



Press Release

For immediate release

Dr. Nadine Arsenault-Samson, a valuable Francophone asset to our health care system

SUMMERSIDE, PEI, May 27, 2015 – The PEI French Health Network (PEIFHN) has a new campaign, Étoile Santé, whose purpose is to promote, recruit and make people aware of health professionals who offer French-language health services in Prince Edward Island. The PEIFHN is pleased to announce that the Étoile Santé for the month of May is being awarded to Dr. Nadine Arsenault-Samson of Summerside.

Finding French-language health professionals and accessing the services they offer remains a challenge in increasing French-language health services here in Prince Edward Island. It is crucial to make French-language professionals more accessible and visible in the community. It's the raison d'être of the Étoile Santé campaign.

A native of Saint-Timothée in the Evangeline area, Dr. Nadine Arsenault-Samson opened her family medicine practice in Summerside in 2006. She has since been a pillar in the field of health for Francophones living in East Prince and beyond. Her expertise, caring nature, thoughtfulness and patience make her a true "Étoile Santé" in the life of hundreds of families.

"I'm one of the only doctors who speak French in the East Prince region. The promotional work that the French Health Network does is very important, because there really are patients who don't speak much English and who are even less able to communicate in their second language when faced with a crisis situation or an illness. There are even doctors from other parts of PEI who send patients my way for this reason. I would say that a third of my clients are Francophone," said Dr. Arsenault-Samson, whose presence in the province's health care system is tremendously valuable.

Following three years of study at Université de Moncton, Dr. Nadine Arsenault-Samson studied at Université Laval in Quebec for seven years, which included a two-year residency. She sees approximately 1,000 patients on a regular basis. "I would say my family medicine practice takes up 80% of my time. I also spend 10% of my time doing palliative care, both in hospital and home settings."

Among her other duties, Dr. Arsenault-Samson teaches, regularly welcoming interns who are at different stages of their training. She also does on-call weeks at the hospital. "During my weeks, I visit hospitalized patients and I'm also on-call 24 hours a day."

Nadine Arsenault-Samson, who has been a family physician in Summerside for nine years now, is married and has two girls who speak French very well, but who would have difficulty making themselves fully understood in English, if they required emergency care or had to consult a specialist. "We live in French, the girls go to a French school, and my husband speaks French. I'm bilingual, but when I'm tired or when I get called at 2:00 a.m., I even have a hard time finding my words in English. So I know that

there truly is a need when people ask for services in French, and I think it's becoming more and more accepted in health care on the Island," she concluded.

Nadine Arsenault-Samson's contact information can be found in the directory of bilingual service providers at www.santeipe.ca/repertoire.

People are encouraged to nominate health professionals who actively offer French-language health services in Prince Edward Island. For more information on the Étoile Santé campaign or to nominate someone directly on the PEIFHN's Web site, go to www.santeipe.ca.

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. The organization brings together representatives from target community groups, educational facilities, health professionals, health service managers and the provincial government. It is also one of 16 networks that make up the Société Santé en français. The PEI French Health Network is funded by Health Canada within the framework of the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities.

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Photo: Nadine Arsenault-Samson

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