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English Speakers Are An Untapped Solution to Québec's Healthcare Crisis

2025 - 06 - 18

Press Release




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE English Speakers Are An Untapped Solution to Québec's Healthcare Crisis [A new report shows that the outflow of English speakers from Quebec is negatively impacting an already strained healthcare sector.](#)

Montréal, June 18, 2025 — Faced with a shortage of healthcare professionals such as family doctors and nurses, Quebec's overstretched healthcare system would benefit from employing more members of the province's underused English-speaking healthcare community, according to a new report from the Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT).

At a time when hospitals and healthcare administrators complain of diminishing resources, soaring patient loads, and aging, outmoded infrastructure, the report found that English speakers, who make up 15% of Quebec's population, were woefully underrepresented in the healthcare sector.

"If offered better French language training and employment opportunities, Quebec's English-speakers could prove vital in helping to strengthen and diversify the province's healthcare provision," says Nicholas Salter, Executive Director at PERT.

 Québec rightfully celebrates its universal healthcare system, the sector is severely challenged. Against this backdrop, PERT's researchers observed a worrying trend: English speakers accounted for nearly two-thirds of healthcare and social assistance workers who left Québec for other provinces in 2021. Significant barriers to entry,

such as French language requirements, were contributing to the exodus, along with generally poor working conditions and job burnout. Their departure in such large numbers underscores the risk of a continued shortage of qualified healthcare professionals in Quebec at a time when skilled nurses, doctors, technicians and other healthcare workers are more needed than ever.

“English-speaking professionals are not only underrepresented — they are also more likely to leave Québec, taking valuable skills with them,” adds Salter. “This isn’t just a community issue — it’s a system-wide risk.”

Key findings from the report include:

- **English speakers made up 65.6% of healthcare workers who left Québec for other provinces in 2021.**
- **They represent just 11.4% of the province’s healthcare labour force, despite being 15.8% of its total labour force.**
- **Access to healthcare-specific French language training is limited, especially outside Montréal.**

PERT’s new report also offers recommendations on how to plug some of the gaps. First, healthcare authorities should partner with educational institutions, professional orders, and community organizations to increase the accessibility and availability of French language training programs for healthcare professionals. The province should also prioritize building targeted recruitment and retention strategies, and should regularly collect healthcare data disaggregated by language to better inform public policy.

“This is a moment to act,” concludes Salter. “With coordinated efforts, Québec can tap into a ready and willing pool of talent — while building a system that offers better healthcare outcomes to everyone.”

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Media Contact Chad Walcott Director of Engagement & Communications chad@pertquebec.ca 1-855-773-7885

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