

## **QCGN Welcomes Wider Distribution of COVID-19 Self-care Guide to English-speaking Quebecers**

**MONTREAL, April 21, 2020** – Following strong advocacy efforts by the Quebec Community Groups Network and others, the Government of Quebec has taken measures to deliver its COVID-19 Self-care Guide to the majority of English-speaking Quebecers.

The Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers, Christopher Skeete, told CJAD's Aaron Rand yesterday afternoon that the government will mail out an English-language version of the COVID-19 guide to than 800,000 Quebecers who file their tax returns with Revenue Quebec in English. Other measures include inserts in the Montreal Gazette, the Sherbrooke Record and suburban newspapers; newspaper ads explaining how to obtain the English guide on the Quebec.ca website; and the distribution of 'duo-lingual' guides to native communities and COVID-19 evaluation clinics.

QCGN has stated that during a public health crisis all necessary measures must be taken to inform and engage all citizens. This is important to ensure the health and safety of all Quebecers.

"Quebec's laws accommodate this need and permit the government to communicate to the public in English during emergencies," said QCGN President Geoffrey Chambers. "We welcome this multi-pronged approach to rectifying what many English-speaking Quebecers considered to be a serious oversight in distribution of the government's guide, from both a public health and language relations perspective," said Chambers.

"This lesson must be impressed upon the mechanisms of the government," Chambers said. "The machinery of government must learn from this experience that critical information during a public health emergency has to be distributed not only in the language of the majority, but in as many languages as possible to ensure the widest possible penetration across the population. We are again reminded that a health crisis – whether personal or collective – is no time for a language test."

The Quebec Community Groups Network ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together English-language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

### **For further information:**

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