

Update on the Renewal of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program – Consultations, Evaluation and Next Steps

Health Canada Science Colloquium on the Health of Official Language Minority Communities

February 28, 2017

Presented by Official Language Community Development Bureau



Outline

- Summary of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program 2013-2018
- Consultation with official language minority communities regarding the renewal of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program
- Program Evaluation
- Next Steps

The Official Languages Health Contribution Program 2013-2018

The two objectives of the OLHCP are:

- To foster improved access to health services for OLMCs; and,
- To increase the use of both official languages in the provision of health services.

These objectives are addressed through three broad contribution activities:

- 1. Labour market initiatives (\$106.5 M)
- 2. Health networks (\$25 M)
- 3. Health services projects (\$38.5 M)

Funds of \$4.3 M are for Health Canada program management, planning and performance measurement.

Consultation – Rationale

- The *Accountability and Coordination Framework for Official Languages* (2003) sets out the responsibility of all federal institutions to consult official language minority communities on policy and program issues that concern them.
- Health Canada is required to consult with Canadians — and especially with official language minority communities — on the renewal of its initiatives under the Official Languages Health Contribution Program.
- Under section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, federal departments must take positive measures to enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities and support and assist their development.

Consultation – Target Audience

- Official language minority communities;
- General public;
- Relevant stakeholder organizations;
- Provincial / territorial government officials;
- Health professional associations;
- Recipients of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program.

Consultation – Approach

- An online consultation held from September 13 to November 4, 2016, targeted official language minority communities (OLMCs), academic researchers, federal, provincial, and territorial officials, and the Canadian public as a whole.
 - A reference document about the Program and its context accompanied the online consultation to provide further information on the Program with a focus on key issues that have been raised over the past years, and present some directions that have been suggested to Health Canada.
- The consultation documents were sent for comment to the members of the provincial and territorial Committee on Health Workforce.
- Consultations were also held with the following ongoing recipients of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program: *Société Santé en français*, *Consortium national de formation en santé*, the Community Health and Social Services Network and McGill University.
- Health Canada will also consider other sources of public evidence in order to complete its assessment of program considerations.
 - A partial list of these sources is attached in Annex A.
- The draft consultation report will be shared with the ongoing recipients of the Official Languages Health Contribution Program prior to its final approval.
- Consultations with official language minority communities in partnership with their official languages health networks will also be considered through town hall meetings in selected communities.

Consultation – Preliminary results from consultations online and with program recipients

1) Bilingual health systems:

- The development of new health training programs, the updating of current programs, and the development of new internship placements, particularly in rural and remote areas.
- Increased follow-ups with CNFS and McGill students after their training to ensure that they are effectively serving OLMCs.
- The continuation of the Franco Doc health services project which was initiated by the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada in November 2014, and involves the identification and mobilization of French-speaking medical students enrolled in 13 English language programs across Canada.
- The systemization of the active offer of health services in the minority official language, which includes training students, raising awareness among health professionals, and integrating language standards into the accreditation process.
- The training of health services navigators or guides who can help patients, especially those who are more vulnerable, to navigate the health system and, in special cases, to act as interpreters.
- Investment in technology to ensure more distance training and simulation-based learning in order to train students in a way that is more effective and safer for patients.
- Health professional associations are involved in improving access to health services for OLMCs.

Consultation – Preliminary results (continued)

2) Communities ensure the stewardship of their health circumstances:

- Heightened access to the entire range of health services in rural and remote areas, beginning with an increased number of internship placements in the health fields in those regions.
- Availability of health information in the minority language (websites, pamphlets, brochures, and signs in health institutions).
- Health prevention and promotion for vulnerable clients such as young children, children, seniors, and people in need of mental health services.
- Services for seniors, at home and in specialized centres.
- Bilingual health clinics in OLMC settings.
- Indexation of funding to organizations and stable, long-term investments to effect systemic changes.

3) Health system performance and targets that are measurable for OLMCs:

- Inclusion of language preferences in patient health databases and health insurance cards that are managed by governments and health providers.
- Qualitative indicators to measure health network outcomes.
- Increased sampling of OLMCs in population health surveys to enable analysis at a provincial or regional level.

4) Engagement of provinces and territories:

- Greater representation of OLMCs and their health networks among federal, provincial, territorial and regional government decision-making processes.
- Health services adaptation projects that support provincial and territorial government initiatives.

Program Evaluation

- The evaluation was launched in October 2015 by Health Canada's Office of Audit and Evaluation.
- The timing of the evaluation was aligned with the 2015-2016 evaluation of the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018.
- The current evaluation period is unusually short (2.5 years) covering program activities from April 1, 2013 to September 30, 2015.

Program Evaluation – Core Issues to be Addressed

Relevance	
Issue #1: Continued Need for program	Assessment of the extent to which the program continues to address a demonstrable need and is responsive to the needs of Canadians
Issue #2: Alignment with Government Priorities	Assessment of the linkages between program objectives and (i) federal government priorities and (ii) departmental strategic outcomes
Issue #3: Alignment with Federal Roles and Responsibilities	Assessment of the role and responsibilities for the federal government in delivering the program
Performance (effectiveness, efficiency and economy)	
Issue #4: Achievement of Expected Outcomes	Assessment of progress toward expected outcomes (incl. immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes) with reference to performance targets and program reach, program design, including the linkage and contribution of outputs to outcomes
Issue #5: Demonstration of Efficiency and Economy	Assessment of resource utilization in relation to the production of outputs and progress toward expected outcomes

Program Evaluation

- Conclusion, in a nutshell : the OLHCP has been successful in contributing to increased access to bilingual health care professionals and intake staff in OLMCs by supporting post-secondary and language training activities as well as a variety of other initiatives intended to improve access to, and quality and safety of, healthcare services for OLMCs.
- Only one recommendation was made to the Official Language Community Development Bureau (OLCDB) to improve the program during the next phase:
 - The OLCDB should pursue opportunities to improve the quality and availability of information on the extent to which health services are available and actively offered in the preferred language of OLMC members, on the extent to which these members access these services, and on their level of satisfaction with such access.
- The Health Canada management response has not yet been approved.

Next Steps

- The consultation report will be published following further consultation with program recipients and communities and approvals by our management.
- The program evaluation report will be available in 2017 following approval by the Deputy Minister.
- Contribution funds of \$33.8 M per year were approved on an ongoing basis in 2013, which means that Health Canada can launch requests for proposals in 2017-2018 with the intent of making funds available on April 1, 2018.
- The mandate letter of Canadian Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly (November 2015) calls upon her to “Develop a new multi-year Official Languages plan to support English and French linguistic minorities.”
 - Discussion with Canadian Heritage, who leads the development of the next action plan for official languages, are ongoing.
 - This new action plan is expected to be announced in 2017 and will be effective starting in April 2018.

**Questions?
Comments?**

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Annex A

List of Consultation Submissions and Other Sources of Public Evidence

Sources of Evidence for Consultation

- Health Canada consultation documents
- Written submissions to the Health Canada consultation process
- House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages:
- Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages
- Consultations by Department of Canadian Heritage
- Consultations and studies undertaken by official languages organizations and governments, including:
 - Community Health and Social Services Network and its member networks
 - Quebec Community Groups Network
 - Société Santé en français and its member networks