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|  <p>Winnipeg Regional Health Authority Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg Caring for Health À l'écoute de notre santé</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY</p> | <p>REGIONAL</p> <p>Applicable to all WRHA governed sites and facilities (including hospitals and personal care homes), and all funded hospitals and personal care homes. All other funded entities are excluded unless set out within a particular Service Purchase Agreement.</p> | | <p>Level:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> |
| | <p>Policy Name:</p> <p>French Language Services – Communications in Official Languages</p> | <p>Policy Number:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10.40.230</p> | <p>Page</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 of 11</p> |
| | <p>Approval Signature:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Original signed by Vickie Kaminski</i></p> | <p>Section:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LANGUAGE SERVICES</p> | |
| | <p>Date:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">August 2020</p> | <p>Supercedes:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">October 2013</p> | |

1.0 **PURPOSE:**

- 1.1 To ensure regular and permanent Active Offer of health and social services in both official languages (French/English) with integrity, compassion, dignity, respect, equity, accountability and excellence in a linguistically and culturally competent way that ensures the quality of services and patient safety;
- 1.2 To ensure a value-added practice through effective bilingual (French/English) communication in the WRHA;
- 1.3 To ensure regular and permanent Active Offer of health and social services in both official languages to the general public, clients, patients, residents, families and other stakeholders within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), whether provided by verbal, written or electronic means, are visible, readily available and easily accessible, and of comparable quality to those offered in English in accordance with the:
 - 1.3.1 WRHA Policy 10.40.220 - General;
 - 1.3.2 Government of Manitoba - French Language Services Policy;
 - 1.3.3 Regional Health Authorities Act (C.C.S.M. c. R34) - French Language Services Regulation (135/2013);
 - 1.3.4 Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act (C.C.S.M. F157);
 - 1.3.5 The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (C.C.S.M. c. A1.7)
 - 1.3.6 WRHA French Language Services (FLS) Plan;
 - 1.3.7 The concentration of the Francophone population in the WRHA as indicated in the Government of Manitoba French Language Services Policy and current census data.

2.0 **DEFINITIONS:**

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- 2.1 Accredited Translator: A professional translator certified by the Canadian Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters Council, one of its member bodies, or an international association of similar stature.
- 2.2 Active Offer: An offer of services in French which reflects the set of measures taken to ensure that services in French are visible, readily available, easily accessible (whether provided by verbal, written or electronic methods) and of comparable quality to those offered in English. The Active Offer of French-language health and social services ensures easy access in both official languages in designated areas where there is a large Francophone population.
- 2.2 Bilingual or Bilingualism: The ability to communicate proficiently in both Official Languages (French and English).
- 2.3 Bilingual-Designated Regional Health Authority: A regional health authority that has the obligation of providing health services in the French language in areas where the French-speaking population is concentrated.
- 2.4 Bilingual Format: English and French content are presented with equal visual weight. The English and French texts exist on the same document. Bilingual format options include:
- Consecutive, line/section (e.g., line/section in English followed by line/section in French);
 - Parallel, dual column;
 - Back-to-front (e.g., English on one side of the page and French on the reverse);
 - Head-to-tail (e.g., each version is upside down in relation to the other).
- 2.5 Communications in Official Languages: The set of written, verbal, audiovisual and digital communications by which information or assistance is provided to the Francophone community, and which are comparable to those offered in English.
- 2.6 Designated Bilingual Facilities, Sites, Programs, and Services: Generic term for WRHA designated sites, programs and services that are required to actively offer services in both French and English, pursuant to the Government of Manitoba French Language Services Policy. Designated Bilingual sites, programs and services can be defined by three (3) levels of bilingualism:
- Designated Bilingual or Francophone Site: One hundred percent (100%) of services and positions are designated bilingual (French/English);
 - Designated Bilingual Service Area: A negotiated percentage of provincial, intermediate, district or local services are designated bilingual (French/English); and
 - Designated Bilingual Positions: Specific positions are identified for bilingual designation (French/English).
- 2.7 Designated Bilingual or Francophone Site: One hundred percent (100%) of services and positions are designated bilingual (French/English);

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- 2.8 Designated Bilingual Position(s): A position that is to be filled by an individual who is proficient in both Official Languages (French and English) and who is able to adequately deliver comparable service in both Official Languages, in accordance with the requirements of the Manitoba French Language Services Policy, the Active Offer of French-language health and social services concept and the WRHA French Language Services policies.
- 2.9 Designated Bilingual Service Area (Target Designation): A negotiated percentage of a provincial, intermediate, district or local health and social services are designated bilingual (French/English). Where an optimal target number of Designated Bilingual employees are identified to offer/deliver health services in both Official Languages within a regional facility, program, service or agency.
- 2.10 Education or Information Materials: All materials (written, audiovisual, or electronic) intended for the general public or for distribution to visitors, clients, patients, residents, or their families, related to a health care/medical condition or directives to follow based on a health care/medical condition or procedure they had undergone. Materials include but are not limited to: pamphlets, brochures, patient education sheets, posters, videos and CDs.
- 2.11 Francophones: As per the Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act, Francophones are defined as: “Persons in Manitoba whose mother tongue is French and those persons in Manitoba whose mother tongue is not French but who have a special affinity for the French language and who use it on a regular basis in their daily life.”
- 2.12 Francophone Vitality: A set of characteristics or resources that promote or contribute to the linguistic advancement of the Francophone community.
- 2.13 Historic Exemption: Applies to non-devolved Bilingual and Francophone Facilities and Agencies of the WRHA which have previously adopted their site-specific procedures and processes, before the WRHA French Language Services policies as originally issued in February 2005.
- 2.14 Health Record Form: Forms requiring the signature of a patient, client, resident or proxy, on which the WRHA logo appears, which becomes a part of the person’s Health Record.
- 2.15 Internal Audience: Includes WRHA employees or contracted persons, medical staff, researchers, educators, employees of WRHA-funded sites (with the exception of Designated Francophone sites), volunteers, members of Boards of Directors, non-WRHA staff participating in WRHA internal committees, working or advisory groups and meetings, as well as employees of firms with whom the WRHA conducts administrative or corporate business.
- 2.16 Language of Operation: Upon consultation with Manitoba Health, Seniors, and Active Living and the Francophone Affairs Secretariat, the *language of operation* reflect the language of business which is different from the *language of client service delivery*.

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- 2.17 Manitoba's Francophone Community: Refers to all peoples and communities anywhere in Manitoba that have French as their mother tongue or customary language.
- 2.18 Official Languages: English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada. The Government of Manitoba's French Language Services Policy recognizes the fact that the French-speaking population of Manitoba is a constituent of one of the fundamental characteristics of Canada.
- 2.19 Priority Populations: Based on past research, including The Manitoba Centre for Health Policy (MCHP) study, several population groups have been identified as being most at-risk if culturally and linguistically appropriate services are not available. They are young children, maternal care (pre- and post-partum), seniors, individuals living with mental health concerns, individuals experiencing an acute health issue or those receiving palliative care, and the newcomer population.
- 2.20 WRHA FLS Plan: An outline of the practical ways and means by which Designated Bilingual or Francophone sites, programs and services can actively offer and effectively provide services in French through designated service areas and by using bilingual and French-language information materials in the Winnipeg - Churchill Health Region. The Plan typically consists of a 5-year strategic plan and an annual operational plan.
- 2.21 WRHA Interpreters: Authorized and trained/qualified individuals, who meet WRHA requirements relative to the provision of Interpreter Services, can interpret with consistency and accuracy, and perform their duties in accordance with the WRHA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Interpreters. Such individuals are employees of, or independent contractors with WRHA Indigenous Health Program, WRHA Language Access, Kivalliq Inuit Services, and agencies that provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, intervener, and related services.
- 2.22 WRHA Interpreter Services: Range of services provided by WRHA Interpreters, e.g., in-person interpretation, conference call interpretation, message relay.

3.0 **POLICY:**

- 3.1 The WRHA shall communicate in both official languages with their external audience (general public) whether provided by verbal, written or electronic means. The WRHA visual identity guidelines shall be respected;
- 3.2 The WRHA and all its sites, programs and services shall support and promote an organizational culture conducive to the Active Offer of French-language services and the delivery of health and social services in both official languages according to the language preference or need of the client, patient, resident, family and/or other stakeholders;
- 3.3 The primary language of operation in all WRHA sites, programs and services is English. The primary language of operation in Francophone sites, for example, Designated Affiliate Health Corporations or Francophone community-owned sites, is French;

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- 3.4 In recognition of the Designated Bilingual status of the WRHA; agencies, organizations, school boards, etc. external to the WRHA requesting the WRHA to distribute education or information materials, or to administer surveys and/or undertake consultations on their behalf, must provide all materials in both official languages (French/English);
- 3.5 Any exceptions to this policy shall be discussed with and approved by the regional FLS representative or delegate. Exceptions shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

4.0 **PROCEDURE:**

4.1 **Visual Identification of Bilingual Employees – All WRHA**

- 4.1.1 The visual environment shall reflect the bilingual/Francophone nature of the WRHA and its Designated Bilingual sites, programs, and services. A sign indicating service in both official languages shall be displayed prominently whenever bilingual staff is on duty.
- 4.1.2 WRHA staff occupying Designated Bilingual Positions shall wear one of the Hello/Bonjour bilingual identifying items available to them through the WRHA FLS department unless job functions or safety issues preclude their wearing. Management shall consistently enforce this requirement and hold employees in Designated Bilingual Positions accountable.
- 4.1.3 All other bilingual staff within the WRHA that are not in a Designated Bilingual Position shall be strongly encouraged to self-identify as bilingual and wear one of the Hello/Bonjour bilingual identifying items available to them through the WRHA FLS department unless job functions or safety issues preclude their wearing.

4.2 **Verbal Communication – Designated Bilingual Sites and Positions**

4.2.1 **Telephone**

- 4.2.1.1 Employees shall answer the telephone in both official languages. The conversation shall continue in the official language chosen by the caller. Where circumstances are such that the person answering the telephone cannot respond to inquiries in French, the employee will make efforts to accommodate the caller in his/her official language of choice. Such efforts shall include referring the caller to a bilingual colleague or accessing Interpreter Services via Language Access as outlined in 4.2.1.2. and 4.2.1.3.
- 4.2.1.2 In circumstances where an employee cannot respond to a request in French, the employee shall seek assistance from a bilingual employee. A bilingual employee referral list shall be used for this purpose.
- 4.2.1.3 In situations where a bilingual employee is not available to respond to a request in French, the employee shall make the

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client, patient or resident aware of the availability of WRHA Interpreter Services and subsequently request services from WRHA Interpreter Services for an over-the-phone WRHA Interpreter in accordance with WRHA policy 10.40.210 Interpreter Services – Language Access.

- 4.2.1.4 Voice mail and prerecorded messages are developed appropriately in both official languages, ensuring that the messages are comparable in both quality and content as English.
- 4.2.1.5 The WRHA and its Designated Bilingual sites, programs, and services shall ensure that purchased answering services or call centre services have sufficient bilingual staff available and that agencies providing such services are aware of and comply with the WRHA policy 10.40.230 French Language Services – Communications in Official Languages.

4.2.2 Interactions in person

- 4.2.2.1 All employees and reception shall greet the public in both official languages. The conversation shall continue in the official language chosen by the client, patient, resident or visitor. Where circumstances are such that the employee cannot respond to inquiries in French, the employee will make efforts to accommodate the client, patient, resident or visitor in his/her official language of choice as outlined in 4.1.3.1.
- 4.2.2.2 In circumstances where an employee cannot respond to a request in French, the employee shall seek assistance from a bilingual employee. A bilingual employee referral list shall be used for this purpose.
- 4.2.2.3 In situations where a bilingual employee is not available to respond to a request in French, the employee shall make the client, patient or resident aware of the availability of WRHA Interpreter Services and subsequently request services from WRHA Interpreter Services for an in-person WRHA Interpreter or alternatively an over-the-phone WRHA Interpreter in accordance with WRHA policy 10.40.210 Interpreter Services – Language Access.

4.2.3 Telehealth

- 4.2.3.1 All telehealth activities involving clinical services delivery shall require WRHA employees to identify the client, patient or resident's preferred official language before commencing the session. The conversation shall continue in the official language chosen by the caller.
- 4.2.3.2 In circumstances where an employee cannot respond to a request in French, the employee shall seek assistance from a

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bilingual employee. A bilingual employee referral list shall be used for this purpose.

- 4.2.3.3 In situations where a bilingual employee is not available to respond to a request in French, the employee shall make the client, patient or resident aware of the availability of WRHA Interpreter Services and subsequently request services from WRHA Interpreter Services for an over-the-phone WRHA Interpreter in accordance with WRHA policy 10.40.210 Interpreter Services – Language Access.

4.3 **Written and Digital Communications – All WRHA**

4.3.1 **Corporate Identification**

- 4.3.1.1 The WRHA identity is bilingual (French and English). The WRHA logo has been developed in a bilingual format. The logo art shall not be used without its accompanying text in both official languages. Compliance to the Graphic Standards Manual is essential in applying the WRHA corporate identity.
- 4.3.1.2 When a name and any associated term (logo, tagline, motto, etc.) for use by WRHA is being developed, WRHA Communications and French Language Services shall be consulted in the preliminary planning stages to ensure that official language obligations are respected.

4.3.2 **Correspondence**

- 4.3.2.1 Correspondence aimed at the general public or organizations across the Region shall be issued in both official languages in a bilingual format.
- 4.3.2.2 The WRHA shall respond to written communication from a visitor, client, patient, resident, their families or the public in the official language used by the correspondent whether it is a letter, email, text, blogs, discussion forums, etc., acknowledging that there may be circumstances where a response in the language of operation may be required.

4.3.3 **Paid Messaging**

- 4.3.3.1 All information materials (written, audiovisual or electronic) produced by the WRHA intended for the general public or for bilingual recruitment shall be produced in both official languages, placed in both English and French media, rolled out concurrently (where media placement deadlines allow), and shall be in a bilingual format (i.e., print pieces).

4.3.4 **Forms**

- 4.3.4.1 All regional forms, including those created by WRHA corporate

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services (such as Human Resources job applications, etc.) on which the WRHA logo appears, intended for intended by the general public shall be in both official languages in a bilingual format (see 2.4).

4.3.4.2 All health record forms, on which the WRHA logo appears, requiring the signature of a patient, client, resident or proxy shall be in both official languages in a bilingual format. The formatting shall be consecutive (see 2.4) with the French text in italics and a different colour (e.g., blue).

4.3.5 **Client Education or Information Materials**

4.3.5.1 All regional client education and information materials (print, audio-visual, digital or other) including resources, appointment cards, surveys, questionnaires, etc., on which the WRHA logo appears, intended for the general public shall be provided in both official languages in a bilingual format (see 2.4).

4.3.5.2 When acquiring external or outside-authored education or information material intended for the general public, the educator shall make every effort to obtain material in both official languages.

4.3.6 **Public Websites**

4.3.6.1 All public internet websites of the WRHA, including individual program or site websites accessible to the public, shall be in both official languages.

4.3.7 **Social Media**

4.3.7.1 All social media platforms of the WRHA, including individual program or site social media platforms accessible to the public, shall be in both official languages.

4.3.8 **Publications and Public Reports**

4.3.8.1 All publications and public reports produced by the WRHA, including individual program or site reports intended for the general public, shall be in both official languages.

4.3.9 **Promotional Material**

4.3.9.1 All promotional material produced with the WRHA logo, including display stands, pamphlets, etc., intended for the public, shall be in both official languages.

4.3.10 **Stationery**

4.3.10.1 All stationery produced with the WRHA logo shall be in both

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official languages.

4.4 **Written and Digital Communications – Designated Bilingual Sites and Positions**

4.4.1 **Signage, Public Notices and Advertisements**

- 4.4.1.1 The visual environment reflects the bilingual nature of designated bilingual sites, including exterior and interior signage in both official languages. In general, Regional Offices also display signage in both official languages. If both Official Languages are used in external and/or internal signage, French shall precede English.
- 4.4.1.2 If a designated position is housed within a non-designated site, interior signage and public notices within the designated bilingual employee’s workspace are in both official languages.
- 4.4.1.3 In accordance with the provincial “Designation Policy for Francophone and Bilingual Facilities, Programs and Services”, designated bilingual sites shall display a public notice, clearly visible in affected services areas indicating their designation.
- 4.4.1.4 Non-Designated sites shall have external signage with the WRHA logo in both official languages. The name of the site may be in English only. Internal signage in such areas may be in English only.

4.4.2 **Libraries and Resource Centres**

- 4.4.2.1 Libraries and resource centres located in Designated Bilingual sites and intended for use by the general public shall ensure relevant WRHA material which exists in a bilingual format are included and shall make reasonable attempts to have non-WRHA information (printed material, videos, CDs, etc.) available in both official languages.

4.4.3 **Business Cards**

- 4.4.3.1 Designated Bilingual Employees shall have business cards in both official languages.
- 4.4.3.2 Business cards shall be a two-sided (one side English and the other side French).
- 4.4.3.3 Bilingual employees in non-Designated Bilingual Positions who interact with the general public may also request bilingual business cards as an indication of their willingness to provide their services in French.

4.4.4 **Email Signatures and Out-of-Office Messages**

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4.4.4.1 Designated Bilingual employees shall have an email signature and use a bilingual out-of-office email messaging in both official languages.

4.4.4.2 Bilingual employees in non-Designated Bilingual Positions shall be encouraged to use an email signature and out-of-office email messaging in both official languages.

4.4.5 Employee Identification Badges

4.4.5.1 Employees shall be issued employee identification badges in both official languages.

4.4.5.2 Bilingual employees in non-Designated Bilingual Positions shall be encouraged to choose an employee identification badge in both official languages.

4.4.6 Faxes

4.4.6.1 All faxes shall include a cover page in both official languages.

4.5 Public Consultations, Educational Conferences, Public Events and Public Meetings

4.5.1 Public consultations as well as educational conferences, public events and meetings held by the WRHA, to which the general public is invited, shall be held in both official languages when they have a direct impact on the French-speaking community or held in an area with a concentration of French-speaking residents.

4.5.2 Documents and other information pertaining to issues at hand shall be available in both official languages including notices of public consultations educational conferences, public events and meetings.

4.5.3 Employees with an adequate bilingual capability and knowledge of the issues in question are made available at public consultations educational conferences, public events and meetings to provide bilingual information and to respond to inquiries.

4.6 Media Relations and Corporate Affaires

4.6.1 Media/News Releases

4.6.1.1 WRHA media releases may be developed and conducted in English and shall include an appropriate disclaimer and contact coordinates should the media seek a French interview. Efforts shall be made to have an accessible bilingual spokesperson.

4.6.1.2 For subject matters directly related to a designated site, direct importance or significant interest to the Francophone community, or having a direct impact on that community, media releases shall be produced and disseminated in both official languages.

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All efforts shall be made to have an informed spokesperson capable of speaking both official languages present.

4.6.2 **Media Relations**

- 4.6.2.1 Any media wanting a French-language interview with representatives of the WRHA or its sites or facilities shall contact or be referred to the bilingual WRHA Communications Representative.
- 4.6.2.2 All Media inquiries or story ideas with a regional interest (not site or facility specific) shall be forwarded to the bilingual WRHA Communications Representative. The bilingual WRHA Communications Representative shall work with the WRHA Director of Media Relations, WRHA Board and/or Senior Management representatives to determine who the appropriate spokesperson is and arranges for her/him to respond in a timely manner.
- 4.6.2.3 Site/Facility Communications Representatives shall discuss bilingual site or facility media inquiries and work collaboratively with the bilingual WRHA Communications Representative. The bilingual WRHA Communications Representative shall work with the WRHA Director of Media Relations, site/facility Communications Representatives, site/facility Board and/or Senior Management representatives to determine who the appropriate spokesperson is and arranges for her/him to respond in a timely manner.

4.7 **Translation**

- 4.7.1 For full details related to translations see WRHA policy 10.40.260 – Translation.

5.0 **REFERENCES:**

- 5.1 Government of Manitoba - [French Language Services Policy](#)
- 5.2 Regional Health Authorities Act (C.C.S.M. c. R34) - [French Language Services Regulation](#) (135/2013)
- 5.3 Regional Health Authorities Act (C.C.S.M. c. R34) - [Bilingual and Francophone Facilities and Programs Designation Regulation](#) (R.M. 131/2013)
- 5.4 [The Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act](#) (C.C.S.M. F157)
- 5.5 [The Accessibility for Manitobans Act](#) (C.C.S.M. c. A1.7)
- 5.6 Canadian Heritage (Sections 16-22) [Official Languages of Canada](#)
- 5.7 Government of Manitoba - [Guidelines Manual for the Implementation of French Language Services](#)

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- 5.8 WRHA French Language Services (FLS) Plan
- 5.9 Chartier, Honourable Judge Richard. [Above All, Common Sense](#) – Report and Recommendations on French Language Services within the Government of Manitoba (Commissioned by the Government of Manitoba). May 1998
- 5.10 [Gauthier Report](#) - Study of French-Language Services in Manitoba's Health Care Facilities (1990)

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