



# 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT



The PEI French Health Network is a non-profit organization that collaborates with various partners in order to improve access to quality French-language health services and programs for Prince Edward Island's Acadian and Francophone population.



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### The Health Network consists of members from five sectors:

- the Acadian and Francophone population of Prince Edward Island
- health professionals
- health service managers
- educational facilities
- policy makers

### Our Vision

The Acadian and Francophone community of Prince Edward Island flourishes by benefitting from quality French-language health services and programs.

### Our Values

- Base partnerships on a relationship of trust and mutual respect
- Select projects that are developed by consensus
- Be flexible when it comes to local realities
- Exercise our power of influence in an apolitical fashion
- Exercise visionary, unifying leadership

The PEIFHN is one of 16 networks that make up the Société Santé en français.

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- **Johanne Irwin**, co-chair; health professionals' representative
- **Marie Dionne-Sullivan**, women's representative
- **Josée Gallant-Gordon**, health professionals' representative
- **Father Eddie Cormier** (until July 2016), seniors' representative
- **Claude Blaquière** (from September 2016), treasurer; seniors' representative
- **Linda Richards** (until September 2016), treasurer; parents and early childhood representative
- **Carole Gallant** (from September 2016), parents and early childhood representative
- **Priscille Arsenault** (until September 2016), community representative
- **Rose Delaney** (from September 2016), seniors' representative
- **Gabriel Arsenault**, vice-chair; youth representative
- **Colette Aucoin**, Société éducative de l'Î.-P.-É.
- **Aubrey Cormier**, Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin

### GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

- **Isabelle Dasyva-Gill**, co-chair; Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat delegate
- **Stéphane Labrosse**, Primary Health Care delegate
- **Tracy Chiasson-Lawlor**, secretary; Social Programs and Seniors delegate
- **Andy Gallant** (until September 2016) and **Yvonne Deagle** (from September 2016), Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee delegates
- **Gayle Lamont**, Long Term Care delegate
- **Matt Bourque**, Child and Youth Services delegate
- **Jennifer LaRosa**, Planning and Evaluation delegate
- **Cheryl Banks**, (until February 2017) Hospital Services delegate

### STAFF

- **Élise Arsenault**, Executive Director of the Health Network
- **Patricia Richard**, Assistant Director of the Health Network



## MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

The PEI French Health Network (Health Network) continues to work with its partners to enhance the offer of and access to quality health care services in French.

To strengthen the capacity of the health system, there was significant collaboration with Health PEI during the Rendez-vous de la francophonie. One hundred and thirty information kits on the active offer of French language health services were distributed in all divisions. These kits contained several practical tools, facilitating access to resources to increase the offer of French services. It provided an opportunity for the Health Network to recognize the outstanding contribution of Health PEI staff in the provision of French-language services and who received the Étoile Santé award.

Given the importance of bilingual human resources in the offer of French-language services to the population, the Health Network is pursuing its partnership with the Public Service Commission. To encourage health professionals to improve their French language skills, additional questions were added to the bilingual service provider directory registration form which is found on the Health Network's Web site. These professionals are invited to have their French language skills assessed by the Public Service Commission and can get information on language training.

Since the publication of the study report entitled ***French Language Services in Home Care*** in 2013, the Health Network continues to collaborate with Health PEI home care directors and service managers to see to the implementation of the report's recommendations. To assist Health PEI improve its ability to deliver services, the Health Network and the SSF collaborate with the University of Sherbrooke in seeking delivery models that can be adapted to the Island's francophone minority context.

To increase French language health services in long-term care facilities in Charlottetown and to benefit from the experience

acquired during the establishment of a bilingual neighborhood in the Summerset Manor, planning is now underway to establish a bilingual neighborhood at Beach Grove Home in Charlottetown.

Board members participate in the work and initiatives of the Santé en français movement. Five representatives of the Health Network as well as its director attended the national meeting Connexion 2016 and the annual general meeting of the SSF in Ottawa last October. The community co-chair sits on the Board and on the executive committee of the SSF. She also participated in the Roadmap renewal and the provincial consultation. The government co-chair was invited to provide a testimony in a video produced by the SSF that accompanies the new framework for the recruitment and retention of bilingual human resources in the field of health.

The Health Network actively participates in the new community governance initiative led by the Developers' Network. The Board of directors is also considering the possible signing of a commitment contract for the implementation of the 2017-2027 community development plan.

Finally, the Board of directors has taken on several initiatives relating to the internal governance of the Health Network during the past year, including the establishment of workplace policies and working conditions as well as a business continuity plan.

To conclude, we would like to express our appreciation to the members of the Board of directors as well as to the staff of the Health Network, without whom these wonderful projects would not be possible.

**Johanne Irwin**  
Community Co-chair

**Isabelle Dasylyva-Gill**  
Government Co-chair



# au Santé

## MESSAGE FROM THE STAFF

The year 2016-2017 has been a very productive one for the Health Network's key initiatives.

The availability of health professionals with the language skills needed to provide French-language services remains a significant challenge for all minority Acadian and Francophone communities. Further to the SSF's launch of a new *Framework for Recruitment and Retention of Bilingual Human Resources in the Health Sector*, Health Network staff received online training and attended a meeting in Winnipeg. The framework is a tool to help the Health Network adequately support its partners in the field, improving access to French-language health services.

The Étoile Santé campaign, which is in its third year, now serves as a model to value, recruit and promote health professionals who provide French-language health services. In March, the Health Network was pleased to present its approach, particularly the Étoile Santé campaign, to Quebec's anglophone network group – the Community Health and Social Services Network – in Gatineau.

A professional bilingual version of the resource entitled *The Keys to Active Offer* was developed and distributed. This set of keys serves as a reference for health professionals and managers, providing them with information on resources available to help provide more French-language health services. We are very proud of this practical tool which has inspired two other networks to produce similar models.

The Health Network is pleased to partner with its New Brunswick colleagues on the Cafés de Paris program, which gives new insight on language training in health establishments. This innovative approach not only increases the active offer of French-language health services but also provides staff with the opportunity to receive personalized language training.



Mental health continues to be an important matter for the Health Network. In November, with the support of the SSF and Health Canada, Network employees received training on mental health first aid for adults. The Health Network pursued its partnership with Health PEI and the Prince Edward Island Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association to increase the resources and access services available in French.

Further to an invitation from Canadian Parents for French to participate in a French program on Eastlink television, the Health Network's employees recorded a show in February which aired on several occasions. It was a wonderful opportunity to promote the Health Network as well as its work, mission and major human resource and mental health projects.

Finally, to align the work of the Health Network with local priorities and the broader national objectives of the Santé en français movement, the Health Network staff participated in all planning stages with the SSF to establish the main objectives of the next Official Languages Roadmap: 2018-2023. The process also included participation in the mid-term evaluation of the present roadmap conducted by Health Canada.

We would like to express our appreciation to the Executive and Board of directors of the Health Network for their confidence and for the time invested in moving our projects forward.

**Élise Arsenault**  
Executive Director

**Patricia Richard**  
Assistant Director



## ÉTOILE SANTÉ CAMPAIGN

In December 2014, the Health Network launched the Étoile Santé campaign to raise awareness, promote and recruit health professionals who offer French-language health services in Prince Edward Island.

The initiative invites Islanders to nominate health professionals who actively offer French-language health services in Prince Edward Island. Once a month, a health professional who has distinguished himself/herself is recognized in an article published by the province's French newspaper, *La Voix acadienne*. These individuals are also acknowledged in various English newspapers such as *The Guardian*, *Journal Pioneer* and *The Buzz*.





## Étoile Santé for April 2016: Yves-Martin Robichaud

Dr. Robichaud is not only a practitioner, but also the owner of two chiropractic clinics – one in Shediac, New Brunswick, and the other in Charlottetown.

At his Charlottetown clinic, Dr. Robichaud sees patients on Tuesdays and Thursdays. "I regularly have Francophones on my appointment list," he pointed out. "I enjoy it when I can speak French with clients, and I think they appreciate it too."

It was one of his clients who nominated him for the PEI French Health Network's Étoile Santé campaign. "During my first appointment, this chiropractor put me at ease right away by speaking to me in French. Since French is my mother tongue, I felt better talking to him in French about my medical situation. He's a professional who makes his patients feel comfortable at the very start of their visit," said the client. According to her, Dr. Robichaud is well appreciated by his French-speaking clients from across the Island.

Chiropractors' tools are their hands. "The treatment we provide consists of a series of manipulations to straighten, correct, maintain, and strengthen the body, and the entire frame," he explained. "When a new client comes to see a chiropractor about pain, the chiropractor does not treat the 'pain', but the person. I always start my assessment with a questionnaire to find out more about the person's health, lifestyle, diet, work and quality of life, as well as repetitive activities, the sports they engage in, etc."

Dr. Robichaud is warm, open to new ideas, and a committed Francophone. He enjoys discovering French expressions and is very interested in the French language and Acadian culture. He was influenced by his ancestors, particularly his grandmother, who taught him that it is a duty and a privilege to speak and live in French.



## Étoile Santé for May 2016: Mélanie Gallant

Mélanie Gallant teaches the licensed practical nurse (LPN) program at Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É. She is presently working with a class of nine female students who truly appreciate her dedication. So much so that three of them decided to nominate her for the PEI French Health Network's Étoile Santé campaign.

"Mélanie has significantly influenced my life. The passion she exudes when sharing her knowledge is hard to overlook. She lent me books that I couldn't afford to buy and gave me advice on how to improve my French skills. Mélanie really enjoys her work and is a very capable professional," said one of her students. The two other students who nominated her agree wholeheartedly. "Mélanie is full of compassion and empathy and is very competent," said another one of her students. "She always gives us tools to help us better understand and explains things really well," added the third student.

Mélanie had not planned on becoming a teacher. She got her nursing degree from the University of Moncton in 2003 and worked for six months in Moncton before returning to the Island. From 2004 to 2010, she worked at the Prince County Hospital, always in bilingual positions. She was working in the Emergency Department when she was contacted by the Collège Acadie.

"I started at the Collège Acadie teaching the resident care worker program. I then developed the licensed practical nurse program based on existing programs and I have been teaching it ever since. To date, all my graduates have passed the national exam and found employment. I am proud of them," said the teacher.

"I believe that providing French health services is important and I want my students to understand that. They will be able to work in both of Canada's official languages and be in high demand when they enter the labour market. I feel that the fact that my students appreciate my work confirms that I am in the right place," concluded Mélanie.

Mélanie lives in Saint-Timothée with her husband, Robbie, and their three children.



## Étoile Santé for June 2016: Gabriel Arsenault

Individuals who undergo an amputation as a result of an accident or illness must then readjust to their new life. There to guide them through the whole process is Gabriel Arsenault. Once the patients have gone through the grieving process and healed from their surgery, the prosthetist becomes one of the most important figures in their life by helping them restore their mobility and quality of life.

Gabriel is the only prosthetist working within the PEI health care system. He works at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Charlottetown. Hailing from the Acadian and Francophone community, he is able to offer this very specialized service in both official languages, which makes him a great source of pride for his community as well as an ideal candidate for the Étoile Santé campaign.

"I became interested in prosthetics when my father lost a leg in a workplace accident in 2001," said Gabriel. "I often went with him to his prosthetist appointments, which further piqued my curiosity. After high school, I completed a four-year bachelor's degree in Kinesiology at Université de Moncton, followed by an internship with the QE's prosthetic and orthotics unit. The internship was made possible through the PERCÉ program and definitely helped me get into the Orthotics/Prosthetics Program at George Brown College in Ontario. I was able to secure my current job almost immediately after completing the three-year program."

The world of prosthetics is constantly evolving with the introduction of new materials and styles. Prosthetists require regular training to keep up with technological developments.

Gabriel takes every opportunity to offer his services in French. "I've been called upon to fix a Francophone tourist's broken prosthesis before, and I am fortunate to have other opportunities to speak French at work," said Gabriel, who speaks mostly French at home.

Gabriel is energetic and very passionate about his work. Whether he's building a custom prosthesis to meet specific needs or bracing a client as they take their first steps with a new limb, Gabriel is always willing to work with his clients to find the right solutions and help them improve their quality of life. This Étoile Santé is a true champion in his field.





## Étoile Santé for July 2016:

### Catherine Rodriguez

Prince Edward Island's one and only dermatologist started in her current position in January of 2015 and has been keeping busy ever since. Born in Chicoutimi, Quebec, Catherine Rodriguez lived in several Canadian cities with her military family before moving back to Quebec, where she completed ten years of academic studies.

"I knew I wanted to be a doctor from a very young age. My interest in dermatology was piqued when I consulted a dermatologist myself and saw first-hand how much his work changed my life. I love what I do, because I see how I too can positively impact people's lives," says the young specialist.

Dr. Rodriguez sees both French and English-speaking patients. "I love the fact that many of my patients are Francophone, because it gives me ample opportunity to speak French. Being able to express themselves in French is very important for these patients. They know we'll be able to understand each other."

It's this quality of personal contact that won Dr. Rodriguez the title of Étoile Santé for the month of July. One of her patients, an elderly lady from France who speaks very little English, was nervous about seeing a specialist. She and her daughter, who expected to play the interpreter during the appointment, were quite relieved to find that the doctor had no problem understanding them. "She was very gentle, and she explained everything in French," wrote the daughter when nominating Dr. Rodriguez. "My mother quickly felt at ease, and it was easy to see that she trusted Dr. Rodriguez."

Given the rise of skin cancer in Prince Edward Island, dermatology has become an increasingly important field in global health. "I regrettably see a lot of patients fighting certain forms of cancer, but also for other skin diseases like psoriasis, acne and eczema," says Dr. Rodriguez. As is the case for all specialists, patients need to get a referral from a doctor to see PEI's only dermatologist.

As a mother of two, the youngest being only eight months old, Dr. Rodriguez keeps herself quite busy both at work and at home. Her family commonly speaks three languages at home: French, English and Spanish. This health professional clearly recognizes the value and importance of being able to communicate in several languages!



## Étoile Santé for August 2016:

### Maddie Hughes

Maddie Hughes, originally from Charlottetown, will receive her nursing degree from the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) in May of 2017. But one can already tell by the way she deals with patients and from her work and internships that she will be an asset to the Prince Edward Island health care system. Maddie Hughes is also bilingual and in a way, trilingual. In addition to speaking English, which is her mother tongue, and French, she also knows sign language.

Before moving on to her post-secondary education, Maddie won a prestigious scholarship from the TD Group for her community leadership. "When I was in high school, I did a lot of volunteering, especially to help a young man with cerebral palsy. Helping him helped me better understand what I wanted to do. I also created a league that helped people with special needs participate in physical activities. It's also through my volunteer work that I had the opportunity to learn sign language. And because of all that, I got a scholarship," she explained.

During an internship at Prince County Hospital in the spring of 2016, her professionalism and particularly her attentiveness to the needs of a French-speaking patient were noticed and recognized by that grateful patient.

"The thought of having to stay in the hospital for several days was discouraging. But, when I woke up from surgery, third-year student Maddie Hughes was there. She spoke to me in French for the rest of my five-day stay at the hospital. It was so pleasant and reassuring to have her explain to me what she was doing, what was happening and the details of my treatment in French," said the patient, who has now completely recovered.

Ms. Hughes remembers this patient well. "I saw her name on my files and I took the initiative to introduce myself in French. While taking care of her, I gained confidence in my French-language skills," mentioned the nursing student, who works at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Charlottetown for the summer.

"In my opinion, being a nurse is about helping people and taking care of them. Yes, there is the medical aspect of the job, but for me, taking care of people goes beyond that. If all it takes to make someone feel more comfortable and less vulnerable is speaking French, then why not do it?" concluded the young lady who will certainly have a remarkable career as a nurse.



## Étoile Santé for September 2016:

### Christina Gallant MacLean

Many people see Christina Gallant MacLean as a young singer, musician and comedian, full of talent and good humour, whether it's in a band like Chiquésa, on stage as part of a dinner theatre, or even through her art. But by day, Ms. Gallant offers psychology services that are in high demand in Prince Edward Island. By working in both official languages, she has become a valuable asset for her Francophone clients and for the entire French-speaking community.

"When I detect an accent or a French-sounding name and make the active offer of greeting a patient in French, I can see the relief on their face. In psychology, it's important to feel understood. It's very satisfying for me to see that I can meet this need for clients and show people that I'm trying to understand the communication issues linked to culture and language," indicates Christina Gallant MacLean, who was featured as an Étoile Santé in early autumn 2016.

"A psychologist helps people take control of their mental wellness. We offer them tools and strategies rather than solutions. Whether it's for depression, or an eating or anxiety disorder, it's very important to set targets that the clients want to meet in order to measure the progress that's been made and see how far we've come. If necessary, we can also refer people to other specialists such as psychiatrists or addiction counsellors," explains the psychologist.

Christina graduated from École Évangéline and pursued her studies in psychology at Crandall University, in Moncton, New Brunswick, and at the Trinity Western University in British Columbia.

Wanting to return to the Island, Christina contacted the Richmond Centre, where she had done an internship, and found a job immediately – one that lasted 12 years. Since September 2015, she has been working for the English Language School Board, now known as the Public Schools Branch. Her work consists in assessing learning disabilities among students who have been recommended by staff members at their schools.







## Étoile Santé for October 2016: Vanessa Lavoie

Orthotists are health professionals who specialize in making various types of orthotics, such as for the knees or feet.

The only orthotist in private practice on Prince Edward Island is Vanessa Lavoie. Her clinic is located in the Polyclinic building on Grafton Street, in Charlottetown. As a Francophone, it gives her great pleasure to help clients who appreciate her providing services in French. "Vanessa shows a personal interest in all of her clients. Her professional and friendly services have allowed me to have comfortable shoes and orthotics, explained the client who nominated Vanessa for the Health Network's Étoile Santé campaign.

"I know this client quite well, indicated Vanessa when she learned about the nomination. Before opening my practice in Charlottetown, this client would regularly travel outside the province to get her orthotics adjusted." Another one of her clients explained how more comfortable he is to be able to speak French during his consultations.

"I spend a lot of time with my clients conducting complete walking and running biomechanic assessments as well as examinations of the joints. Then come the design and manufacturing of the orthotic device, followed by the delivery, which involves an important verification step to make the necessary adjustments."

Originally from Packington, Quebec, Vanessa Lavoie received her diploma in 2009 from Collège Mérici, one of Canada's four institutions that train orthotists and prosthetists. She immediately found employment in Moncton, but was then recruited by the Equilibrium group and opened a practice in Charlottetown in 2012. Always looking to better serve her clients, she received an additional national certification in the summer of 2016.

When Vanessa arrived on the Island, she did not speak any English. She therefore understands the challenges of communicating in another language. This professional and friendly orthotist is proud to offer quality services in both official languages.



## Étoile Santé for November 2016: Trevor Dunphy

Trevor Dunphy is a professional who is determined to achieve his objectives. His skills, as much as his willingness to help his clients in French and in English, make him an Étoile Santé for the Acadian and Francophone community of the province.

"I discovered physiotherapy when I was studying psychology at UPEI, where I also played varsity soccer. I would see physiotherapists working wonders with injured players. I started to develop an interest in this line of work while I was completing my psychology degree. I worked four years in this field, helping people take control of their lives. It was interesting, but there was something missing in terms of manual work and I was convinced that physiotherapy would be the ideal career for me," explained the young man.

His story, however, started out solely in English, because Trevor, who is originally from Souris, could not speak a word of French. "I started speaking French with my wife, Christine. I couldn't imagine visiting her family and having everyone speak English just for me. It was normal that I learn French and it ended up opening doors for me," said Trevor. To improve his French language skills, he took courses at Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.

"I chose to complete my master's degree at the University of Ottawa because the physiotherapy program was offered in French. It was hard at first, but I soon got used to it with the help of a few Acadian and Francophone colleagues. Also, my young French-speaking family came with me, which helped considerably," explained Trevor, adding that he received several scholarships for having continued his education in French.

Trevor Dunphy is now a physiotherapist at ReActive Health, a business that has five clinics – four in the Greater Charlottetown area and one that just opened in Summerside.

As a skilled health professional impassioned by his field, Trevor Dunphy is proud to be able to provide French health care services to the Francophone community to which he feels indebted for supporting him throughout his journey. Being fluently bilingual and trained in psychology, he is well equipped to help his clients. "Pain is always complex. It is hard to describe and determine. It is therefore important for people to be able to easily explain how they are feeling in their own words and in their own language."



## Étoile Santé for December 2016: Julie Savoie

Julie Savoie has been a speech-language pathologist on Prince Edward Island since 1993, after obtaining her master's degree in speech-language pathology from the University of Dalhousie. "I had said I would be a speech-language pathologist in my high school yearbook," recalls Julie. In order to become a speech-language pathologist, she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology, which allowed her to pursue her studies at the master's level in speech-language pathology.

Growing up in the Acadian Peninsula of New Brunswick, Julie was interested in languages and in the origin of words and sounds. "I always knew I wanted to work with people, especially children. And that's what I do now; I work with children from kindergarten to grade 6 at École Pierre-Chiasson, École Évangéline and École-sur-Mer, as well as with preschool children."

Julie works for Health PEI and provides services to the French Language School Board. She spends 60% of her time in French schools. The rest of her time is dedicated to preschool children (Anglophone or Francophone) from the Evangeline area, and to Francophone children in the western half of the province.

Julie works with several teams of providers and with parents to ensure prescribed exercises are followed and steady progress is made. "I help students pronounce and better distinguish certain sounds, but above all, I try to understand why these sounds are challenging for them."

"When working in the field of children's language development, it's important for the speech-language pathologist to speak the client's language, because the realities aren't the same and neither are the sentence structures," indicated the speech-language pathologist

This health professional has certainly been contributing to the development of the French language in the Island's Francophone community, one client at a time, for almost 25 years.





## Étoile Santé for January 2017: Corinne Arsenault

Corinne Arsenault, who lives in Wellington, has been working at Andrews of Summerside, a seniors' residence, for 13 years. For the past five years, she has been working in the Alzheimer's unit. "I have a lot of fun working with these residents. I try to make a difference in their lives, and they bring much joy to my life as well," said Corinne Arsenault.

Devoted, generous, happy and energetic, Corinne Arsenault is a shining star that brightens the lives of individuals who sometimes need a spark. In 2016, the Alzheimer Society of PEI recognized Corinne Arsenault for her excellence and leadership in caring for those afflicted by Alzheimer's.

Corinne began working in this field quite coincidentally. She had just obtained her grade 12 equivalency diploma from Collège Acadie and was preparing to begin the human services college program when her sister became ill. For three years, she cared for her sister at home while her brother-in-law was at work. It is also during this time that Corinne's husband had a major accident. These events made her decide to take the resident care worker course.

Corinne had been working as a resident care worker at Andrews of Summerside for several years when the Alzheimer's unit was established. People suffering from Alzheimer's often revert to their mother tongue – communication in their language is therefore very important. "Little by little, I discovered people who needed attention and joy, and that's what I try to give them. I feel fortunate to be able to care for Acadian residents in French!"

Corinne also learned how to play guitar so that she could make music for residents. She has treasured memories of a resident with a great love of music. He particularly liked listening to Corinne play the guitar, and his family knew this. "When he was nearing the end of his life, his family asked me to play for him. I played all the songs that he liked," recalls Corinne.



## Étoile Santé for February 2017: Élisa St-Coeur

Élisa St-Coeur is originally from Neguac, New Brunswick. She began her career in radiotherapy in 2007, working out of the Cancer Treatment Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Charlottetown.

Radiotherapy is a specialized field that uses radiation as a form of cancer treatment. The technology used in this branch of medicine is constantly evolving. Since there is currently no radiotherapy program offered in the Maritimes, Élisa completed her studies at the Cégep de Sainte-Foy, in Quebec. "The three-year program, which included a few internships, was very intense, but I'm very happy to have gone down that path," says Élisa. "It allowed me to find this great job in Charlottetown!"

Élisa pays special attention to her patients' needs, especially if they prefer interacting in French. Each time she sees a French name on a file, she actively offers her services in French. "From time to time, I'll learn that one of my patients speaks French when I overhear them talking to someone else. When I switch to French, I can see they really appreciate it," says Élisa. "In Charlottetown, we offer a treatment that is not currently available in New Brunswick. A number of our patients from New Brunswick are Francophones, some of which don't speak any English at all. I sometimes have to call these patients to prepare them for their appointment, then guide them through each step of the treatment."

Élisa's colleagues appreciate her presence and her ability to communicate with patients in both official languages. In fact, it was one of her colleagues who submitted her name to the Étoile Santé campaign.

"My work is really gratifying. I work with patients over the course of several weeks and share their hope for recovery. We talk about the future and the projects they hope to undertake. I feel that I am able to help my patients, especially Francophones, on their healing journey. It's a privilege to be able to support them," concludes the caring therapist.



## Étoile Santé for March 2017: Natalie Arsenault

Natalie Arsenault has been working as a home support worker for 25 years. Over the years, she worked at a long-term care facility in Summerside as well as at Le Chez-Nous in Wellington, where she held various types of positions. She started working in the field of home care in 1996. Since then, Natalie has been going to her clients' home to provide basic care.

As she does her work, she chats about all kinds of things with her clients. "When I work with seniors, I try to imagine them when they were my age and I ask them questions about their life. Sometimes, we exchange recipes or cooking secrets. It's a privilege for me to hear their stories. I think it does me just as much good as it does them."

This simple and profoundly human contact that Natalie Arsenault has with her clients is appreciated as much by her clients than by the members of their families, as evidenced in this message provided by the daughter of one of her clients. "Natalie was so kind to my mother. She took her time, talked about things that were of interest to my mother and made her feel special. When my mother spoke about Natalie, she always had a smile on her face."

In her work, Natalie also helps the families who must adapt to their loved ones' loss of independence. The daughter of another client who greatly appreciated the services provided said: "Natalie is almost part of the family! We know that she not only ensures the well-being of the client, but of the family as well."

Natalie Arsenault's office is located in Wellington and the majority of her clientele is in the Evangeline area. This dedicated health professional of Acadian descent estimates that almost half of her clientele speaks French.





# HEALTH STUDENTS

## Database

To increase entries in the health student database, the Health Network has been offering, since 2014, two \$1,500 bursaries per year to Francophone or Francophile students from Prince Edward Island enrolled in a post-secondary health program.

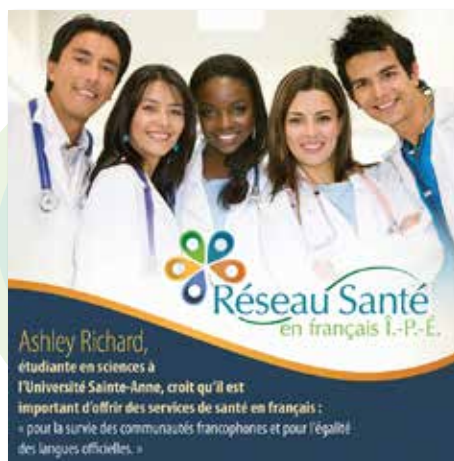
In addition to the chance of winning \$1,500 to help with their tuition fees, students are automatically added to the PEIFHN's health student database. In 2016–2017, 53 students registered in health programs such as medicine, pharmacology, kinesiology, psychology and several others. With the students' permission, the PEIFHT shares the information with the Recruitment and Retention Secretariat so that youth are informed about internship and employment opportunities in Prince Edward Island in the hopes that they remain or return to the Island to provide French-language health services to Islanders.

The two bursary recipients for 2016–2017 were Jenna Arsenault from Abram-Village, a radiology technician student at Université de Moncton, and Émilie Maquignaz from Charlottetown, who is currently enrolled in the nursing program at the University of Prince Edward Island.



## TESTIMONIALS FROM HEALTH STUDENTS

Over the last year, the PEIFHN launched a series of images on its social networks with quotes from students in the health field who participated in last year's bursary campaign and answered the question, *Why is it important to offer health care services in French?* The initiative will continue in 2017.





# HEALTH PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Subsequent to a call for proposals for health promotion projects to help empower individuals and communities to take ownership of health and wellness in French, the following five groups and organizations in Prince Edward Island were identified for support by the Health Network:

## **Le Village des Sources l'Étoile Filante: Family resource camps focused on mental health and well-being from the perspective of the family unit**

Two family resource camps assisted the members of the nine participating families in better appreciating each individual that makes up their respective families by learning through their hearts and discovering each person's strengths and challenges through a variety of activities. Each camp sought to bring family members together and



improve communication between the members while also raising the participants' awareness about the importance of mental health, physical activity and healthy eating.

## **La Fédération des parents de l'Î.-P.-É. inc.: Parents' club – Learning and sharing**

This initiative was launched for parents who expressed interest in having the option to meet in a casual atmosphere to share their experiences while also developing their parenting skills. The Fédération developed this initiative based on the results of a survey conducted in September 2016 among Island families as well as on assessments of its own Voir grand ("Think Big") family activities. Three workshops



were facilitated by experts on the following topics: healthy eating and physical activity, managing family stress, and talking about difficult topics with children and the importance of open communication. A total of 81 people took part in the workshops.

## **Cap enfants: Papa itou (Dad too)**

This initiative was developed to recognize the importance of fatherhood and to offer programs and services



to dads on the Island. Cap enfants delivered two sessions on the importance of the father's role in the family and the impact of fathers on childhood development. The objective of the project was to get to know and understand fathers and take actions to help meet their needs. A total of six dads took part in the sessions.

## **La Commission scolaire de langue française de l'Î.-P.-É. (CSLF): Mental health:**

**promoting understanding to enable mutual acceptance, respect and support** – A course in Mental Health First Aid

was offered to four school staff members and five members of the community. Its objective was to target the certification



of a greater number of adults so they can gain a better understanding of the various types of mental health disorders and learn how to provide support to young people and direct them to professional resources. The CSLF also organized a symposium on mental health in Summerside for the Acadian and Francophone community featuring speaker Bernard Richard. Mr. Richard works in the areas of human rights, children's rights, social justice and addressing inequalities in Canadian society. The 29 attendees also had the opportunity to visit eight different information booths on various aspects of mental health.

## **La Belle-Alliance Itée: Nourishing body and soul**

A series of activities was offered to develop and improve people's knowledge with the objective of building community capacity for making wise choices in relation to physical and mental health. Yoga classes were hosted by a certified instructor, while a

dietitian facilitated a family cooking workshop. Children were welcome at the cooking workshop, where they helped their parents with food preparation while also learning about healthy eating. Participation in both activities was highly positive, and La Belle-Alliance is considering offering more yoga classes and cooking workshops in the future.



# SUPPORT FOR SENIORS

The average age of the Island's Acadian and Francophone population is the highest in the Atlantic Provinces and Canada in general (Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada). Providing French language health services for seniors is therefore a priority for the Health Network as well as the Acadian and Francophone community of Prince Edward Island.

## French services for long term care

In 2010, the Health Network conducted a study entitled *French Language Services in Long Term Care*. Since that time, several wonderful projects were developed:

- Support from the administration of the Summerset Manor to increase services and the number of designated bilingual positions in the bilingual households of the Summerset Manor which opened in 2013;
- Offer to assist Beach Grove Home in planning and securing the necessary funding to hire staff and be able to launch a project similar to the one at Summerset Manor, improving access to French services for the Francophone residents of Charlottetown and surrounding areas;
- Preliminary discussions with West Prince civil servants who recognize the need to serve the Francophone population in its own language and who have been interested in this positive movement for quite some time.

The initiative of these nursing homes to provide French language health services influences other public nursing homes of the province to do the same, which is very positive and encouraging.

## Collaboration for French language home care

French language home care has been defined as a priority by the Acadian and Francophone population. The Health Network therefore carried out a study entitled *French Language Services in Home Care* in 2013. The Health Network is presently working with researchers of the University of Sherbrooke's Centre de recherche sur le vieillissement (Research Centre on Aging) to identify models that could be piloted in Prince Edward Island. Also, the Health Network committed to sharing the results of this study with the Department of Health and Wellness to pilot an initiative in Prince Edward Island. Discussions are ongoing with Health PEI staff.



A panel on home care has also been organized for the Health Network's Board of Directors. It was composed of a home care worker, a client/caregiver, a home care manager and the coordinator of the Geriatric Program. A productive discussion followed which produced immediate results such as staff assignment and increased awareness of managers to the needs of the community.

## Training and other projects

The Health Network provided support to Le Chez-Nous community care facility by offering mental health first aid training to the staff.

Also, the Health Network consistently supports the Jeux de l'Acadie 50+ planning committee with its health component. The event will be held in Prince Edward Island in 2018.



## OTHER PROJECTS

### Mental health first aid course

In August 2016, the Health Network supported Colette Arsenault's training, offered by the Mental Health



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

Commission of Canada, allowing her to become a certified facilitator of the adult mental health first aid course. She then offered two courses to 13 participants at the Centre Goéland in Cap-Egmont, during the fall and winter. This course provides participants with the tools and information needed to offer assistance to adults who are developing a mental health problem or who are in a mental health crisis. The Health Network heard from a participant who was able to react to a mental health crisis involving a family member, situation which required a 911 call. A care provider working with seniors also indicated that she had a better understanding of mental health challenges, which allowed her to better intervene and refer clients to the appropriate services.



### Health activities in French during the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie

The Health Network was happy to partner with Health PEI to celebrate, from March 2 to 22, 2017, the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie, by offering activities aiming to increase access to French-language health services.

During the Rendez-vous, the Health Network encouraged the public to nominate health professionals for the Étoile Santé campaign. Six new nominations were received during the month of March.

A poster and booklet containing articles on the 15 Health PEI employees who were nominated by the Francophone community or their peers and recognized in the Étoile Santé campaign for enhancing patient experience for French-speaking Islanders were distributed and posted in the Quality Board Overview section during the month of March.



One hundred and thirty information kits on the active offer of French-language health services were provided to all Health PEI divisions. The kits contained a joint letter from Health PEI and the Health Network, the **Keys to Active Offer** resource, important information to assist health professionals provide French language health services, a glossary of common terminology, a letter from the Public Service Commission and Health PEI inviting staff to have their language skills assessed, as well as instructions on how to be included in the PEI bilingual service provider directory.





## PEI French Health Network

### Income Statement and Statement of Changes in Net Assets For the year ending March 31, 2017

	Networking	Service organization support	HR + National	Project promotion	Human Resources Strategy	Seniors	Other revenue and expenses	2017	2016
<b>REVENUE</b>									
Health Canada	\$ 96,752	\$ 32,251	\$ 30,000	\$ 22,575	\$ 15,000	\$ 3,615	-	<b>\$ 200,193</b>	\$ 181,579
Other revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 2,392	<b>\$ 2,392</b>	\$ 2,392
	96,752	32,251	30,000	22,575	15,000	3,615	2,392	<b>202,585</b>	183,971
<b>EXPENSES</b>									
Other expenses	1,565	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1,565</b>	1,315
Travel	5,513	1,542	699	201	304	-	-	<b>8,259</b>	12,756
Equipment	6,321	1,715	-	-	9,778	-	-	<b>17,814</b>	5,056
Audit fees	3,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>3,800</b>	4,503
Professional fees	23,179	3,886	22,789	17,700	436	3,615	-	<b>71,605</b>	76,650
Rent and utilities	9,124	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>9,124</b>	9,108
Office equipment	8,055	13,750	1,215	219	986	-	-	<b>24,225</b>	8,407
Wages	39,196	11,375	5,290	4,465	3,500	-	3,277	<b>67,103</b>	63,945
	96,753	32,268	29,993	22,585	15,004	3,615	3,277	<b>203,495</b>	181,740
Excess revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue) for the fiscal year	\$ (1)	\$ (17)	\$ 7	\$ (10)	\$ (4)	-	\$ (885)	<b>\$ (910)</b>	\$ 2,231

Allen, Paquet & Arseneau LLP





# 2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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