

Health Canada's Official Languages Health Program

The Official Languages Health Program (OLHP), launched in 2003, aims to improve access to health services for official language minority communities (OLMCs).

The OLHP received a total of \$191,2 million over five years (including \$5.3 million in operating and maintenance costs) under the government-wide Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future.

The program includes the following three mutually reinforcing components:

1 – Training and Retention of Health Professionals (\$117.6 over five years)

Health Canada provides support to postsecondary training institutions in order to improve the availability of bilingual health service providers across the country and specifically in regions where the needs of OLMCs are greatest.

- The Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS), which includes a national secretariat and 16 postsecondary member-institutions outside Quebec offers over 100 French-language health programs in eight provinces and works with health facilities to offer internships and placements for its students.
- McGill University offers language training to existing health providers, as well as bursaries and internships for integrating health professionals in regions where there is significant need for English-language services.

2 – Health Networking (\$46.2 million over five years)

Health networks work with various partners (communities, decision-makers, health managers, health professionals, and post-secondary institutions) to develop concrete solutions to improve access to health services for OLMCs. Targeted recipients for this component are:

- The Société Santé en français (SSF), with its 16 networks across all provinces and territories (except Quebec) for French-speaking minority communities.
- The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN), with its 23 networks and 10 satellite networks across Quebec for English-speaking minority communities.



3 – Health services access projects (\$22.1 million over five years)

Projects under the current funding phase will use innovative approaches to improve access to health services for OLMCs in the areas of: home and community care, mental health and addiction services, and palliative and end-of-life care.

- SSF and CHSSN provide funding to promote innovative solutions to address OLMCs' health needs;
- Health Canada launched a call for proposals in winter 2019 to support new stakeholders, such as not-for-profit organisations, provinces and territories;
- as a pilot project during the current funding phase, micro-grants of up to \$1000 each will be offered to small not-for-profit organisations and individuals to increase access to health services within OLMCs.