

COMMUNITY NetLink

NEWS FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES NETWORK

SPRING 2026 | VOLUME 44

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▶ Participants at the NPI Reboot
2026 in Wendake.

What an Incredible Three Days in Wendake!

From May 20 to 22, 2026, NPI organizations gathered at Hôtel-Musée Premières Nations in Wendake, near Québec City, for NPI Reboot 2026—an inspiring opportunity to reconnect, reflect, and reimagine our work together.

Set in a space deeply rooted in culture and community, the conference fostered a strong sense of renewal and connection, alongside rich opportunities for resource sharing and collective learning. Key themes included Indigenous partnerships, inclusion, the social determinants of health, exploring the intersection of culture, literacy, employment, education, and health for English-Speaking Quebecers and reporting.



Three Days in Wendake

Continued...

Highlights included a workshop on connecting and collaborating with Indigenous partners led by Connie Jacques, and a presentation by Pemma Muzumdar of the National Collaborating Centre for the Determinants of Health on integrating structural and social determinants of health into change efforts.

Participants also explored the links between culture, literacy, employment, education, and health for English-speaking Quebecers through a dynamic panel featuring Rosalie Di Lollo (YES), Nick Maturro (ELAN), Wendy Seys (Literacy Quebec), and Christine Truesdale (LEARN).

Strong emphasis was on reporting and impact, with participants reviewing 2025–2026 accomplishments,



NPI Reboot Participants.



Pemma Muzumdar, Knowledge Translation Specialist, National Collaborating Centre for the Determinants of Health.

Clockwise from left: Panel with Rosalie di Lollo (YES), Nick Maturro (ELAN), Christine Truesdale (LEARN) and Wendy Seys (Literacy Quebec), and Participants of NPI Reboot.



identifying ways to strengthen reporting processes. Denise Beaton (CHSSN) presented on how CHSSN and the network can make the most of SHARP to improve reach and engagement. Rachel Tremblay of Santé Québec led a session on access plans and access committees and shared updates on the process underway. Participants also learned about CHSSN's Guide to Supporting the Inclusion of English-Speaking Families as a practical tool to support ongoing partnership development with the French community sector from Anne-Marie Čech (CHSSN).

Leadership renewal and peer learning were also central themes on the second and third day, with executive directors exploring the future of NPI and coordinators coming together for resource sharing and collective learning. A visit to the Huron-Wendat Museum and Long House added another meaningful dimension to the gathering, grounding the experience in place, history, and connection. Altogether, NPI Reboot 2026 renewed momentum, strengthened relationships, and reinforced a shared commitment to inclusive, community-rooted action.

NPI Awards

At our recent NPI Reboot, we took a moment to celebrate the extraordinary impact of community organizations across the network. As part of this gathering, we proudly presented awards to five outstanding teams, recognizing their dedication and excellence across the five core components that guide the Networking and Partnership Initiative.

Each award reflects a unique dimension of how we work to strengthen community health and social services access for English-speaking populations in Québec:



Networking

AGAPE—The Youth and Parents Agape Association Inc.
(Ian Williams)



Knowledge

HLSSL—Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence
(Anna Cone and Susan Woodfine)



Outreach

Eva Marsden Centre for Social Justice and Aging
(Sheri McLeod)



Representation

NSCA—North Shore Community Association
Aitalina Stepanova and Jody Lessard



Partnerships

CASE—Center for Access to Services in English
(Julia Frid and Audrey Ottier)

These organizations exemplify the strength, innovation, and commitment found across the NPI network. Through their work on the ground, they are improving access to services, building meaningful partnerships, and advancing health equity in their communities.

We extend our sincere congratulations and gratitude to all the award recipients for their inspiring contributions.

Adaptation Conference: Building Together 2026

Strengthening Access, Equity, and Collaboration for English-Speaking Communities in Quebec



The “Building Together 2026 Exchange Conference”, held January 28–29 at the Delta Hotels Quebec, once again affirmed its role as one of the most important gatherings for advancing health equity for English-speaking communities across the province. Held every two to three years, the event brings together the health-system professionals responsible for English-language services and the community organizations innovating on the ground—creating a rare and essential space for shared learning, research exchange, and collaboration.

This year’s conference welcomed more than 100 participants from across Quebec. The agenda showcased cutting-edge research, including presentations on “Inequalities in Mental Health Hospitalizations Among Anglophones” using hospital records of pregnant women and the “Challenges and Resilience of English-speaking Immigrant Fathers” navigating linguistic and cultural transitions. Sessions also explored building data infrastructure for monitoring access to care, and the long-term impacts of patient-physician language concordance. ▶

Photos:

- 1) Kettly Pinchinat (CIUSSS-du-Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, Institut universitaire SHERPA).
- 2) Michael Reaume (University of Ottawa).
- 3) Bilis Vissandjée (Université de Montréal).
- 4) Valérie Fontaine (Secrétariat à l'accès aux services en langue anglaise et aux communautés ethnoculturelles, ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux) and Jennifer Johnson (CHSSN).
- 5) Kevin Erskine-Henry (CHSSN Board director).
- 6) Soukaina Hamia and Ushana Houston (ACDPN).
- 7) Collective art done on-site in a teambuilding activity.



Adaptation Conference: Building Together 2026

Continued...

Community voices were front and centre, with presentations on outreach strategies, rural engagement, and campaigns supporting both health-network staff and English-speaking residents. Work-shops on communicating effectively with English-speaking populations provided practical tools that participants reported they would apply immediately in their regions.

System-level collaboration included Santé Québec's work on English-language services, new population-health findings, youth-protection pathways, caregiver experiences, and promising models such as Aire ouverte. Community organizations—including AGAPE, ACDPN, and CASE—shared culturally adapted approaches that are improving access and outcomes.

Evaluation results were unequivocal: participants deeply valued the event, reporting that they learned concrete strategies they will bring back to their communities. Building Together 2026 reinforced a shared commitment—progress happens when research, community expertise, and system partners move forward together.



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Photos:
1) Sathya Karunanathan, Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ottawa.
2) Said Berghel, Professor UQAT, discussing with John McMahon, Assistant Deputy Minister, SRQEA.
3) Anne Duchesne, "répondante" for Capitale-Nationale.
4) William Floch and Dr. Joanne Pocock.
5) John McMahon, Jennifer Johnson, Ron Creary, Maryse Bérubé and Rachel Tremblay (Santé Québec), Louis-Pierre Légaré (SRQEA).
6) Exchange Conference "Building Together 2026" Participants.



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CHSSN Calls for Stronger Part VII Regulations in Senate Testimony

On April 27, 2026, Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN), addressed the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages during its study of the regulatory framework for Part VII of the Official Languages Act. Drawing on more than 20 years of experience, she emphasized that strong, enforceable regulations are essential to protecting the vitality of English-speaking communities in Quebec.

Johnson warned that pressures to route federal funds through provincial systems without clear obligations risk diluting federal intentions. She pointed to the 2024 Youth Mental Health Fund—where Quebec organizations were deemed ineligible despite federal guidance to include official language minority communities—as a clear example of what regulations must prevent.

Her recommendations included embedding enforceable obligations in federal-provincial agreements, protecting dedicated funding envelopes, strengthening positive measures, stabilizing community networks, and safeguarding direct federal-to- community funding.

The full presentation can be viewed on the Senate website: sencanada.ca/en/committees/ollo/ (sencanada.ca in Bing).





Partners in Care Summit

In February 2026, CHSSN convened the Partners in Care Summit in Montréal, bringing together community organizations, researchers, Senior Wellness Initiative coordinators, and health and social service partners from across Québec to discuss the realities facing caregivers of English-speaking older adults. Funded through Health Canada, the event focused on identifying priorities and practical solutions to better support caregivers throughout their journeys.

Through facilitated discussions, collaborative workshops, and expert presentations, participants explored challenges related to system navigation, recognition and self-identification, linguistic access, and the growing complexity of caregiving roles. The Summit created an opportunity to strengthen partnerships across sectors while highlighting the important contributions of caregivers in communities throughout Québec.

Insights gathered during the event are summarized in the Partners in Care Summit report, available at [Partners in Care Summit](#). The aim of the report is to help inform future policy discussions and community initiatives aimed at improving support for caregivers and advancing more inclusive, accessible health and social services for English-speaking communities.

(Above) Participants of Partners in Care Summit

Two New Suites of Resources from CHSSN Support

Healthier Aging & Stronger Community Programs

This spring CHSSN is releasing two new suites of resources to support organizations, partners, and funders working with English-speaking older adults across Québec. Through the Senior Wellness Initiative, CHSSN created a bilingual Risk & Quality Management toolkit designed to strengthen safety, inclusion, and program planning in community settings. It includes guides on risk assessment and inclusive outreach, a risk assessment flowchart, along with adaptable templates and planning tools. Grounded in the realities of community-based programming, these resources were created to address a gap in publicly available risk and quality management tools for the community sector.

The second suite of tools is the Senior Wellness Compass; a visual framework and companion resource collection. The Compass connects key life transitions, including caregiving, cognitive changes, mental health changes, and navigating health and social services, with practical information, provincial and national resources, and government priorities.

Together, these resources aim to strengthen collaboration, improve navigation and outreach, and support healthier aging in the right place. View the Risk & Quality Management Toolkit and the Senior Wellness Compass materials at chssn.org/projects/senior-wellness-centres.



A New Provincial Patient Navigation Network

On April 1st, 2026, the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) announced the launch of its new Patient Navigation Network (PNN), an innovative provincial initiative designed to improve access to health and social services for English-speaking communities across Quebec.

The project is supported largely by funding from the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise (SRQEA), while the CHSSN will lead the coordination of the network by supporting the participating organizations in implementing their programs. This includes mentorship, professional development, information sharing, and the promotion of best practices. The CHSSN will also establish a framework and statistical tools to track outcomes, manage reporting across regions, and produce annual reports evaluating the program's impact. Minister Christopher Skeete attended the announcement at the CHSSN head office in Quebec City, emphasizing that health care and social services must be equitable for all Quebecers, whether French- or English-speaking, and that this project will help meet the needs of English-speaking communities across Quebec.



CHSSN team members with Minister Christopher Skeete.

About the Patient Navigators

While many Quebecers face both the challenges of navigating the complexities of the provincial health system and the stress of their medical situation, the PNN represents a significant step toward addressing persistent linguistic barriers faced by English-speakers when accessing care. Language plays a fundamental role across the entire continuum of healthcare, serving as the main channel for communicating symptoms, diagnosis, treatment planning, and following medical instructions. Clear communication—especially when delivered in a patient's preferred language and in plain terms—is closely associated with greater safety, fewer medical errors, and improved health outcomes.

Through this program, patient navigators will be deployed in 12 regions where they will offer personalized support to help patients better navigate, access, and understand the care they need. "This initiative marks an important milestone in strengthening access to care for English-speaking communities," shared Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director of CHSSN. "By building a coordinated network of patient navigators, we are reinforcing connections between communities and the health system."

Steve Guimond, the former Québec City Patient Navigator and now new program's coordinator, adds: "The PNN is the result of years of hard work and development, drawing heavily on the Patient Navigator service established in Quebec City in 2018. This new network will help create more equitable access to the health care system for thousands of English-speaking Quebecers."

Helping Patients Navigate Care

Patient navigation is an evidence-based approach that supports individuals facing barriers related to language, culture, geography, or system complexity.

Their role includes guiding patients through appointment logistics, assisting with medical forms, and ensuring that key health information is clearly communicated. Navigators also act as a bridge between patients and healthcare providers, offering accompaniment to appointments when necessary and providing emotional support to patients and their families.

In addition, navigators identify and address barriers such as transportation, lodging, and language challenges. They connect individuals to community resources and, in some cases, support travel coordination for specialized care outside their region.

A Strong Local, Community-Based Network

Through the PNN network, the CHSSN will coordinate and support patient navigation services delivered by community organizations in the following regions:

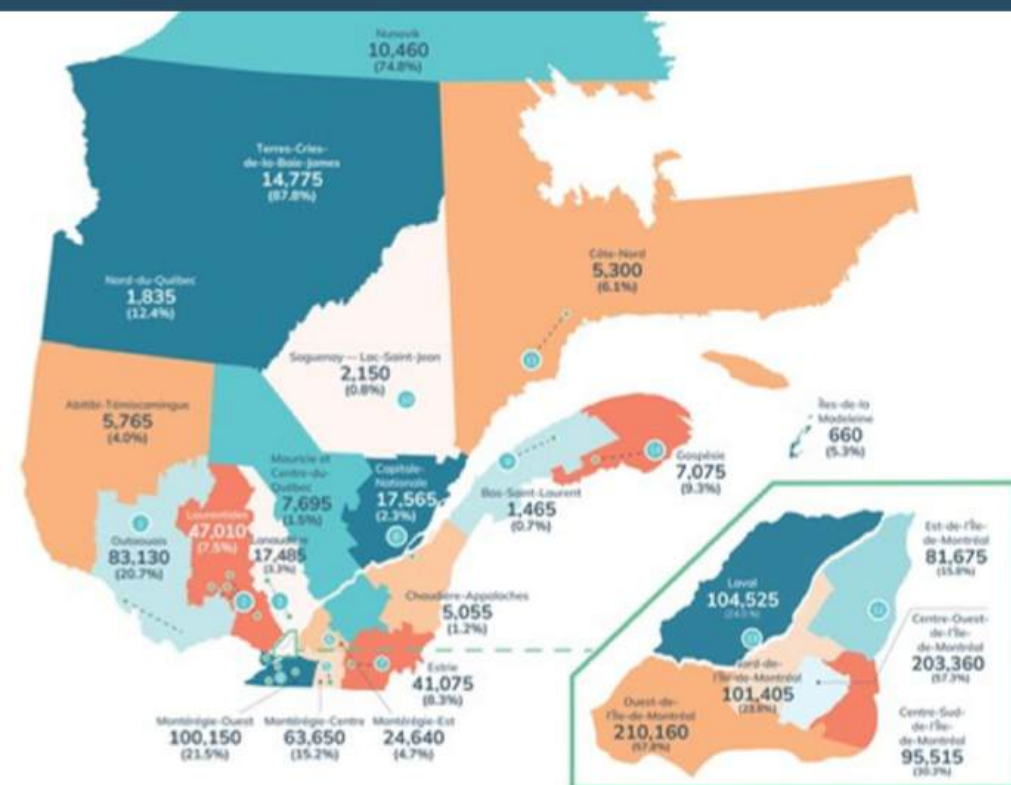
- Jeffery Hale Community Partners (Capitale-Nationale)
- Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence (Rimouski)
- North Shore Community Association (Sept-Îles and Baie Comeau)
- 4Korners (Laurentians)

- Assistance and Referral Centre (Montréal Centre)
- Connexions Resource Centre (Outaouais)
- English Community Organization Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean (Saguenay)
- English Community Organization of Lanaudière (Lanaudière)
- Montréal East Partnership for the English-speaking Community (Montréal East)
- Montréal West Community Network (Montréal West)
- Townshippers' Association (Eastern Townships)
- East Island Network for English Language Services (Montréal East)

The following networks will also be part of the PNN as affiliated organizations, as they also offer patient navigation services within their respective regions:

- Committee for Anglophone Social Action (Gaspé)
- The Youth and Parents AGAPE Association (Laval)

Together, these partners will deliver services that support vulnerable English-speaking individuals in accessing both local and, when needed, inter-regional care.



The CHSSN PN Network Le réseau GAP du CHSSN

1. Outaouais
Connexions Resource Centre
 2. Laurentides
4Korners
 3. Lanaudière
English Community Organization of Lanaudière (ECOL)
 4. Montréal-Ouest
Montréal West Community Network (MWCN)
 5. Montréal-Centre
Assistance and Referral Centre (ARC)
 6. Montréal-Est
Montréal East Partnership for the English-Speaking Community (MEPEC)
 7. Estrie
Townshippers' Association
 8. Capitale-Nationale
Jeffery Hale Community Partners (JH Partners)
 9. Bas-Saint-Laurent
Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence
 10. Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean
English Community Organization of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean (ECO-SJ)
 11. Côte-Nord
North Shore Community Association (NSCA)
 12. Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal
East Island Network for English-Language Services (REISA)
- CHSSN Affiliated PNs
Les GAPs affiliés**
13. Laval
The Youth & Parents AGAPE Association Inc. (AGAPE)
 14. Gaspésie
Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA)
- With financial support from / Avec la participation financière de :
- Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise
- Québec



(L to R)
Juniper Glass, Myriam Tessier,
Lindsay Turner, Tony Alfonso,
Shirley Jobson, Danica Logan,
Amy Bilodeau, Griffin Payne,
Amanda Keller, Jenn Cooke,
Jennifer Johnson.

Connecting Perspectives

Mental Health Advisory Committee Meets in Montréal

CHSSN recently convened its Mental Health Advisory Committee on February 24, 2026, ahead of the annual Mental Health Forum, bringing together partners, practitioners, and community representatives from across Québec to share insights and inform the ongoing development of mental health initiatives.

The meeting provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on emerging needs, exchange promising practices, and strengthen alignment across programs serving English-speaking communities. Advisory members contributed their expertise to validate approaches, contextualize emerging trends, and ensure that CHSSN's work remains responsive to community realities and grounded in current knowledge and practice. Discussions highlighted key developments in the field, including the rise of youth-led advocacy, growing awareness of youth caregivers, and increased demand for supports that build emotional and social skills among young people. Participants also emphasized the ongoing impacts of isolation, employment barriers, and broader social determinants of mental health, including housing and food insecurity.

Across conversations, a shared theme emerged around the importance of connection, purpose, and meaningful engagement as foundational to mental well-being. Members also identified opportunities to strengthen collaboration across sectors and connect CHSSN with broader policy, research, and service networks, helping to inform future areas of development.

CHSSN extends its thanks to all Advisory Committee members for their continued engagement and leadership. Their contributions help ensure that programs remain grounded in community realities while supporting innovation and growth across the network.



Reflect & Rise:

CHSSN 2026 Mental Health Forum

The 2026 CHSSN Mental Health Forum, #Reflect & Rise, held on February 24-25, 2026, brought together community leaders, service providers, and partners from across Québec to strengthen collaboration and advance culturally responsive approaches to mental health.

Supported by the Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon, the SRQEA (Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise), and the Secrétariat à la jeunesse, the Forum created space for reflection,

learning, and dialogue. Participants explored themes including outreach, partnership development, workplace culture, and sustainable community impact. The gathering opened with a land acknowledgment and recognition of Black History Month, highlighting the leadership and contributions of organizations serving Black communities.

Over two days, participants engaged in workshops, panels, and peer exchanges designed to build both individual and collective capacity. Key messages emerged: effective outreach is rooted in trust and relationships; collaboration requires intentionality; and staff well-being is essential to long-term impact.



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participant name;
Jennifer Johnson; lorem
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Reflect & Rise

Continued...



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The Forum demonstrated strong outcomes, with most participants reporting new connections, strengthened partnerships, and practical tools to support their work. While the energy and insights were clear, participants also emphasized the need for continued follow-up and structural support to translate ideas into action.

A full report summarizing the Forum's outcomes and learnings is now available for consultation. The event was also highlighted during Mental Health Week across CHSSN's social media channels, extending its reach and impact beyond the gathering itself.

Above all, the Forum reaffirmed a shared commitment to building a stronger, more connected mental health ecosystem for Québec's English-speaking communities.





A Practical Guide

Born from a Unique Collaboration to Include English-Speaking Families

40%

of English-speaking five-year-olds are vulnerable in at least one developmental domain

When entering kindergarten in Quebec, early childhood development is critical. Yet, data shows that nearly 40% of English-speaking five-year-olds are vulnerable in at least one developmental domain—a situation often compounded by language barriers that complicate access to essential health and social services.

To build a stronger, more inclusive safety net, the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) chose to leverage the power of collective action. Thanks to an unprecedented mobilization of key players from Quebec's early childhood and family ecosystem, our new tool was created: "Vos services sont-ils accessibles aux tout-petits d'expression anglaise? Guide de soutien à l'inclusion des familles d'expression anglaise en contexte de vulnérabilité".

A Collective and Multidisciplinary Achievement

This guide would not have been possible without the generosity, expertise, and shared vision of numerous key partners in our sector. Together, we brought together diverse perspectives to offer a rigorous tool rooted in on-the-ground realities:

- **Deeply Rooted in the Family and Early Childhood Network:** A huge thank you to the "Fédération québécoise des organismes communautaires Famille" (Alex Gauthier and Sofie Terrien), the "Réseau pour un Québec Famille" (Corinne Vachon Croteau and Marilou Fuller), the "Confédération des organismes familiaux du Québec" (Marie Simard), the "Réseau des Centres de ressources périnatales du Québec" (Marie-Claude Dufour), and the "Association des haltes-garderies communautaires du Québec" (Sandrine Tarjon) for their essential networking and collaboration.

Photo (L to R): Karoll-Ann Carrier (MEPEC), Sandrine Tarjon (Association des haltes-garderies communautaires du Québec), Corinne Vachon Croteau et Marilou Fuller (Réseau pour un Québec Famille), Anne-Marie Čech (CHSSN), Alex Gauthier (FQOCF), Stéphanie Émond (RCRPQ), Christine Couture (RVP), Marie Simard (Confédération des Organismes Familiaux du Québec), Jennifer Johnson (CHSSN).

A Practical Guide

Continued...

- **The Fathers' Perspective:** Provided by the "Regroupement pour la valorisation de la Paternité" (Raymond Villeneuve and Nathalie Jalabert).
- **Scientific, Clinical, and Field Expertise:** Driven by Professor Saïd Bergeul (Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue), Kristy Findlay (Centre Mosaïque de Québec) for the speech-language pathology component, and Fannie Dagenais for strategic communication support.
- **The Voice of English-Speaking Communities:** Thanks to the vital involvement of Jody Lessard (North Shore Community Association) and Karoll-Ann Carrier (Montérégie East Partnership for the English-speaking Community).
- **Legal Compliance:** Thanks to the invaluable guidance and validation from the "Éducaloi" team.

Representatives from over 30 organizations attended the launch of the Guide.

What's Inside the Guide A Reflection of Our Shared Expertise

Thanks to this rich collaboration, the guide offers a practical blend of data, lived experiences, and operational tools:

- **Demographics & Realities:** Key data showing that English speakers in Quebec face real isolation and higher poverty rates (12.1% vs. 7.1% for French speakers).
- **A Stepping Stone to French:** Evidence demonstrating that welcoming vulnerable families in their language of comfort builds the trust necessary to encourage them, down the road, to integrate into community francization programs.
- **Language Development:** Professional advice reassuring parents that speaking their native language at home enriches cognitive development and strengthens the foundations for learning French.
- **Legal Parameters:** A section written by Éducaloi clarifying how non-profit organizations can legally use English (in public signage, websites, etc.) while fully respecting the Charter of the French Language.

Photo (L to R): Corinne Vachon Croteau (Réseau pour un Québec Famille), Brittney Chabot (ECO-02), Anne-Marie Čech (CHSSN).



Download the Guide Today!

By joining forces and making our environments inclusive from the very start, we work together to ensure that every toddler in Quebec gets an equal opportunity to thrive.

To get your copy: Download the guide at the following link:
chssn.org/fr/documents/guide-familles-expression-anglaise/



Staff Updates at CHSSN

CHSSN is pleased to share several staff updates as we continue strengthening our programs and supporting communities across Quebec. Earlier this year, three colleagues stepped into new roles that bring valuable experience, insight, and energy to our work.



Welcoming Lindsay Turner, Director of Programs

CHSSN is delighted to welcome Lindsay Turner, who joined us in January as Director of Programs. Lindsay brings over two decades of leadership in policy development, community engagement, and public service, most recently as Director of the Poverty Reduction Division in Nunavut. She has led major territorial initiatives and built strong partnerships across governments and communities. Lindsay brings a thoughtful, team-oriented approach and deep commitment to equity and collaboration. Her experience managing remote teams and navigating complex policy landscapes is already strengthening CHSSN's work.



Welcoming Denise Beaton, Program Manager

We are also pleased to welcome Denise Beaton, who joined CHSSN in February as Program Manager for Seniors. Over the past year, Denise has worked closely with CHSSN to develop a comprehensive risk-management dossier, giving her strong insight into our network and priorities. She brings more than ten years of experience in public health and aging policy, with roles at the BC Ministry of Health, Canada Health Infoway, and the BC Centre for Disease Control. Denise's steady, solutions-focused approach and strong partnership skills are already contributing meaningfully to our programs.

Staff Update: New Coordination Role for Danica Logan

We are pleased to share that Danica Logan has transitioned to become the new Coordinator of the Networking and Partnership Initiative (NPI). Danica brings deep expertise and a long-standing connection to the NPI model. Prior to joining CHSSN, she held several roles within the NPI network, culminating in her position as Interim Executive Director of MEPEC, one of the NPI organizations.

Her understanding of the NPI's strengths and pressures will be invaluable as we enter the next phase of renewal and improvement. We are fortunate to have her leadership in this important work.

Strengthening CHSSN's Mental Health Programming

In alignment with long-term strategic planning, CHSSN has brought together its two mental health programs—the Youth Mental Health Initiative (YMHI) and the "Partenariat d'assistance aux organismes en santé mentale" (PAOSM)—under a single program.

This integrated portfolio will now be led by Amy Bilodeau in her new role as Mental Health Program Manager.

Since 2023, CHSSN has supported 16 community organizations through the PAOSM program, funded on a year-to-year basis through the "Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise" (SRQEA). With the Québec government's 2025 budget confirming multi-year funding envelopes for both Mental Health and Patient Navigation, the landscape is evolving. The SRQEA will now assume direct administrative responsibility for the Mental Health program—the new "Soutien aux organismes de services en santé mentale aux Québécoises et Québécois d'expression anglaise" (SOS-Santé Mentale).

CHSSN will continue to play a key role in supporting funded organizations throughout implementation.

We also extend our sincere thanks to Danica Logan for her outstanding leadership of PAOSM over the past year.





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 OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT US AT:**

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Legal deposit: National Library of Canada: ISSN 1709-2175
Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec.



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THIS NEWSLETTER IS FUNDED BY HEALTH CANADA AS PART
OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES 2023-2028