

## **French-speaking job opportunities in healthcare on PEI**

### **Quick Facts on PEI**

- French mother tongue population: **5,418 or 4%**
- Bilingual population: **17,005 or 12.3%**
- Population of Acadian or French origin: **23%**
- Number of provincial government employees in all departments considered to have sufficient language skills to offer services in French: **238**
- Number of designated bilingual positions in all the provincial government departments: **121**
- The Public Service Commission offers French language training in partnership with the Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.
- Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É. is the only accredited and recognized French language postsecondary institution on the Island.
- There are six French school and community centres located in 6 regions: West Prince, Évangéline, Summerside/Miscouche, Rustico, Greater Charlottetown, Eastern Kings.
- 53% of English schools offer French immersion programs on PEI.
- The Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin (SSTA) is the community's spokes group.  
[www.ssta.org](http://www.ssta.org)

\*Sources from the new Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat website <http://www.gov.pe.ca/afa/>

## **Réseau Santé en français Î.-P.-É. (PEI French Health Network)**



### **Élise Arsenault, Executive Director**

In 2002, the Acadian and Francophone community identified the need to create a French Health Network. To do this, they encouraged the Minister responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs and the Minister of Health and Social Services to establish a joint government-community network. This group is now called **Réseau Santé en français Î.-P.-É.** (PEI French Health Network).

The Health Network collaborates with various partners in order to improve access to quality French-Language health services and programs and is dedicated to the task of proposing practical solutions for the delivery of French language health and social services on PEI.

**The PEI French Health Network** is part of a national network, la Société Santé en français, regrouping similar organizations in each province and territory. They work together to improve access to French language health services for French language minority communities. In Quebec, the Community Health and Social Services Network play a similar role for the English speaking minority of that province.

The Network's Vision is that the Acadian and Francophone community of Prince Edward Island flourishes by benefiting from quality French-language health services and programs.

## Breaking down the communication challenges in healthcare

“Communication is vital for a good level of care,” says **Élise Arsenault**. “If you cannot establish communication with the patient, information could be lacking that can affect the quality of care. Research shows that communication is key to quality healthcare.”

“**The Action Plan for the Delivery of Primary Health Care Services in French on PEI** was established in 2006. In 2007, the PEI French Health Network worked on a position paper in response to one of the recommendations of the action plan. The document was called **The Impact of Communication Challenges on the Delivery of Quality of Health Care to Minority Language Clients & Communities**. It was presented to the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA).”

This document outlines the impact of providing access to health services in a person’s first language. This position paper has been used as a guide to work towards solutions within community services.

First language communication is important for areas such as:

- **Access to treatment:** there can be difficulties in dealing with the first person contact for treatment.
- **Preventive measure:** the study says that French-speaking people were less likely to have breast examinations.
- **To obtain consent:** ensuring that people fully understand extent of care while signing forms.
- **Hospital admission:** being able to answer all patients’ questions.
- **Diagnostic testing:** taking direction and answering questions can be difficult.
- **Patient follow-up:** further information can be hard to obtain.
- **Quality of mental healthcare:** getting to the root of difficulties and dealing with medications.
- **Patient safety:** medication consumption and care after surgery.

“Experience and studies have shown that the moment a patient is in contact with someone who can speak their first language, the level of stress goes down, and that helps with treatment.”

“I know myself when crisis hits and emotions are high, the comfort of speaking French is so important. I speak English everyday but when I am in a difficult situation my whole thought process changes and my immediate reaction is to speak French. In stressful events sometimes you just don’t have the energy to find the English words.”

For more about **The Impact of Communication Challenges on the Delivery of Quality of Health Care to Minority Language Clients & Communities**, visit [www.santeipe.ca/expose-de-position](http://www.santeipe.ca/expose-de-position).

## **Career awareness and opportunity**

PEI has one of the highest percentages of students in French Immersion in Canada. The network has done a lot of work around encouraging youth to continue their post-secondary studies in health. “We work with the schools to make students aware of health career options in French and what post-secondary choices there are on the Island and across Canada.”

For more about career options on PEI, check the **PEI Health Sector Council Career Guide** at [peihsc.ca/careers/guide-des-carrieres](http://peihsc.ca/careers/guide-des-carrieres).

## **French education programs in healthcare on PEI**

This year celebrated the first students to graduate from the French **Practical Nursing** program at **Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.** in Wellington. Three students completed the newly formed two-year program in June, 2013. During this two-year program, theoretical, laboratory and clinical practice allow students to gain the skills necessary to provide appropriate care.

January 2014, will be the start date for the next Practical Nursing program.

There is also a **Resident Care Worker** program at **Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.** in Wellington. It is designed to help students gain the knowledge and skills required to provide care in long term care facilities and home care settings. Students will gain an appreciation for personal support services, community services, and physical and mental health care services required by individuals in order to help them function as independently as possible. January 2014 is the next start date.

For further information about **Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.**, call **854-3010** ext. **241**, call toll free at **1-877-854-3010** ext. **241**, or visit [www.collegeacadieipe.ca](http://www.collegeacadieipe.ca)

## **Need for more French-speaking health professionals**

Health PEI has about 4,400 staff, and about 30 of these are in bilingual positions. Most are RN or RCW positions. We also have some allied health professionals such as an Occupational Therapist and a Speech and Language Pathologist.

“I can see the need to create more French-speaking designated jobs as the aging population continues to grow,” says Élise. “Also, with the increase of chronic disease on PEI will come the need for an increase in French-speaking service providers.”

## Examples of French-speaking healthcare jobs on PEI:



**Louise Bossé** is a Registered Nurse who works at the emergency room of the Prince County Hospital. She is originally from Edmundston, New Brunswick, where she studied nursing at the École d’infirmières d’Edmundston.

“When I moved to PEI, there were not a lot of jobs available in nursing,” says Louise. “Because I was bilingual, I was hired under l’Entente Cadre, a project implemented by the provincial and federal governments aimed at providing more services to those who asked to be served in French.

“In my job, I provide services in French at least every second day. There are quite a few French families on the Island. I speak French even more in the summer months, when so many tourists arrive from Quebec. When people go to the hospital, they are already under a great deal of stress, and it means the world to them to be served in the language they know best.”

For more information about health careers, contact the **PEI Health Recruiter** at 620-3872, visit [www.healthjobspei.ca](http://www.healthjobspei.ca)



**Lynne Faubert** is the only bilingual Registered Community Dietitian on PEI. As part of Health PEI's Public Health Services team in Souris, she works in manors, hospitals, home care and palliative care.

"I always had an interest in health and fitness and working with people, so I studied Home Economics (now Food Nutrition Sciences) at UPEI and earned a Bachelor of Science degree," she says.

"I completed an internship, a requirement to be a registered dietitian, at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba. My first job on PEI was in Summerside where I filled a maternity leave.

"I have been using French more often than I expected," she says. "I have helped make a video on diabetes care and have traveled across PEI to speak to schools and communities about health and nutrition.

"I hope youth will see there's an incredible advantage in having this second language. There are so many job opportunities and a real sense of job security."

For more information, find the **PEI Dietetic Association** on facebook.

Visit the **PEI Dietitians Registration Board** at [www.peidietitians.ca](http://www.peidietitians.ca).

## **Recruitment toolkit**

The **PEI French Health Network** developed a toolkit and partnered with the PEI Recruitment and Retention Secretariat to provide French-speaking professionals with information about employment on PEI.

The toolkit includes information about French-speaking communities across PEI, what schools are here, how to help partners search for work on PEI, and more.

For more about the **Bilingual Service Providers Toolkit**, visit [www.santeipe.ca/trousse-de-recrutement-pour-les-fournisseurs-de-services-bilingues](http://www.santeipe.ca/trousse-de-recrutement-pour-les-fournisseurs-de-services-bilingues).

For more information about the **Réseau Santé en français Î.-P.-É.**(PEI French Health Network), call **854-7441**, email [info@santeipe.ca](mailto:info@santeipe.ca) or visit [www.santeipe.ca](http://www.santeipe.ca).

## French speaking workplaces on PEI

Here is a list of some of the locations on PEI where the French language is predominantly spoken in the workplace:

### Healthcare:

La Coopérative Le Chez-Nous Ltée  
Bilingual Neighbourhood at Summerset Manor,  
Summerside  
Evangeline Community Health Center

### Schools and Day Cares:

École Évangéline, in Abram-Village  
[www.edu.pe.ca/evangeline](http://www.edu.pe.ca/evangeline)  
École François-Buote, in Charlottetown  
[www.edu.pe.ca/francois](http://www.edu.pe.ca/francois)  
École Pierre-Chiasson, in DeBlois  
[www.edu.pe.ca/prince-ouest](http://www.edu.pe.ca/prince-ouest)  
École Saint-Augustin, in Rustico  
[www.edu.pe.ca/staugustin](http://www.edu.pe.ca/staugustin)  
École-sur-Mer, in Summerside  
[www.edu.pe.ca/ecole-sur-mer](http://www.edu.pe.ca/ecole-sur-mer)  
École La-Belle-Cloche, in Souris  
[www.edu.pe.ca/labellecloche](http://www.edu.pe.ca/labellecloche)

### Post-secondary:

Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É.  
[www.collegeacadiepe.ca](http://www.collegeacadiepe.ca)

### Not-for-profit:

La Voix acadienne [www.lavoixacadienne.com](http://www.lavoixacadienne.com)  
La Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin [www.ssta.org](http://www.ssta.org)  
Evangeline Recreation Centre  
[www.gov.pe.ca/health/index.php3?number=1029952&lang=E](http://www.gov.pe.ca/health/index.php3?number=1029952&lang=E)  
Centre Expo Festival, Abram Village  
[www.centreexpofestival.com](http://www.centreexpofestival.com)  
Agriculture Exhibition & Acadian Festival  
[www.expositionfestival.com](http://www.expositionfestival.com)  
Réseau Santé en français Î.-P.-É.  
[www.santepe.ca](http://www.santepe.ca)  
RDÉE ÎPÉ [www.rdeepe.ca](http://www.rdeepe.ca)  
PERCÉ Program [www.percepe.ca](http://www.percepe.ca)

### Community Services:

Wellington Fire Department  
[www.gov.pe.ca/infopei/index.php3?number=173&lang=E](http://www.gov.pe.ca/infopei/index.php3?number=173&lang=E)

### Businesses:

A number of businesses on PEI offer services in French such as:

Cavendish Figurines Ltd.-

[www.cavendishfigurines.com/](http://www.cavendishfigurines.com/)

Tracey's Place Restaurant - Wellington  
Evangeline Credit Union [www.eccu.ca/Home](http://www.eccu.ca/Home)

Wellington Co-op

[www.coopatlantic.ca/storeInfo.aspx?id=67](http://www.coopatlantic.ca/storeInfo.aspx?id=67)

HMS Office Supplies

[www.hmsofficesupplies.com](http://www.hmsofficesupplies.com)

### Government:

GST Tax Centre [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca)

Access PEI Wellington

[www.gov.pe.ca/infopei/index.php3?number=11322](http://www.gov.pe.ca/infopei/index.php3?number=11322)

Veteran's Affairs Canada [www.veterans.gc.ca](http://www.veterans.gc.ca)

Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat

[www.gov.pe.ca/eco/aafas-info/dg.inc.php3](http://www.gov.pe.ca/eco/aafas-info/dg.inc.php3)

### Job search:

PEI Career Development Services

[cdspei.ca/fra/index.php?page=home](http://cdspei.ca/fra/index.php?page=home)

\*For detailed list of francophone community organizations, visit the **Membres et partenaires** section on the SSTA website. [www.ssta.org](http://www.ssta.org)