

Dialogue

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A project built on partnerships

Good, solid partners make all the difference. The McGill Training and Retention of Health Professionals (TRHP) Project Team knows that very well. Since 2004, McGill, the organization responsible for the oversight of all components of this ambitious project, has been able to count on the knowledge, experience and dedication of two great partners: the *Ministère de la Santé et*

des Services sociaux (MSSS) and the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN). Collaboration is therefore crucial.

The MSSS provides strong support for the implementation of the project. Iannick Martin, Coordinator, Access to English-Language Services, at the MSSS, sees many benefits: "McGill University's reputation of world class excellence helps when reaching out to different regions. It also provides English-speaking communities with well-trained bilingual personnel. Their knowledge is key to providing better access to quality services all over Quebec."

The partnership with the CHSSN, based in Quebec City, has also evolved significantly over the years. The CHSSN acts as a bridge between McGill University and the 19 English-speaking community networks

that are funded by the Project for retention initiatives. "From a community perspective, our Network has benefited from this partnership with McGill in two ways: it enjoys provision of health and social services by a larger group of linguistically competent providers and better access to academic researchers who focus their efforts on the English-speaking communities' needs," said Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director of CHSSN.

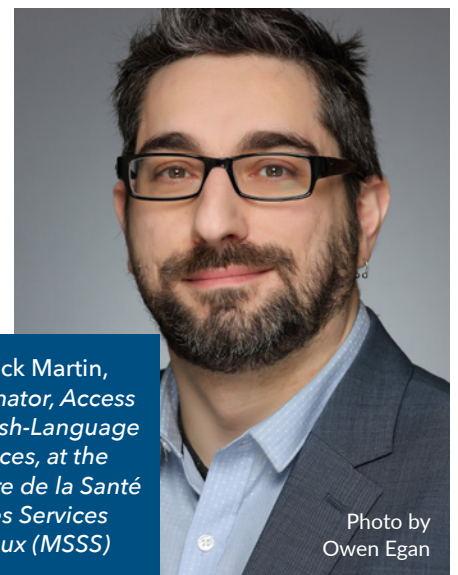
The long-term success of such an endeavour requires a continued focus on its objectives. "In order to get optimal results, we must ensure the stability and sustainability of such a project," added Mr. Martin. Ms. Johnson agreed: "We have established a very strong partnership over the years; we need to make sure that it continues. ♦"



Jennifer Johnson,
Executive Director
of Community
Health and Social
Services Network
(CHSSN)

des Services sociaux (MSSS) and the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN).

Collaboration with these stakehold-



Iannick Martin,
Coordinator, Access
to English-Language
Services, at the
Ministère de la Santé
et des Services
sociaux (MSSS)

Photo by
Owen Egan

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NOTABLE EVENTS

Sharing knowledge and best practices is key in achieving our goal. The Institute for Health and Social Policy led by Professor Daniel Weinstock hosted an international research conference entitled *Language and Health - Ethical and Policy Issues* on June 17-18, 2016. The conference organized by Dr. Yael Peled included speakers from various universities such as University of Copenhagen, Chicago and Alaska Southeast along with Carleton and York Universities. A second event on June 16th, focused on the results of the McGill Research Development Program, featured speakers from McGill, Université Laval, UQAT, UQAC, Université de Montréal, Concordia and Bishop's. The many Health Care Access for Linguistic Minorities (HCALM) Network researchers who participated in this event had a chance to share some of the results from their

studies focused on important Quebec-based issues. *To see photos from the event, go to:* <https://flic.kr/s/aHskFz779E>

Another interesting event is upcoming: The Second Science Colloquium on the Health of Canada's Official Language Minority Communities will be held in Ottawa on February 27 and 28, 2017. Research in this field has advanced since the first colloquium, held in November 2009. This event will be an opportunity to get the latest information regarding health research among Canada's anglophone and francophone minorities and to share knowledge. It will also be a chance to address the various health challenges, promote research and influence health practices. McGill will be well represented at the Colloquium by the following affiliates:

McGill University: Lia Sanzone, Madeleine Buck, Srividya Iyer, Eric Jarvis, James Falconer *Université Laval:* Shahrzad Saif, Jan Warnke *Centre hospitalier universitaire Sainte-Justine:* Andrea MacLeod *Institut national de santé publique du Québec:* Nathalie Auger



Photo by Owen Egan

McGill researchers from the HCALM team during the *Language and Health - Ethical and Policy Issues* conference back in June:
Back row, left to right: James Falconer, Jan Warnke, Stéphanie Lapointe, _____, Alessandra Miklavcic, Mohammed Reza Abdolrahimpour, Parisa Safaei, Andrew Ryder, Nathalie Auger *Front row, left to right:* Zoua Vang, Beverly Baker, Shahrzad Saif, Duncan Sanderson, Norman Segalowitz

TRHP'S RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:

Better understanding linguistic dynamics in the healthcare delivery process

"Language plays a crucial role in health care. The existence of language barriers, therefore, is a significant challenge to equitable health provision in highly multilingual societies such as Canada's,"

states Dr. Yael Peled, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Language and Health for the Health Care Access for Linguistic Minorities (HCALM) Network.

In the Canadian context, the complex linguistic landscape includes Canada's two official languages, indigenous languages, immigrant languages and sign languages. In the Quebec context, the prioritization of French creates challenges to the delivery of healthcare services to the English-speaking population and to other linguistic groups.

"The research development program of McGill's Training and Retention of Health Professionals (TRHP) Project is unique in its efforts to explore the impact of these complex linguistic dynamics," explained Dr. Peled. "The program, created and funded by the Project, explores its impact on equitable healthcare provision in the Quebec context as it relates to the English-speaking communities."

To illustrate the research development program, Dr. Peled pointed to two studies. The first, "Language Barriers in Critical Settings", led by Dr. Eric Jarvis from the Department of Psychiatry at

the Jewish General Hospital, explores the ways in which language barriers compromise the equity and quality of mental health care in critical settings. The results of the research demonstrate an urgent need for language interpretation in emergency psychiatry services, as communicative barriers were pervasive among study subjects. While the study found that, despite these difficulties, most patients were satisfied with their care, their clinicians felt compromised in their capacity to provide the best quality services given the degree of language barrier.

The second study, “English Language Demands of the University Programs in Quebec and their Relationship to Nurses’ Preparedness for the ‘Practice of the Profession’”, was led by Shahrzad Saif from the *Département de langues, linguistique et traduction* at the Université

Laval. The study set out to investigate whether nursing programs in francophone universities in the province of Quebec properly prepare nurses to communicate in English in healthcare contexts. The results of the study thus far point to a discrepancy between what is provided and the language abilities that are required. The final results of the research are expected to underscore the need to continue to find innovative ways to improve second language skills of nurses, whether as students or professionals in the workplace.

McGill’s TRHP project is proud to support research that will enhance the delivery of health and social services to anglophone communities in Quebec. Improving the quality of patient – provider interactions by breaking down language barriers is a critical component in this process. ♦



Dr. Yael Peled,
Postdoctoral Research
Fellow in Language
and Health for the
Health Care Access for
Linguistic Minorities
(HCALM) Network

Photo by
Owen Egan



Photo by
Owen Egan

Participants of the preliminary session:
Katherine Quast, Executive Director,
Assistance and Referral Centre
Sarah Shaughnessy, Project Officer,
Training and Retention of Health
Professionals Project
Rachel Hunting, Executive Director,
Townshippers’ Association

COMMUNITY NETWORKS:

A new digital library of project materials is being built just for you

Have you had to create a pamphlet for your own network and wished you could have seen pamphlets that others had created before you? The Training and Retention of Health Professionals (TRHP) Project Team had you in mind when building its new Digital Library of Project Materials. A content management system created by McGill will host the private space where community networks will be able to upload their materials. Whether it be brochures,

pamphlets, bags, posters, cups or USB keys, all types of materials can be saved on the platform.

The Library is meant as a new instrument for sharing ideas, promoting tools, and celebrating the work being done by each network. Instead of creating everything from scratch, professionals will now be able to see what others are doing, get inspired and share ideas. It will not only reduce costs and time spent on each initiative but also

create a new community of ideas. “The new Library is a very neat thing. It will assist our partners in promoting their tools and allow them to share with each other,” explained Sarah Shaughnessy, Project Officer at the TRHP Project and one of the new Library’s champions.

“Discussions can happen, ideas can be shared, initiatives can be celebrated,”

added Ms. Shaughnessy. The new platform will go beyond seeing and showing: it will allow discussions, wikis and blogs, which will certainly prove

Continued from page 3.

very useful for many. All materials will be uploaded on a voluntary, unlimited basis and will be classified in folders, by type of material, community network,

region and year. It will then be easily searchable: a controlled vocabulary used for tagging will be in place to make the tool very user-friendly. The Library's use will also be monitored to optimize its usefulness.

Active participation from all community networks is exactly what the team is hoping for, since it was designed with, and for, them and will

ensure that this content management initiative reaches its full potential. This innovative collaborative platform will be available soon, along with training sessions. A draft information session was held and attended by Rachel Hunting, from the Townshippers' Association and Katherine Quast from the Assistance and Referral Centre. We will keep you posted! ♦

LANGUAGE TRAINING:

An essential confidence boost

French language training for English-speaking students

To perform well on their OQLF test during their internship and be confident enough to work in a francophone work environment, students in health and social services must be comfortable speaking and writing in French. Their work requires them to use their language skills to ask the right questions, use the right terms, show empathy, be sensitive to cultural differences, build trust and develop an optimal relationship, in order to make the right diagnoses and provide follow-up care. And they have to do all of that in a language that is not their mother tongue.

That is the challenge a team from the French Language Centre of McGill University's Faculty of Arts was glad to help students undertake. The *French language training courses for students in Health disciplines and Social Work*, focused on health and

social services (Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Social Work, Dietetics and Human Nutrition and Communication Sciences & Disorders), came about following consultations with past and present students as well as professionals. The hands-on aspect of the resulting classes is crucial and very appreciated by students, who literally learn by doing. Classes range from elementary level all the way to advanced. Five of them are offered with credits and, when possible, students may arrange for their marks not to show on their transcript, which can relieve some of the stress associated with grades. Another two are offered without credits.

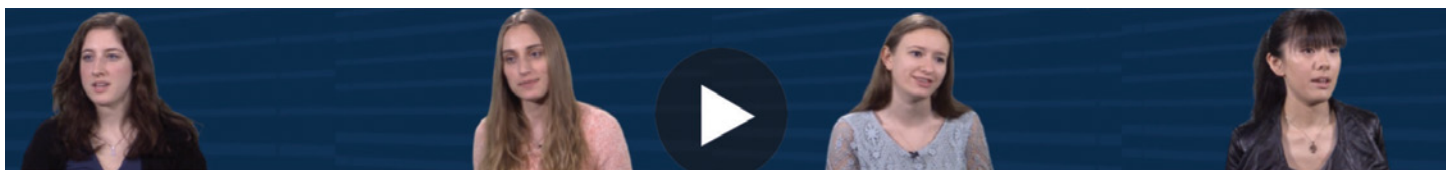
These courses are centered on specific objectives developed in collaboration with professional schools. It is based on real-life tasks, which helps students build the vocabulary needed when interacting with patients and colleagues. Such training is very

demanding, in time as well as in energy, and a limited number of students can sign up. This past semester, 26 students took part in the French language training program. "That means there are now 26 more professionals who are able to provide services to both the French-speaking population and the English-speaking population.

"They are very motivated to provide the best care and have gained a great amount of confidence,"

says Hélène Riel-Salvatore, Faculty Lecturer, who developed and coordinates these courses. For Ms. Riel-Salvatore, the need is very real.

"This language training program has been an eye-opening experience for me, on a professional level as well as on a human level. I am very happy and proud that we offer such courses,"



Des étudiantes témoignent – 4 students will tell you more

UPDATE

Remember the article about the John Abbott Traveling Health Caravan, featured in Dialogue 5? Staffed by 3rd year students from John Abbott College's Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Pre-Hospital Emergency Care, and Youth and Adult Correctional intervention programs, it brought students from Montreal to provide healthcare services to English-speaking communities in the Laurentian region. It is one of the many initiatives of McGill's TRHP Project Retention Program. We are happy to report that three students who took part in the Health Caravan were recently offered jobs in the region.

Congratulations!

One mandate of the French Language Centre within the McGill's Faculty of Arts has always been to foster the integration of McGill students into the Montreal and Quebec Community," Ms. Riel-Salvatore added.

And the students share her enthusiasm. They show a lot of interest and motivation in class, and the level of satisfaction in evaluations is consistently high.

To know more about these courses:
<http://www.mcgill.ca/hssaccess/files/hssaccess/cours-de-francais-v14fin-030117.pdf>



Photo by
Owen Egan

Lia Sanzone, Assistant Program Director at the Ingram School of Nursing, Nurse Peer Mentorship Program (NPMP) Director, and Clinical Associate at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) in Nursing

And to see student testimonials:
dontforgetyourkey.com

Another innovative way to learn French is available to Nursing students: *The Nursing Peer Mentorship Program*. It all started in 2014 as a grassroots project, when Nursing students at McGill University expressed the need for this type of support which was not being met in the university. An informal survey and a grant later, the Program was born. Their first meeting was held in January 2014 with 30 dyads. Today, 125 mentors and mentees meet regularly in an informal setting. In January 2016, French workshops were added to help with the retention of Nursing students who have no or little experience speaking French. Lia Sanzone, Assistant Program Director at the Ingram School of Nursing, Nurse Peer Mentorship Program (NPMP) Director, and Clinical Associate at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) in Nursing, explains the Program: "During casual social events, such as "hot chocolate and cookies", francophone nursing students act as teachers, and other students join in a conversation with them (if they are at level 2 and want to learn medical terms) to enhance their verbal skills. Otherwise, francophone nursing students tutor small groups of anglophone nursing students and teach them basic French terms (this is known as level 1).

**In these safe spaces,
they can make mistakes
without feeling judged,**

**because they are
among their peers in
an informal setting.
It is meant as a less
intimidating way to
learn the language.**

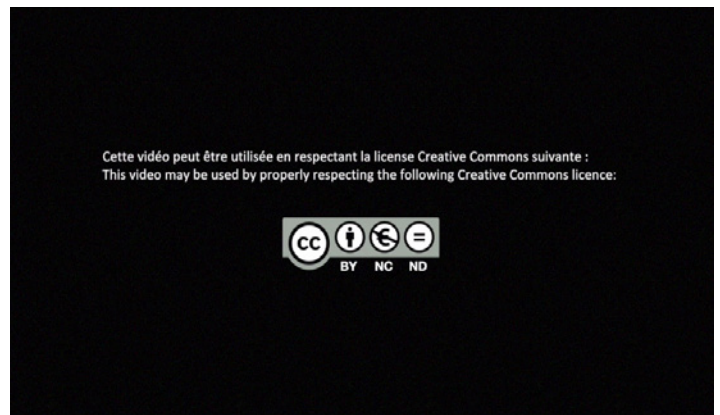
By the time they take the Professional language exams (after three years), we hope they have overcome their stress levels and perform better."

This fall, another project was created to help students with their French writing skills. It involves the translation of PowerPoint presentations in the classrooms. Students can simultaneously see clinical terms in both English and French, so they can familiarize themselves with the terminology. This has proven beneficial to Anglophones and Francophones alike. Overall, the Peer Mentorship Project has brought a lot of confidence to McGill Nursing students in a clinical setting, as well as a sense of belonging to a professional family. Hopefully, it will result in improved workforce retention. Talk about a win-win initiative!

**English language training
videos on the web for French-
speaking students**

The McGill TRHP Project Team has successfully developed a range of self-study English-language training materials targeted specifically at triage nurses, receptionists and psychosocial service providers. In addition to workbooks, the materials include companion DVDs featuring training videos. Not content to rest on its laurels, the TRHP Team decided these materials would be even more helpful if they were available online.

The TRHP Team has mandated this ambitious project to *Cégep à distance*. Created in 1991 by the Collège de Rosemont, *Cégep à distance* offers a self-paced model for college-level students, who can register at any time of the year and find all their



Continued from page 5.

course materials online. “Hosted on a server and catalogued with relevant information about its content, McGill TRHP Project’s English language training videos will now be available to a much wider audience. In fact, they will become available around the world,” explained Ryan Moon, Program Manager – English Language Services at *Cégep à distance*. Preliminary discussions regarding the adaptation of other components of the learning material as part of a second phase of the project have begun.

What does this mean for French-speaking students?

It means that English-language training videos can now be made available for use on many learning platforms, anywhere, and at any time.

They can also be viewed over and over again, which is helpful to francophone students who need to provide optimal care to English-speaking patients.

And what does it mean for English language teachers?

“It means that they can access the course materials from anywhere and they can reuse the videos in class without worrying about copyright infringement

(the videos have been licenced for reuse under Creative Commons as long as the videos are not modified or used for commercial purposes). It is very simple for teachers to embed these videos into their learning platforms, such as Moodle,” added Mr. Moon.

This is great news for French-speaking students and English language teachers alike. The videos will also be accessible to all Cégeps very shortly. We will keep you informed of our progress. ♦



Ryan Moon,
Program
Manager - English
Language
Services at Cégep
à distance