



French-language Services Plan

2024–2025

*Department of Seniors
and Long Term Care*

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French-language Services Plan
Department of Seniors and Long Term Care
April 2024

ISBN: 978-1-77448-605-4

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Seniors and Long-Term Care

Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2024-2025 »

Message from the Deputy Minister

Bonjour!

The Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care (SLTC) is committed to the social and economic well-being of older adults. SLTC divisions work with service delivery partners to provide continuing care services, are overseeing the building of 5700 new long-term care beds and provide leadership and policy coordination across government to create and provide services for seniors.

SLTC is dedicated to working with service delivery partners to continually improve the support system for seniors and those requiring continued and long-term care. The Department provides information in French to older adults and their families through the **Seniors Information Line** and **Seniors Abuse Referral Services** by calling 211, going to ns.211.ca, or following @211NS on twitter. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In accordance with the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations, I am pleased to provide the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care's French-language Services Plan for the year 2024-25.

Tracey Barbrick
Deputy Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care

What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and francophone community

We recognize the importance of French-language services in our communities, and we endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and regulations. We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French, and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programs, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and francophone community. One example is the recently opened "Villa Acadienne," a long-term care facility in Meteghan, the Municipality of Clare, which offers a welcoming environment for residents and seniors that reflect the unique identity of the Acadian community.

To achieve this aim, we collaborate with other designated public institutions across government – including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie – through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. We engage with the Acadian and francophone communities in their priority initiatives and work collaboratively with public health, and the French-language services coordinators (FLSCs) (including those at the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA)) to ensure Acadian and francophone citizens across Nova Scotia have access to information respecting seniors care and services in French. We greatly value this partnership, which ensures a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We have a collaborative working relationship with the Réseau Santé Nouvelle-Écosse (RSNE) to improve access to health services in French for Acadians and Francophones in Nova Scotia. Much of this work will take place under the auspices of the Health Equity Framework, led by the Department of Health and Wellness. We greatly

value these partnerships, which enable a continued understanding of the unique needs of our province's Acadian and francophone community.

We encourage Nova Scotians to request government services in French. We also encourage Acadians and francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards, and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office. As we continue to maintain and improve our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress and we invite you to share with us your comments or questions by contacting our French-language services coordinator. If you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language services coordinator:

Sophia Foley, Director of Policy and Research

Email address: Sophia.Foley@novascotia.ca

Phone: 902-225-5876

Services we offer in French

The Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care responds to verbal and written requests to communicate in French from the public in a timely manner. This is accomplished by obtaining external translation when necessary. Our goal continues to be to provide the same quality of handling inquiries and information requests in French as in English. Examples include

- Documents on Long Term Care (LTC) and Home Care programs and services such as the "[*Bien vivre, services de soins continus*](#)" which provides an overview of continuing care services in Nova Scotia as well as an overview of the Continuing Care Assistant funding and training program through "[*Devenir Auxiliaire en soins continus dans le secteur des soins continus de la Nouvelle-Écosse.*](#)" And "[*Becoming a Continuing Care Assistant \(CCA\) in Nova Scotia's Continuing Care Sector.*](#)"
- The Department overview on the Nova Scotia website is being updated to reflect the new mandate and responsibilities.

How we communicate with the public in French

The Department's correspondence team, program areas and FLSC work together to ensure that:

- Correspondence that is received in French is responded to in French.
- Information lines such as the Seniors Information Line and Seniors Abuse Referral Services are offered in French through 211 phone service and ns.211.ca.
- The translation of web content, forms, brochures and other publications as opportunities become available. For example,
 - French ads have run on radio (province-wide), French-language newspapers, Facebook, and Access Nova Scotia digital screens regarding the Seniors Care Grant.
 - Any information that is developed respecting the Seniors Care Grant and Age Friendly Grants are translated. This includes, "[*Demandez de l'aide pour des dépenses liées aux services à domicile, aux services de soins de santé et au chauffage : Allocation pour services à domicile chez les aînés - Gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Écosse \(novascotia.ca\)*](#)" and fact sheet: "[*Fiche d'information au sujet de l'Allocation pour services à domicile chez les aînés - Gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Écosse \(novascotia.ca\)*](#)."
- Where possible, agencies identify French-speaking providers to support French-speaking clients for Home Care services. To continue to build this service offering, Seniors and Long-Term care has partnered with the Université Sainte-Anne to offer a francophone work and learn CCA program.

How we plan to maintain and enhance our French-language services in 2024–25

Objective 1: Support the development, planning, and delivery of French-language services to the public:

- Actions
 - The Health Equity Framework acknowledges the need for French-speaking Nova Scotians to have access to health service in French, and the positive health outcomes that can be realized when French services are available to French-speakers. SLTC will continue to support the work of the Health Equity Framework as it addresses issues directly related to French Nova Scotians in its three overarching themes: Patient Experience, Health Human Resources and Health System Policies and Practices,
 - Represent the Department on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee including sharing information from the Committee with the department staff,
 - Support the publication of the 2024-25 French-language services plan,
 - Fulfill obligations determined in the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations,
 - Ensure all staff are aware of French-language Services related activities, such as cultural learning and promote the voluntary participation of staff in French language training within our Department.

Objective 2: Communications and consultations with the francophone community

- Actions
 - Continue to develop and distribute communication materials in French and move towards a bilingual format as resources are updated,
 - Collaborate and engage with the Acadian and Francophone community organizations such as the Réseau Santé Nouvelle-Écosse and with Regroupement des Aînés de la Nouvelle-Écosse through the Seniors Advisory Council to ensure French language services are provided with respect to programs and services.
 - Seniors Week takes place each year and is an opportunity to celebrate and support Nova Scotia Seniors to age well in their communities. This year, SLTC will work with community partners to host an event in French, as an opportunity to celebrate Acadian culture.
 - [The Congres Mondial](#), an international celebration of Acadian culture, will be taking place in Clare/Argyle August 10-18, 2024. With a conference element focused on Seniors, SLTC will work with our community partners in the area who may wish to connect their Acadian participants into this local programming.

Objective 3: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administration frameworks

- Actions
 - Our Space and Design Guidelines with respect to building new Long Term Care Nursing Homes, promote inclusion that incorporates culture and community needs. By providing space that facilitates community connections and meaningful interactions with other residents, staff, family and community, facilities can help to strengthen the social capacity of their community, based on their unique needs.
 - The department is currently working with key partners on the replacement of the long-term care facility, Foyer Pere Fiset in the community of Chéticamp. This work in is the early stages however this build will reflect the francophone community in this area of Nova Scotia.
 - Translate requests and provide services in French as per the French-language Services Regulations
 - Increase awareness of our French-language services requirements to achieve a better understanding of the Department's obligations under the *French-language Services Act*