BUILDING RESILIENCE — ONLINE!



Erica Botner

The Cummings Centre, a non-profit, community-based organization in Montreal, strives to connect the older adults who are its members to helpful information about living well as seniors via its Virtual Learning Program.

To make content and information more readily available to their members, the Centre livestreams on the Web and archives presentations by leading experts in a variety of fields, focusing particularly on health promotion and prevention, with an occasional foray into

the arts, politics and global affairs. These presentations and lectures can be easily accessed by Cummings Centre members using the Virtual Learning Program interface, with loaner computers to take home and technical assistance.

Erica Botner, project coordinator with the Cummings Centre, said that the rationale behind the Virtual Learning Program is “specifically to try and break isolation amongst English-speaking Quebecers,” and “build resilience among the population.” It was for these reasons that Health Canada provided the Centre with a three year grant to reinforce the program, with help from CHSSN to secure the support and to extend the reach of virtual learning.

CHSSN sees these virtual information sessions as an ideal way for NPI Networks and for CHSSN member organizations to connect with isolated seniors who are housebound for all or part of the year, and also to bring English-speaking residents together for health promotion sessions.

The Cummings Centre Virtual Learning Program shows that older adults can adapt to technology as well as their younger peers, all the while enjoying the benefits of being part of an inclusive and informative online space.

More information can be found at www.cummingscentre.org and virtual.cummingscentre.org.



A NEIGHBOURLY “GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY” IN ROUYN-NORANDA

The Neighbours Regional Association of Rouyn-Noranda recognized a need for a community liaison to reach out to isolated English-speakers and support them in accessing health and social services in their language.

For the past year and a half, Neighbours has been providing what it calls an English Health Service Agent to both patients and healthcare

professionals in order to bridge the language and cultural gap in the local healthcare system. Claudiane Dufour has been working as the English Health Service Agent in the Neighbours program.

“Claudiane’s role is a win-win for both the English-speaking community and health and social services professionals serving them” explained **Sharleen Sullivan**, Executive Director of Neighbours. She also goes

on to say that “sometimes what our more isolated English-speaking members need is some moral support to help them navigate the health and social services system and if necessary, even advocate on their behalf.”

“This kind of community outreach worker is a growing practice in our networks, especially for geographically and socially isolated and vulnerable Anglophones,” said **Russ Kueber**, CHSSN program manager.



A BIG WEEK FOR LITTLE KIDS

“Knee-high to a grasshopper, you are sometimes overlooked in our eyes.” That’s how the “letter from grown-ups to little ones”, the pledge from the organizers and supporters of *la Grande semaine des tout-petits* to all children aged 0–5 in Quebec, begins.

November 19–25, 2017, has been designated the second *la Grande semaine des tout-petits*, but this year with a bit of a difference.

“They came to us last winter,” explained **Jennifer Johnson**, Executive Director of CHSSN. “The leadership of the event wanted to widen participation this year and saw CHSSN and its NPIs and member groups as the best way to connect with English-speaking people in the province. It’s an exciting development for us to be approached by this kind of high profile event to be its primary English language partner. We’re very proud to be part of Early Childhood Week.”

A week focusing on early childhood issues was created to build greater awareness of the situation of children in Quebec in all sectors of the society and to give citizens a chance to show their support for a focused response to the needs of 0–5 year olds.

The Early Childhood Week website can be accessed at grandesemaine.com where a variety of posters, buttons, and brochures explaining the event is available in both languages.

Respite for CHILDREN & MOTHERS

The **Youth and Parents AGAPE Association Inc.** of Laval, in partnership with local public health organizations as well as primary schools, provides an English language service to children and families in need.

It’s called “Children’s Time” — a service which brings together children in difficult home situations for a “night-out”, complete with free supper and a wide range of fun activities. Running at the same time, AGAPE provides a service to mothers and victims of abuse, where women can meet for supper and chat in a supportive group environment.

“Children’s Time is always focused on positivity,” explained **Kevin McLeod**, Executive Director of AGAPE.

“These children have found a place where they can be happy. We try to focus on families that don’t have the budget to send their kids to activities like hockey or ballet.”

“The CHSSN was particularly helpful in terms of research about the community and providing statistics to demonstrate to local partners how there is a great need for a program like Children’s Time,” said MacLeod. “AGAPE has been proud to offer this program over the years; there are so many mothers and children in our area who benefit from it.”

More information on Children’s Time can be found at www.agapeassociationinc.com



RICHARD WALLING Retires from the CHSSN Board



Photo credit: Jacques Boissinot

Richard Walling’s enthusiasm is infectious. Just ask him about the beginnings of CHSSN and his energy and humour crackle over the phone.

“We were a tiny band of brothers,” he laughed. “Me, Louis Hanrahan, Ron Creary, and Martin Murphy, with Jim Carter offering some staff support. That was the founding Board that gathered at the Hôtel Universel in Drummondville in 2000.”

Walling is stepping down after almost twenty years of very active involvement in the establishment, the work, and the remarkable growth of CHSSN.

“The foundations of CHSSN can be found in part in the work I did with Kevin Saville, Jan Warnke and others building an evidence base to establish priorities for community organizing. That approach led to the creation of the Holland Centre in Quebec City,” Walling explained.

At the same time, a new legislative framework for access to English health and social services was being implemented.

“Some of us who were involved with the work of the Provincial Committee that was advising on access plans realized that legislative guarantees were not enough,” Walling recalled. “We decided we had to shift from being advocates to actors to make access to health care and social services a reality.”

“His leadership was absolutely essential to everything we achieved. We wouldn’t be what we are without Richard Walling!”

— Jim Carter, Senior Advisor at CHSSN

But the heart of success, for Walling, is still the evidence-based, community-centred model that characterizes all CHSSN’s work.

“What I’m most proud of in what we’ve done,” said Walling, “is that each community can respond to the specific needs of local people, making each NPI unique, but using a common, robust model.”

For Walling, it has clearly been a source of great professional and personal satisfaction.

“Hey, the only reason we’re here is to improve the quality of life of vulnerable and isolated populations and individuals,” he said from his office with Jeffery Hale Community Partners in Quebec City. “I’m proud of what we’ve accomplished together.”



“BUILDING TOGETHER”

Dr. Gaétan Barrette, Minister of Health and Social Services, joined CHSSN network representatives and their public partners on November 23 at the CHSSN Exchange Conference 2017, “Building Together”, in Quebec City. A full report on the conference is being prepared for early 2018.

Photo credit: Jacques Boissinot



It's Not Just about Youth & Not Just about Employment

Montreal based Youth Employment Services (YES) was founded over twenty years ago in response to the massive outflow of young English-speaking Quebecers in the 1970s and eighties. YES has grown from helping 150 people in its first year to serving nearly 5,000 clients annually.

YES has expanded its services to include support for entrepreneurs and artists, as well as encouraging younger women to enter the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields. From its base in Montreal, YES offers services and sends its professionals across all regions of Quebec.

YES was "initially started by a group of community leaders who were committed to trying to stem the flow of young Anglophones leaving Quebec," said **Iris Unger**,



Executive Director of YES. "People concluded that employment was the number one issue at the time. And it's still a major issue!"

During the course of their work, YES found that many of those seeking help finding jobs were also dealing with mental health issues, often related to unemployment.

"We had a lot to work on with many young people even before looking for a job," Unger said. "We mentioned this to the team at CHSSN and then we worked together to come up with a program around resilience and how to build it into your life."

"One of the things we recognize is the tremendous need we are filling," Unger said. "Our target population has really changed over the years, and we're seeing more people who are new arrivals."

"We have enough history to see the impact of our work in the life of the community," Unger concluded. "It's very exciting to see people who have been able to stay in Quebec and build a good life because they got a job." ■

More information can be found at www.yesmontreal.ca



JIM CARTER HONOURED WITH THE 2017 SHEILA & VICTOR GOLDBLOOM AWARD

On September 26, 2017, at a gala awards ceremony, CHSSN's Senior Advisor **Jim Carter** was honoured for his "singular contribution and outstanding community leadership" by the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN).

Jim, along with Clifford Lincoln, Sid Stevens and Earl De La Perralle, were the 2017 winners of the ninth annual Sheila and Victor Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service Awards. At the same ceremony, Claudia Di Iorio was given the third annual Young Quebecers Leading the Way Award. ■

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ADVOCACY EVENT

Jim Carter and Jennifer Johnson from the CHSSN discuss the English-speaking community with Premier Philippe Couillard and Minister of Health and Social Services Gaëtan Barrette at the QCGN-organized National Assembly advocacy event, November 21, 2017.

Photo credit: Mary Ellen Beaulieu



TAKING SOME STRESS out of TRAVEL for HEALTH CARE



A PILOT PROJECT TO PUT IN PLACE A "PATIENT NAVIGATOR" IN QUEBEC CITY IS WELL UNDERWAY. THE NAVIGATOR WILL WORK DIRECTLY WITH PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES COMING TO THE CITY FOR SPECIALIZED CARE.

The new travel4health.ca website went live on September 1st, providing information and support to English-speaking patients who have to travel away from home for medical services.

Patients from the eastern regions of Quebec often have to travel to larger centres like Quebec City, Rimouski, and Sept-Îles for specialized medical services that are unavailable in their home regions.

Many of these patients and their families are unfamiliar with these larger centres and their hospitals, and may be not sufficiently bilingual to communicate effectively, struggling especially to understand medical terminology.

CHSSN worked with local NPIs and identified useful travel information that's gathered together on the new website, with hard-copy booklets or "travel toolkits" available from local community organizations.

"We're very happy with the results of this partnership," said **Jennifer Johnson**, Executive Director of CHSSN. "When you're sick and faced with travel to an unknown city or being a patient in an unfamiliar hospital, that stress just adds to the burden of being ill."

CHSSN is already planning next steps for travel4health.ca. A pilot project to put in place a "patient navigator" in Quebec City is well underway. The navigator will work directly with patients and their families coming to the city for specialized care. The new service will be supported by the Quebec Community Health and Social Services Foundation. ■

For more information and to access resources, go to travel4health.ca



NEW DIRECTOR AT HEALTH CANADA SEES CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

This is an important time for Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in Canada,” says Sally Scott, Director of Health Care Programs within the Strategic Policy Branch at Health Canada, which includes the management of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program (OLHCP).

“At the federal level, we have a new government that encourages diversity, openness and transparency, and that is focused on achieving results. We also have an opportunity, through the renewal of the Official Languages Action Plan for 2018–2023, to strengthen our programming to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of Official Language Minority Communities in terms of improving access to appropriate and effective health services.”

In her new role, Scott is responsible for leading the renewal, implementation, oversight, redesign and management of several key contribution programs for Health Canada, including the aforementioned Official Languages Health Contribution Program, the Health Care Policy Contribution Program, and existing funding agreements with two Pan-Canadian health organizations (Canada Health Infoway and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer). Scott replaces Roger Farley as the key point of contact for the Official Language Community Development Bureau at Health Canada, a role previously occupied by him for more than 10 years.

Scott has over 20 years of experience in negotiating and maintaining effective partnerships, providing strategic advice on

policies, programs and initiatives, and effectively mobilizing people, organizations and partners to deliver results. She says she’s excited to take on a job that helps promote the full recognition of English and French in Canadian society and that seeks to improve the vitality of Anglophone and Francophone minority language communities. She sees both challenges and opportunities ahead.

“There is a need for more and better access to data to ensure that the OLHCP continues to target the evolving needs of Official Language Minority Communities,” she observed. “Better data will also help to tell our results story and to demonstrate how initiatives funded under the OLHCP are making a meaningful difference in improving access to quality health services for Official Language Minority Communities.”

“In terms of opportunities,” she continued, “the creation of the new Health Portfolio Consultative Committee for Official Language Minority Communities will facilitate the consideration of issues of concern to OLMCs, and provide an important venue for their input into policy and program development across the Health Portfolio.”

The new Committee brings together representatives from Health Canada’s four targeted beneficiaries (CHSSN, SSF, CNFS and McGill) as well as representatives from Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The Committee held its inaugural meeting on November 15, 2017. ■

The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) is a network of community resources, associations and public institutions dedicated to the development of health and social services for English-speaking communities in Quebec.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHSSN VISIT THE WEBSITE OR CONTACT US AT:

CHSSN

1270, chemin Ste-Foy, bureau 2106 Québec (Québec) G1S 2M4
Tel: 418 684 2289 Fax: 418 684 2290 email: info@chssn.org
chssn.org

Legal deposit: National Library of Canada: ISSN 1709-2175
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec

Publication of this newsletter is made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada

CHSSN'S OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

- + Foster projects and initiatives, through partnership and network building, to promote access to English-language health and social services and support community vitality;
- + Create new knowledge and provide information on English-language communities and their needs;
- + Promote, evaluate and disseminate successful models of organization of services;
- + Promote informed public policy supporting the vitality of English-speaking communities;
- + Support conferences and other forms of consultation on health and social services for English-speaking communities.

CHSSN
Community Health
And Social Services Network