

COMMUNITY PROFILE

VISION
Gaspé - Percé  Now

SENIOR AND YOUTH

2016

ENGLISH SPEAKING
POPULATIONS
GASPÉ

The
DIFFERENCE
in your
COMMUNITY

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Purpose.....	1
Geography.....	1
Linguistic Definitions.....	2
Demography.....	3
Demographic Size.....	3
Demographic Groups: Seniors and Youth.....	3
Summary.....	4
Characteristics of English-speaking Seniors.....	5
Income.....	6
Access to Health Services.....	8
Home Support.....	12
Care Giving.....	15
Characteristics of English-speaking Youth.....	18
Education and School Programs.....	19
Income and Employability.....	21
Access to Health Services.....	25
Conclusion.....	28
Bibliography.....	29

Figures

Figure 1: The territory covered by the CISSS de la Côte-de-Gaspé and their available facilities.....	1
Figure 2: Population by mother tongue.....	2
Figure 3: Age structure by language group.....	3
Figure 4: Income level by language group.....	6
Figure 5: Population living below the low-income cut-off.....	7
Figure 6: Use of English as the language of service.....	8
Figure 7: Household living arrangements.....	12
Figure 8: Low-income cut-off (LICO) by household living arrangement.....	15
Figure 9: Educational attainment by language group.....	19
Figure 10: Labour force participation by language group.....	21
Figure 11: Knowledge of official language groups.....	22

Photos

Photo 1: Douglastown community garden.....	4
Photo 2: Fellowship at the Gaspé Wellness Centre.....	5
Photo 3: Exercise program at the Gaspé Wellness Centre.....	11
Photo 4: Halloween at the Barachois Day Centre.....	14
Photo 5: Dancing at the Gaspé Wellness Centre.....	17
Photo 6: Commemorative bracelets from Vision's 'I AM ME' Campaign.....	18
Photo 7: Learning about healthy food options.....	24
Photo 8: The Douglastown Community Garden.....	25
Photo 9: Pink Shirt Day at Gaspé Elementary School, 2015.....	28

Introduction

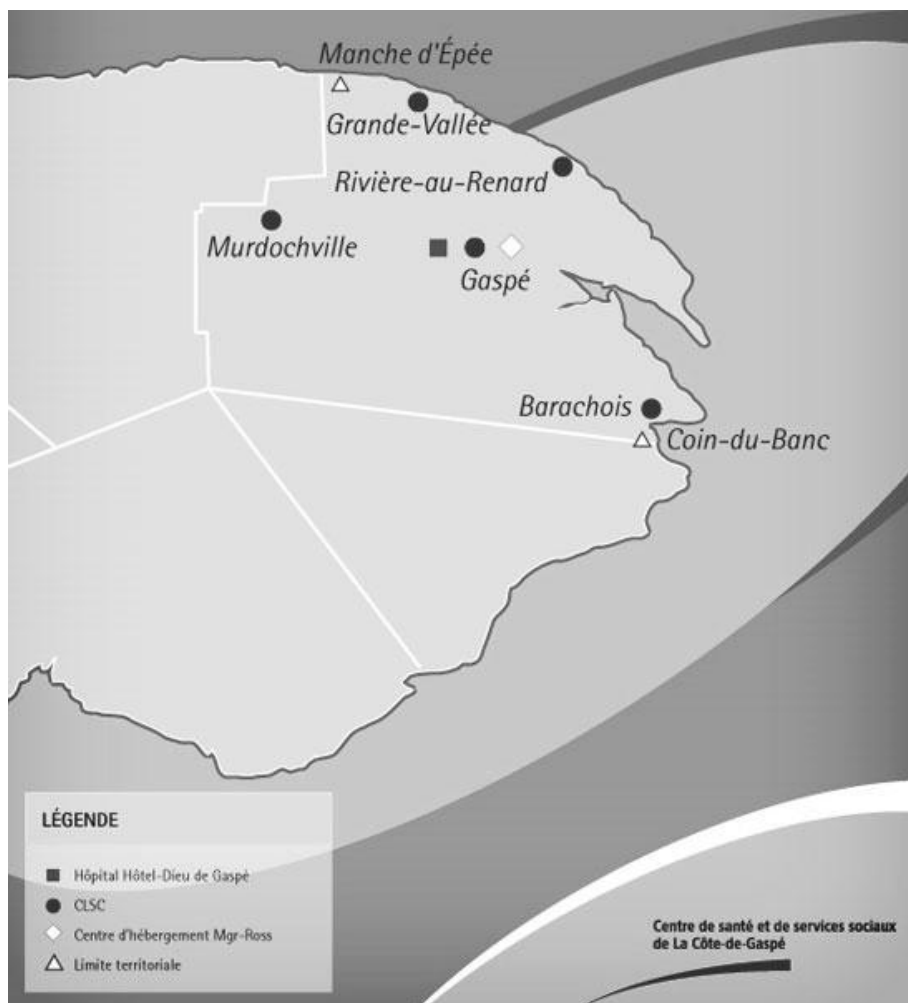
Purpose of the Document

This document is a resource for community and government organizations and for those who may benefit from information on the senior and youth English-speaking populations of Gaspé. Production of this document was made possible by the financial support of Health Canada and the demographic data has been provided by the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN).

Geography

This document presents selected demographic characteristics on the English-speaking population covered by the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé (CISSS). This territory includes part of the Percé Rock Municipal Regional County (MRC) from Coin du Banc to Manche d'Épée, totalling 4089 square kilometers; 2430 residents of the territory have English as their First Official Language Spoken (FOLS).

Figure 1: The territory covered by the CISSS de la Côte-de-Gaspé and their available facilities¹



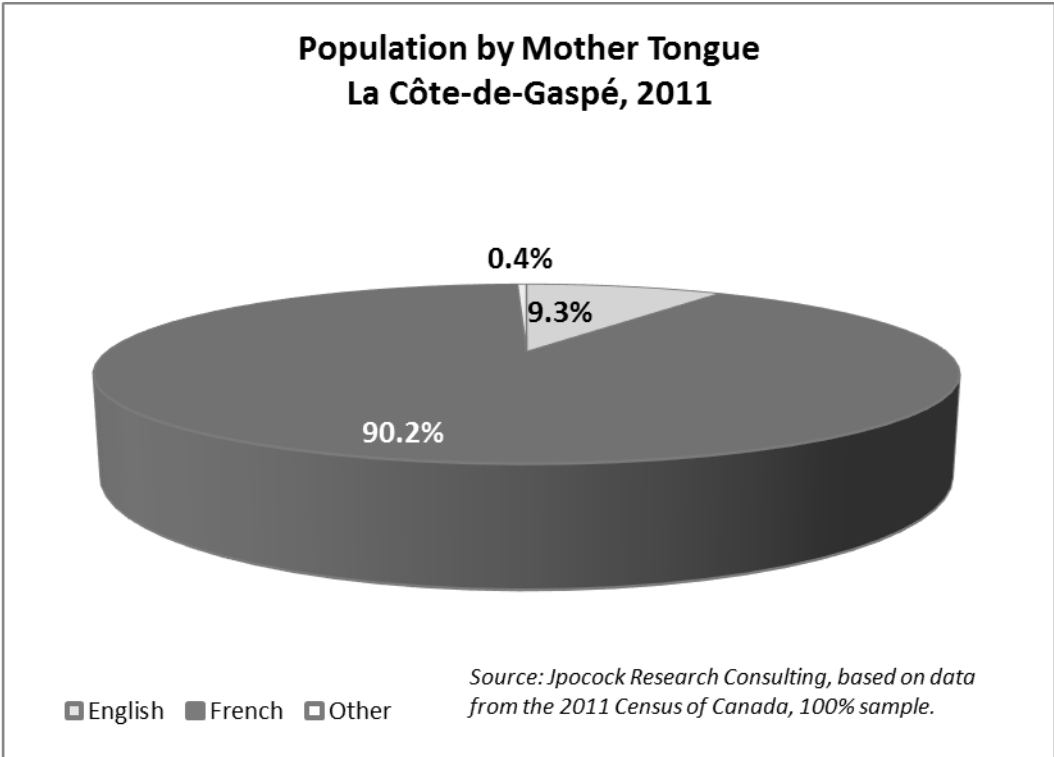
¹ Centre de Santé et des Services Sociaux de La Côte-de-Gaspé. "Nos Points de Services" (Gaspé: CISSS, 2010). Available: http://www.CISSScotedegaspe.ca/?id=286&titre=Nos_points_de_services&em.

Linguistic Definitions

The data presented in this profile is drawn from the 2011 and 2006 Census of Canada’s long questionnaire, which is administered to 20% of the Canadian population.

There are numerous linguistic definitions used to identify the English-speaking population in Québec and the choice of linguistic indicator depends largely on the issue being examined. This document uses the First Official Language Spoken (FOLS) definition since it best reflects the number of English-speakers, many of whom speak both official languages at work and home. FOLS is an inclusive language concept derived from three census questions: knowledge of official languages, mother tongue and home language.

Figure 2: Population by mother tongue²



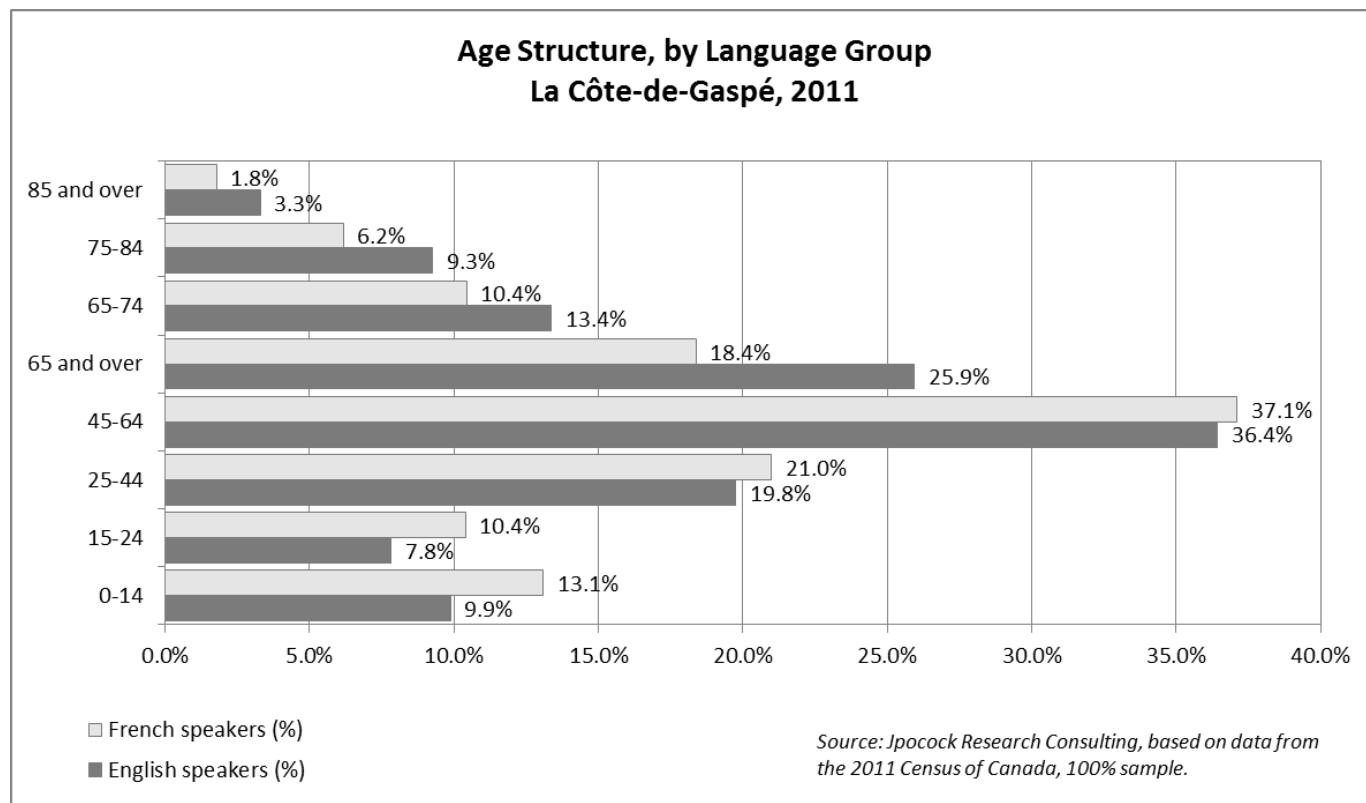
² Joanne Pocock, “La Côte-de-Gaspé: Population by Mother Tongue,” in *Quebec’s English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

Demography

Demographic Size

The Gaspésie is home to the second largest English-speaking population in the province, east of Québec City. There are 2430 English-speaking people residing in the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé territory, where they represent 20% of the population. Across all age groups, the proportion of English-speakers is lower than that of French-speakers except for those aged 65 and over, where the English-speaking community has a significantly higher proportion (see Figure 3.)

Figure 3: Age Structure by language group³



Demographic Groups: Seniors and Youth

For the purposes of this document, seniors are defined as those aged 65 years and over and youth are defined as those aged 15-24 years.

There are 630 English-speaking seniors, where they account for 25.9% of the total population of English-speakers. The proportion of seniors in the English-speaking population is much higher than their proportion in the French-speaking majority population in the CISSS territory.

³ Joanne Pocock, "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Age Structure by Language Group," in *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

Similarly, there are 190 English-speaking youth, who account for 7.8% of the total English-speaking population. The proportion of young people in the English-speaking population is much lower than the proportion in the French-speaking majority population in the CISSS territory, who account for 10.4%.

Summary

Throughout Quebec, English-speakers find themselves as a provincial linguistic minority living among a national linguistic minority. The number of English-speaking seniors and youth within the geographical size of the territory covered by the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé, and relative to the total population, results in particularly unique challenges in maintaining the health and well-being of these demographic groups. The following sections will explore these challenges in light of socioeconomic status, that is, income, employment, and educational attainment.

A recent report determined that “place of residence has a greater determining effect on socioeconomic status for Anglophones than for Francophones,”⁴ meaning proximity to metropolitan areas like Montreal and Québec City has a larger effect on lifestyle for English- than French-speakers. Coupled with the minority status of Anglophones in our area and the small numbers of the groups showcased within this booklet, Vision Gaspé-Percé Now explores the different strategies currently in place for these groups and where further attention and development is needed.

Photo 1: Douglastown Community Garden



⁴ Marie-Hélène Lussier, *The Socioeconomic Status of Anglophones in Quebec* (Québec: Institut National de Santé Publique Québec, 2012), 18.

Characteristics of English-Speaking Seniors

The CISSS territory is home to an aging English-speaking community who tend to be less educated than their French-speaking counterparts, unilingual, and living alone with many family members out of province. The lack of family in the area results in seniors with few housing options and few available natural care givers. For example, many of these seniors do not have the option of moving in with a close family relative when they are no longer able to fully care for themselves.

While both the French and English-speaking communities of our CISSS territory are considered to be aging populations, the aging process of the English-speaking community is significantly more advanced. In 2011, a full 25.9% of our English-speaking minority were 65 years or older.

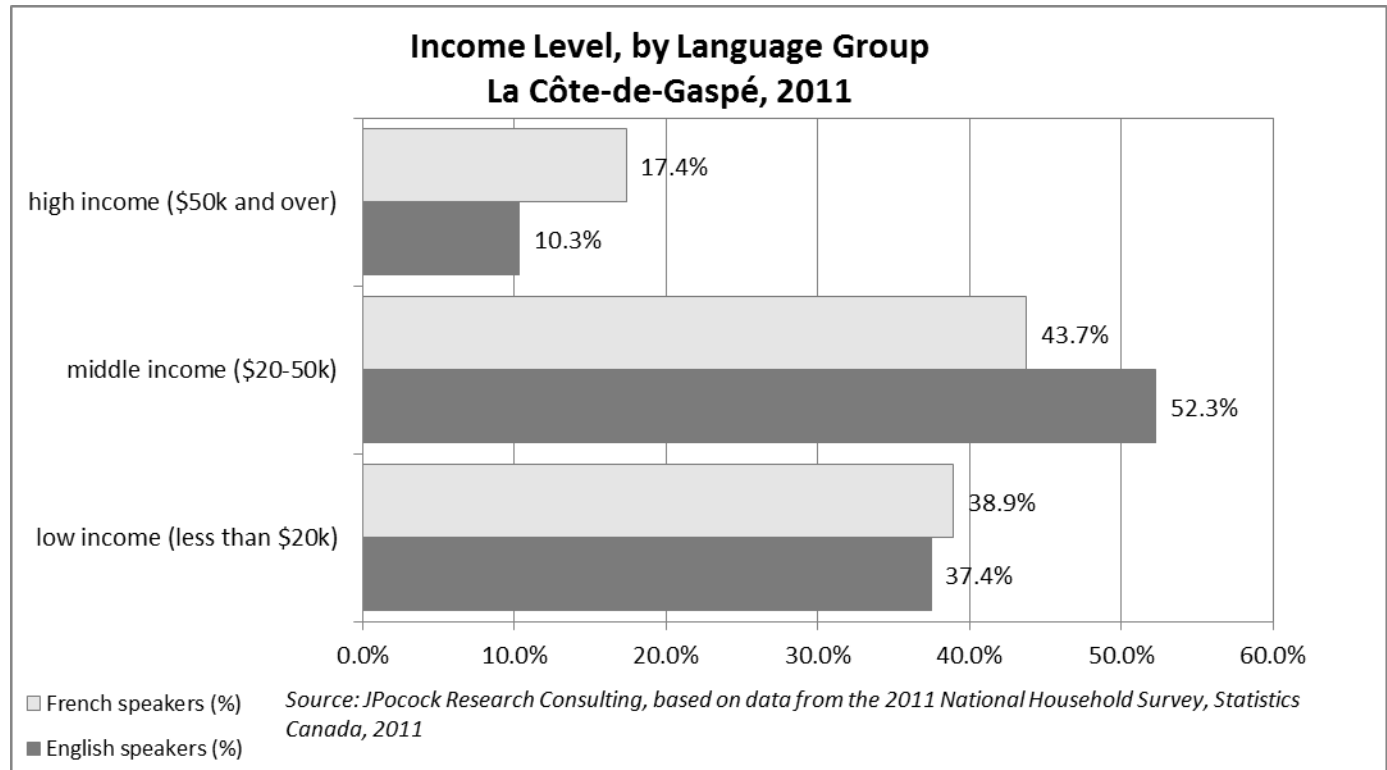
Photo 2: Fellowship at the Gaspé Wellness Centre



Income

Substantial research provides evidence that socioeconomic status is a key determinant of the level of health and well-being experienced by community members.⁵ Barriers to health services are encountered by low income earners because they are unlikely to have access to work-related benefits and they cannot afford private care services. For example, minimum wage earners are significantly less likely to have access to employer-provided medical insurance, which frequently helps cover the cost of medication. In Québec, “income inequalities are greater in the Anglophone population at every level;”⁶ for seniors, these inequalities are magnified and pose a serious risk in terms of health and access to health-care services.

Figure 4: Income level by language group⁷



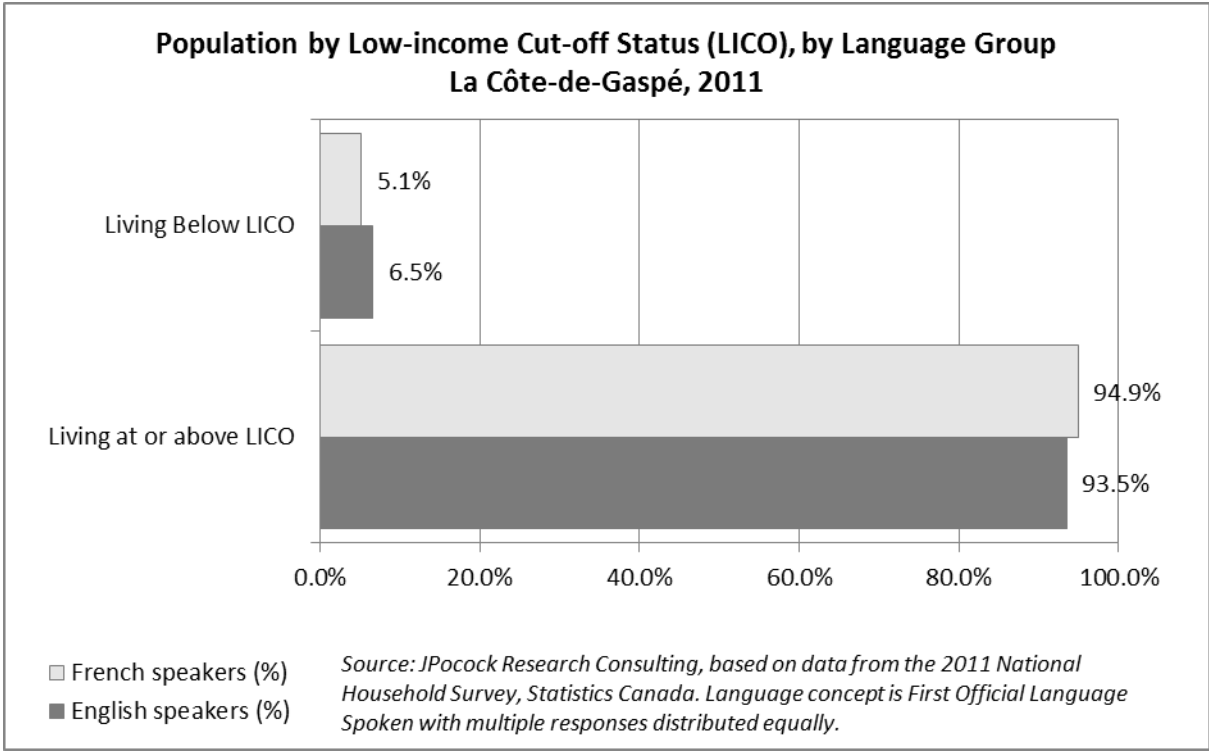
⁵ Lussier, *The Socioeconomic Status*, 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁷ Joanne Pocock, “La Côte-de-Gaspé: Income Level, by Language Group,” in *Quebec’s English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

In the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé, we find approximately 275 seniors earning less than \$20K, where they account for 48.7% of the senior population. In relation to low-income cut-off (LICO), 6.6% of English-speaking seniors live below LICO.

Figure 5: Population living below the low-income cut off⁸

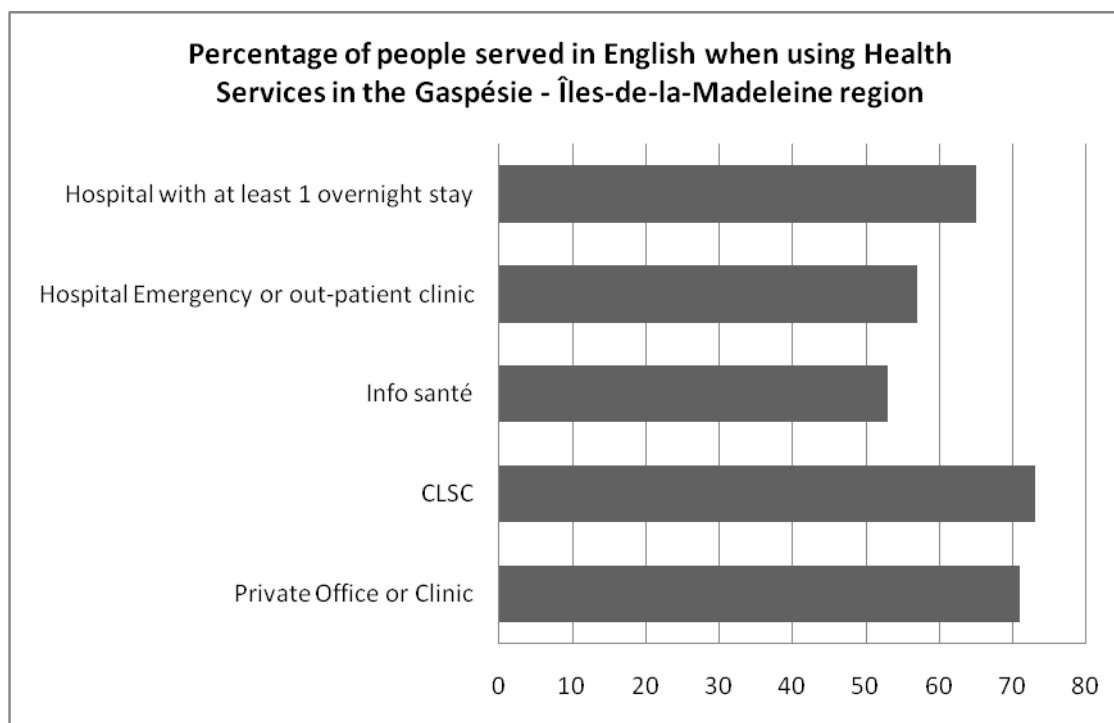


⁸ Joanne Pocock, “La Côte-de-Gaspé: Population Living Below LICO, by Language Group,” in *Quebec’s English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

Access to Health Services

A CHSSN report notes that “Regardless of whether English-speaking people go to a doctor’s office, use a health information line, a local community services centre, or a hospital, an overwhelming majority of them (over 80%) affirm that it is very important to receive their services in English.”⁹ Medical terms concerning diagnosis and treatment options can be difficult to understand, even in one’s own language. Communication in a second language adds to the stress experienced by those suffering from a physical or mental illness and may dramatically affect such decisions as treatment options, medication options, and even whether or not to seek healthcare.

Figure 6: Use of English as the language of service¹⁰



Research looking at the reasons the English-speaking community may be reluctant to request services in English are:

- They feel it may impose a burden on health personnel;
- A delay will occur or they may be refused service;
- They are too embarrassed or shy.¹¹

There appears to be an unfounded fear that services may be lost if they are requested in English and a notion that service providers do not speak English. This has the unfortunate result of the English-speaking community only seeking out medical attention as a last resort.

⁹ Joanne Pocock, *Community Network Building: Baseline Data Report, 2006-2007*. (Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2007).

¹⁰ Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN), *Community Vitality Survey, 2010* (Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2010).

¹¹ CHSSN, *Community Vitality Survey 2010*.

Strategies in place:

Networking and Partnership Initiative (NPI):

This program is intended to support the development of Québec's English-speaking communities in order to ensure their vitality. This is achieved through cooperation and partnership with the health and social services system, thereby improving, developing, and maintaining access to the full range of services for Québec's English-speaking minority communities. Funding is provided by Health Canada to Vision Gaspé-Percé Now through the Roadmap for Official Language Minority Communities. The overall objective of the NPI Program (2014-2018) is to enhance the vitality and development of English-speaking communities in Québec through improved access to health and social services in English.

CISSS Employee Identification Badges:

The CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé took the initiative and implemented a system whereby CISSS employees who speak English are easily identifiable through yellow identification badges. This practice provides a level of comfort within the English-speaking community, knowing they can identify and approach an employee who is able to respond in English.

Gaspé Cancer Foundation:

The Gaspé Cancer Foundation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing assistance with travel for cancer patients who must leave the region to seek medical treatment, as well as bilingual assistance and information for the region. They are volunteer-led and their income is based on memberships; to be eligible for travel assistance, one must be a member of good standing of the Foundation for a minimum of 30 days, which is accomplished through purchasing a reasonably priced membership.

Access Plan:

According to Québec law, Bill 142 states that all English-speaking persons have the right to obtain health and social services in their language, taking into account the organization and resources of the establishments that provide these services. In March 1994, the regional committee for access programs to health and social services in English was formed. Vision Gaspé-Percé Now is represented on the Regional Access Committee and Vision works directly with the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé in the development of the Access Plan.

The Access Plan identifies the services that are particular to the English-speaking population of the region and indicates the service providers who are obligated to deliver these services. The goal of the Access Plan is to ensure that English-speaking people have access to a range of health and social services provided in English.

Wellness Centre in Barachois:

Vision Gaspé-Percé Now and the CISSS work in partnership to deliver an English Wellness Centre in Barachois for the benefit of seniors. The Centre operates twice a month, with a break over the summer months. Vision coordinates and executes the program with support from the CISSS. Participants are individually monitored with referrals coming from the Social Integration Worker for the English-speaking community in this area.

Wellness Centre in Gaspé:

The Wellness Centre in Gaspé is a sister institution to the one in Barachois; it is another combined effort with the CISSS. It has been running for three years and provides mentally stimulating activities, a light exercise routine, an opportunity for socialization, and the means for organizers to disseminate health information and for participants to ask their questions.

Stand Up (PIED) program:

Vision Gaspé-Percé Now and the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé work in partnership to deliver the Stand Up program annually to the English-speaking community. This is a Fall Prevention Program for seniors living in their own homes. The CISSS provides a trained facilitator and Vision assists with recruiting participants and promoting the program.

McGill Training and Retention of Health Professionals Project:

The objectives of the McGill initiatives are to improve the capacity of health and social services to meet the needs of the English-speaking population in their language and to increase the participation of English-speaking professionals in Québec's public health system.

The CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé participates in this process by offering English language training to employees and the CISSS has been active in the recruitment and provision of internships for bilingual University students.

Vision Gaspé-Percé Now, the Council for Anglophone Social Action (CASA), and the Council for Magdalene Islanders (CAMI) are working in partnership with our associated CISSS institutions and the Agence de la Santé et des Services Sociaux de la Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine on a regional bilingual recruitment strategy to retain bilingual personnel and encourage those who have left the region to return, specifically students who have completed a degree in the health and social services sector.

Future development:

Mental health services:

According to a 2008 study, “English-speaking respondents display a greater prevalence of mental health problems compared to French-speaking respondents.”¹² In relative terms, English-speakers were 58% more likely to report mental health problems.¹³

Employment, income, and education are key social determinants of mental health and, considering the low socio-economic profile of the English-speaking community, it follows that more mental health services with bilingual professionals are required to best serve the community.

Availability of family doctors:

In a community survey undertaken by Vision in 2006, 89 of 100 respondents had a family doctor. Lacking access to a family doctor becomes a major problem when patients are sick and require an appointment immediately. Further, not having a family doctor exacerbates issues that arise because of unilingualism, such

¹² Allison Gonsalves, Russell Kueber, Paule Langevin, and Joanne Pocock. *Partnering for the Well-Being of Minority English-Language Youth, Schools and Communities* (Community Health and Social Services Network, 2015), 6. Available: <http://chssn.org/pdf/En/CHSSN-LEARN-Booklet-2015-EN.pdf>.

¹³ Pocock, *Community Network Building, 2006-2007*.

as discussing treatment and medication options, as well as creating problems like obtaining a referral for a specialist. As most doctors have a minimum waiting time of one month, patients are forced to attend the Family Clinic, which is only possible if their doctor has an affiliation with that Clinic; otherwise there is no option available except the Emergency Clinic at the hospital.

Medical Terms Booklet:

Vision is in the process of producing a medical terms booklet that may be distributed among the employees at the various health-care facilities throughout the CISSS de la Côte-de-Gaspé, including the hospitals, the CLSCs, and the senior care facilities (see Figure 1.) These booklets are comprised of the most commonly used words and phrases encountered in these facilities, translated into English and French. The goal of this initiative is to decrease the number of misunderstandings that may arise due to a lack of bilingualism.

Info Santé:

In 2010, 53% of the 25% of English-speaking Gaspesians who used Info-Santé were served in English.¹⁴ Greater effort to promote and serve the English-speaking community is required to improve access to this important service, as seniors are the least bilingual segment of the English-speaking community and may be able to avoid hospital visits by using Info-santé more frequently.

Volunteerism:

Presently, there is no volunteer system at Gaspé Hospital. Many of our senior population have families who are no longer living in the area; volunteer visits would be appreciated by both English-speaking seniors and their families, who could then be assured that their loved one remains comfortable and has access to anything they may need for the duration of their time in the hospital.

Photo 3: Exercise program at the Gaspé Wellness Centre



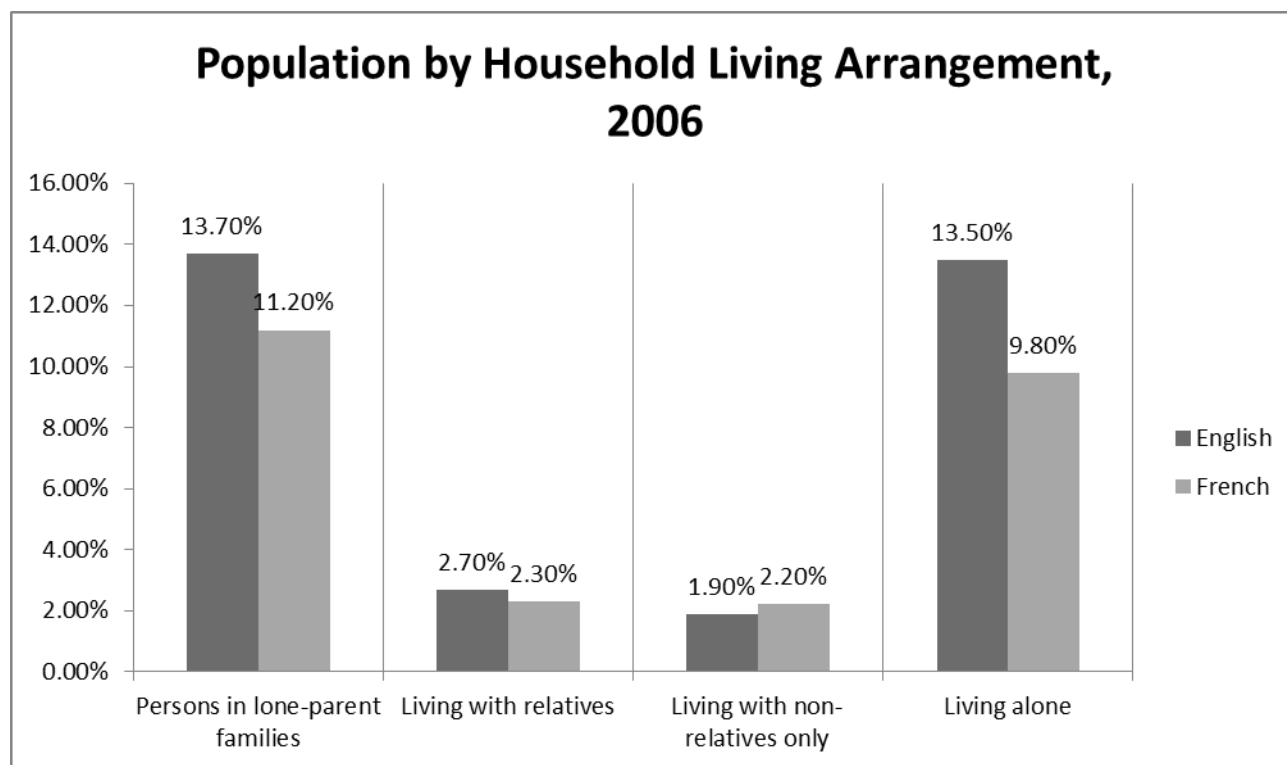
¹⁴ CHSSN, *Community Vitality Survey 2010*.

Home Support

Community consultations with the senior English-speaking population in Gaspé continuously reveal a desire by participants to remain in their own home for as long as possible. Their preference is to receive services in their home as opposed to moving into a seniors' facility.

However, due to the low number of family and relatives living within close proximity, few options are available to seniors who are unable to look after themselves. Further, the waiting time to get into a senior facility is long and many seniors are unwilling to get on the list at an appropriate time because of language barriers and a fear of social isolation once they are removed from their friends and neighbours. This leads to situations wherein individuals should be in an assisted living situation far before they actually are, with a subsequent drop in quality of life, health, and well-being.

Figure 7: Household living arrangements¹⁵



The proportion of English-speakers aged 65 years and over living alone was much higher than the proportion exhibited by the French-speaking population. English-speakers were 37% more likely to be living alone in 2010.¹⁶

¹⁵ Statistics Canada, *La Côte-de-Gaspé, Québec (Code2403)* (table), in *2006 Community Profiles*, 2006 Census, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, March 2007), available: <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E>. The linguistic concept used is First official Language Spoken with multiple responses proportionately distributed between the English and the French.

¹⁶ Community Health and Social Services Network, *Baseline Data Report 2009-2010: Demographic profiles of Québec's English-speaking communities by selected CISSS Territories* (Québec: CHSSN, 2010).

Strategies in place:

CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé:

A Social Integration Worker is designated specifically for English-speaking seniors. The worker in this position is required to evaluate those seniors who prefer to remain in their own home rather than being placed in a long term care facility.

The CLSC staff provides home support in the form of visitation and evaluation. Nurses visit patients in their home on a regular basis to check blood pressure, take blood tests, and administer flu shots. Auxiliary nurses assist seniors with their personal hygiene and bathing needs. An occupational therapist can evaluate the senior's need in regard to everyday activities. 61% of English-speaking Gaspésians reported using the CLSC in 2010 for themselves or to help someone else and 73% reported being served in English.¹⁷

Home healthcare and home care services are likely to be in higher demand by communities with a greater number of seniors. Clearly, services designed with a majority profile in mind may not meet the needs of the minority.

Centre d'Action Bénévole Le Hauban (CAB):

This organization provides various programs, such as:

- Meals on Wheels – offered 1 day per week to people over 55 years old or persons with loss of autonomy;
- Medical accompaniment – transport to and from medical appointments;
- Friendly phone calls;

Alzheimer's Society and Resource Centre

Alzheimer's disease is recognizable by the onset of symptoms affecting mental faculties as the illness progressively attacks and destroys vital brain cells. For example, the disease frequently affects both personality traits and cognitive abilities. Over time, physical and intellectual abilities are gradually and irreversibly damaged. This organization, then, provides information and support for those diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and their families, a vital resource for coping with such an emotionally devastating disease. English resources are available in the Gaspé region by contacting the Society: 418-368-6634; <http://www.alzheimer.ca>.

Multi-Services:

This is a specialized service to assist people over 65 years of age in maintaining their autonomy and remaining in their homes for as long as possible. The multi-services workers provide domestic assistance and home support service on a regular basis to people living within the CISSS de la Côte-de-Gaspé territory. This is a partially-funded program that makes services such as cleaning homes and preparing meals affordable for those living on a fixed income, such as a government funded pension plan.

¹⁷ CHSSN, *Community Vitality Survey 2010*.

Frozen meals:

Long-standing and substantial research provides evidence that income is a key determinant of the level of health and well-being. Seniors who live below the low income cut-off (LICO) cannot afford to eat properly and those with limited mobility, disabilities, or debilitating illnesses are less able to take care of themselves by preparing wholesome and nutritious meals. Coupled with a lack of natural caregivers available locally, improper nutrition becomes a widespread problem. As such, Vision has instituted a frozen meals program that provides nutritious, healthy meals for pick-up or delivery. This program is intended to improve the quality of life of those who remain in their own homes.

Friendly visits:

Many of our seniors live alone and in many cases their extended families no longer live in the area. As a result, they are isolated and would greatly benefit from friendly visits in the home as in the hospital (see p. 11). Further, families could rest assured that someone is checking up on their loved ones and would be well placed to notice any changes in behaviour or health issues that may develop.

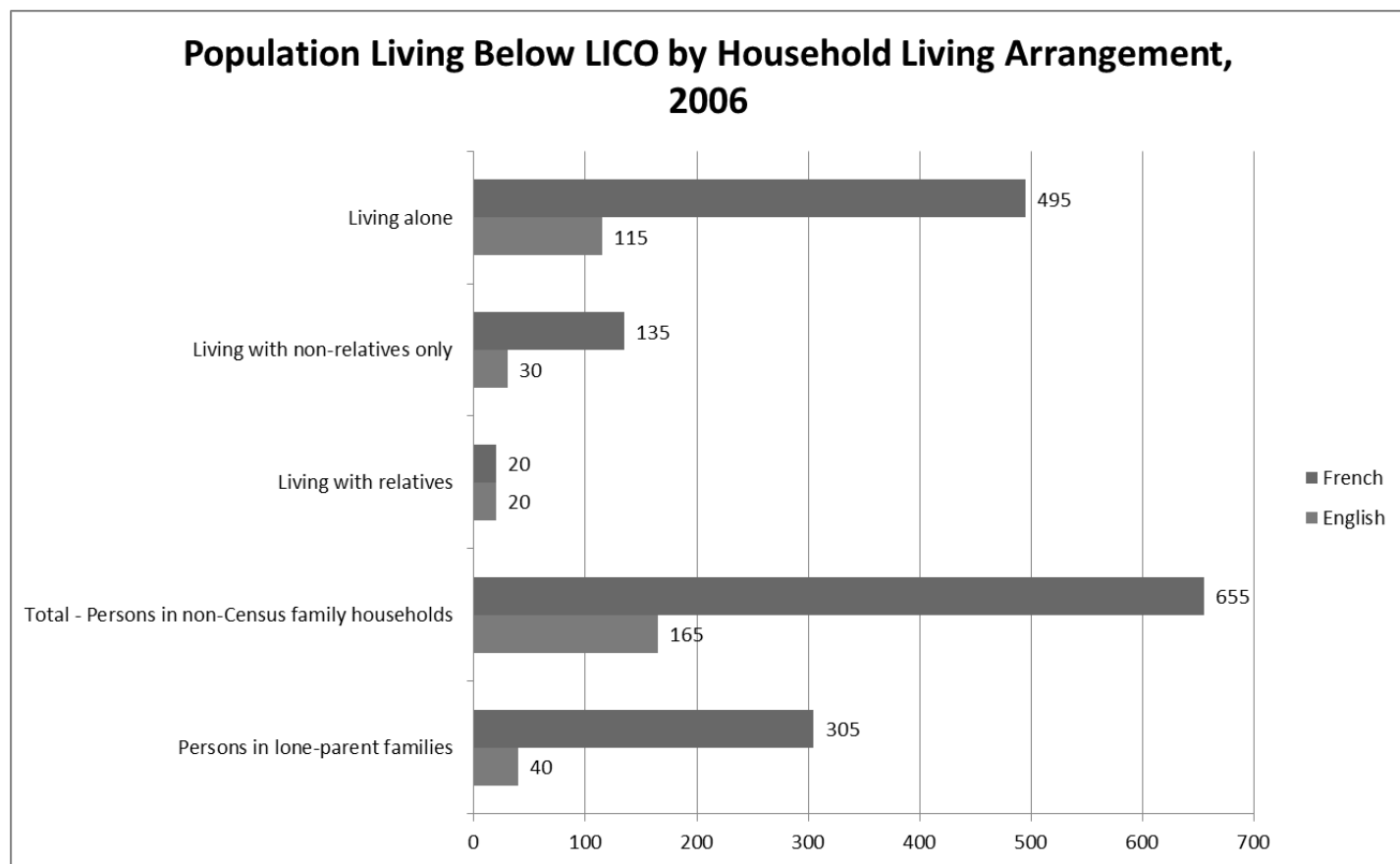
Photo 4: Halloween at the Barachois Wellness Centre



Care Giving

Natural caregivers are typically drawn from the “middle generation,” those aged 45-64. In Gaspé, the percentage of people in this group, relative to the total English-language population, is approaching the number of seniors themselves, with 36.4% of middle generation English-speakers to 25.9% senior. This means that the number of natural caregivers is declining while the need for natural caregiving continues to rise, leading to high levels of unpaid work and high levels of stress and obligation on those doing this work. In fact, a total of 38% of the volunteer work done by English-speaking Gaspésians in 2010 involved care and support of the elderly.¹⁸

Figure 8: Low-income cut off (LICO) by household living arrangement¹⁹



¹⁸ CHSSN, *Community Vitality Survey 2010*.

¹⁹ Statistics Canada, *La Côte-de-Gaspé, Québec (Code2403)*.

In 2010, the English-speaking population had a higher proportion of people living alone and below LICO at 32.9% than the French-speaking population. The highest proportion of English-speakers living below LICO was seen in those persons living with relatives, at a rate 450 times that of the French-speaking population.²⁰ Although there is a preference to turn to relatives and friends when illness occurs, the Gaspésie led all other regions in Québec with 18% of English-speakers having to rely on public service institutions to provide support in times of illness.²¹

Strategies in place:

Caregiver's Kit

We have found that seniors and care givers are often unaware of many of the services that are available to them. As such, Vision has produced a Caregiver's Kit, which details all of the services available to seniors in the area, including institutional benefits and community groups, as well as providing helpful tips for dealing with the mental and emotional stress that caregiving often inspires, useful ways to share the workload, examples of success stories, and ways to make the person receiving care as comfortable as possible. This is part of an initiative, including the two Wellness Centres, and various youth-focused activities, geared towards educating the English-speaking community on health and wellbeing.

Future development:

Associated tax benefits for natural caregivers:

Tax credits are available to natural caregivers who look after seniors in their own homes, but the laws do not take into account those who care for the senior in an assisted living situation, like a seniors' home. It is widely accepted that the best place for a senior is in their own home and they are thus encouraged by government institutions to remain at home for as long as possible. However, with declining numbers of natural caregivers available, it becomes more difficult to maintain a senior in their home. Caregiving does not end once a senior is in an assisted living facility, although it may change the nature of the caregiving into something more manageable. Changes need to be made to the tax system to reflect both of these realities. Caregivers are often faced with reduced income levels as they are often unable to work full time. Financial assistance from the government would help improve their quality of life and, by recognizing this work both directly and indirectly, lead to improved health and well-being for the caregiver's themselves.

²⁰ CHSSN, *Baseline Data Report, 2009-2010*.

²¹ CHSSN, *Community Vitality Survey 2010*.

Photo 5: Dancing at the Gaspé Wellness Centre



Characteristics of English-speaking Youth

The proportion of English-speaking young people in the population of Gaspé is well below that of their French-speaking counterparts. There are also less young people residing in the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé territory when compared to young English-speakers across the province of Québec.²²

The level of education achieved, which tends to be an indicator of economic opportunity, is considerably lower in the English-speaking community. Lower incomes are more prevalent, as are higher unemployment levels, typically leading to greater issues in health and general well-being.

Photo 6: Commemorative bracelets from Vision's 'I AM ME' Campaign



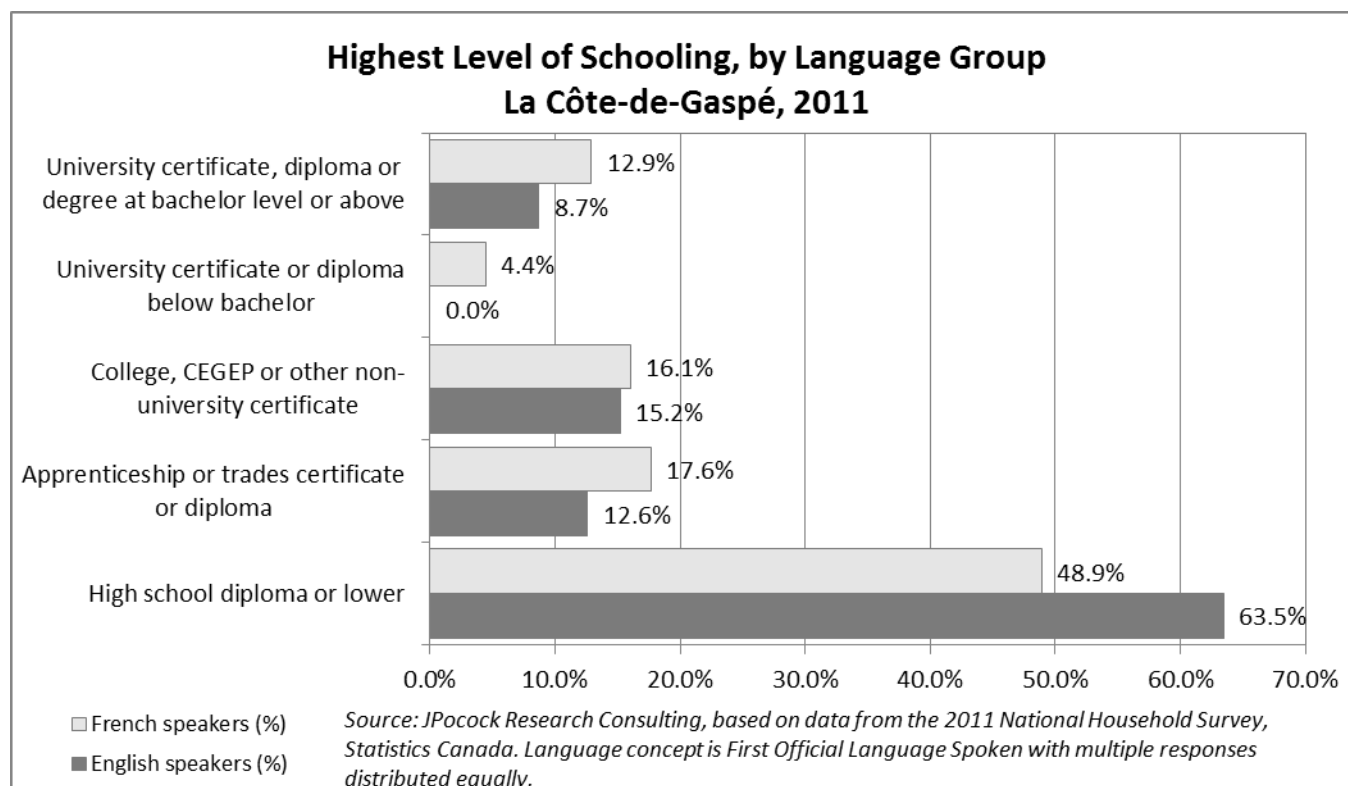
²² Joanne Pocock and Jan Warnke, *Baseline Data Report, 2009-2010: Demographic profiles of Québec's English-speaking communities by selected CISSS Territories* (Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2010).

Education and School Programs

All three English schools in the territory received New Approaches, New Solutions (NANS), which is a program consisting of financial measures to ensure greater success for disadvantaged students. When comparing young people across the region in 2006, those living in the CISSS territory had a 42% greater chance of not completing high school.²³ According to a recent study, “English-language school boards face the challenge of declining school enrollment due primarily to patterns of demographic change and language policy.”²⁴

In effect, declining enrollment and fewer numbers in the schools leads to less funding for important extra-curricular programs and information sessions. It then falls to the community at large to fill in these gaps.

Figure 9: Educational attainment by language group²⁵



²³ Pocock and Warnke, *Baseline Data Report, 2009-2010*.

²⁴ Gonsalves et al., *Partnering*, 6

²⁵ Joanne Pocock, “La Côte-de-Gaspé: Educational Attainment, by Language Group,” in *Quebec’s English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

The CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé territory displayed the 3rd highest percentage of uneducated youth across the province of Québec in 2006, with 46.4% English-speakers without a certificate, diploma or degree (excluding Montreal and Laval). In relative terms, English-speakers were 30% more likely than French-speakers to be without a high school diploma in 2010.²⁶

Although the 2012-2013 ‘Tell Them From Me’ survey recorded 64% of secondary students planning to go to college or university,²⁷ the “brain drain” experienced by English-speaking communities in Quebec suggests that these higher educated youth are more likely to leave the province with their degree.²⁸ Further, these youth tend to feel “a weak sense of belonging to the province and many see the future of their community in Quebec as threatened,”²⁹ which only contributes to the exodus of young people (see the following section for a further discussion on this.)

Strategies in place:

Vision Youth Liaison Officer:

The youth liaison officer working with Vision Gaspé-Percé Now provides services to the four English-speaking schools in the area: Belle Anse Elementary, Gaspé Elementary, the Gaspé Polyvalent, and the English sector of the CEGEP de la Gaspésie et des Îles. The primary focus of this officer is to promote healthy body images among our children and youth, an initiative that has culminated primarily in Vision’s ‘I AM ME’ campaign (see p. 26 for more information on ‘I AM ME’.)

Gaspé-Percé Community Learning Centre (CLC):

The CLC is a partnership of three schools that opens its doors during the day, beyond school hours, and often on weekends. It also works in partnership with local businesses, service providers, and health and community organizations to offer activities in the schools that are geared to students, parents, and community members. The purpose of the activities, and the mandate of the CLC, is to promote student success, lifelong learning, and community vitality.

Future development:

Early school leaving rates:

As noted above in Figure 7, 38% of English-speaking Gaspésians are without educational certification. The English-speaking community must acknowledge the low level of education being attained by young people and take significant action to ensure young people are gaining suitable education levels that will enable them to have a viable economic future.

²⁶ Joanne Pockock, Jan Warnke, and James Carter, *Socio-Economic Profiles of Quebec’s English-Speaking Communities*, Companion Report to the CHSSN online table series (Québec: CHSSN, 2010).

²⁷ Gonsalves et al., *Partnering*, 6.

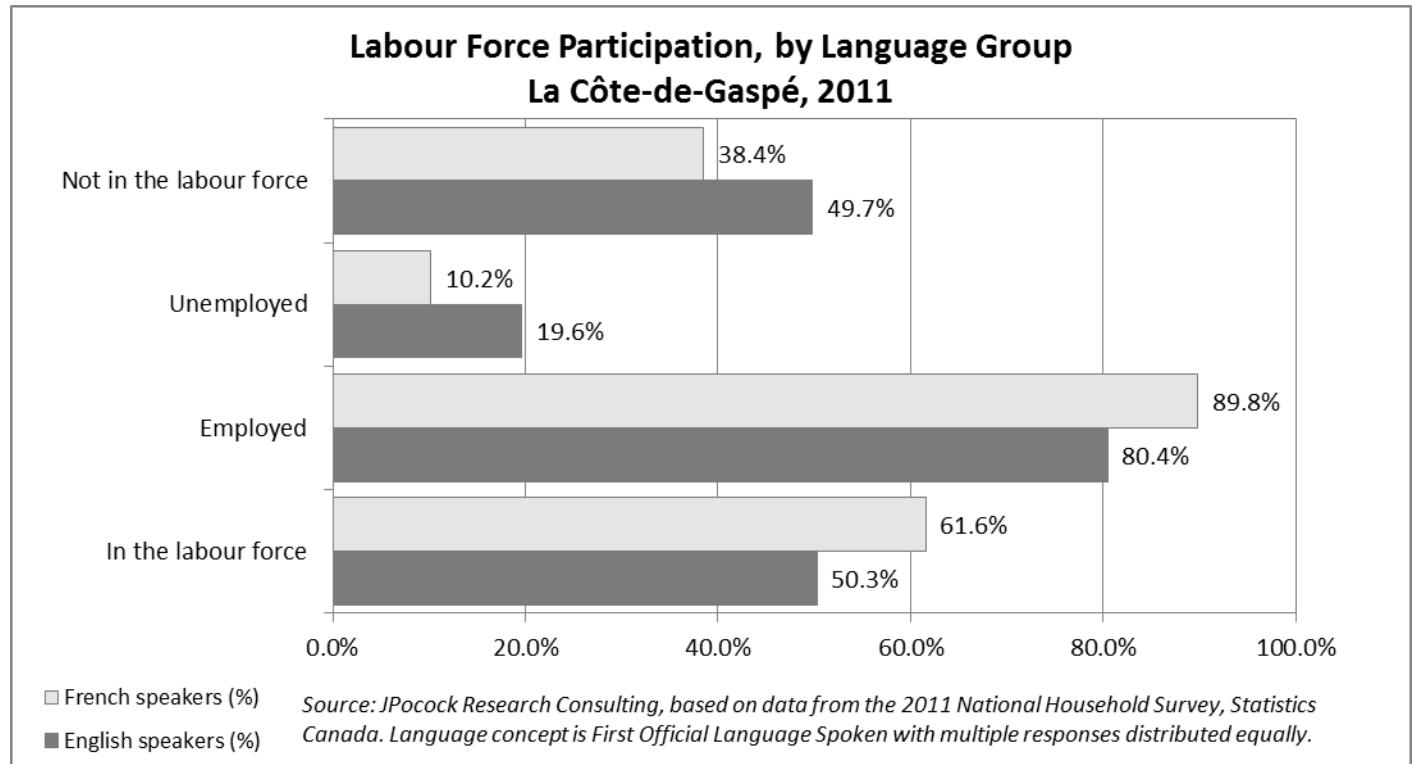
²⁸ Government of Canada, *A Portrait of the English-speaking Communities in Québec* (Canadian Heritage, 2011), 7. Available: [https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/vwapj/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf/\\$file/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/vwapj/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf/$file/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf).

²⁹ Gonsalves et al., *Partnering*, 7.

Income and Employability

The CISSS territory is home to generational cycles of government assistance (frequently, but not exclusively, due to seasonal work.) This, coupled with a lack of demand for unskilled labour, low value being placed on education, and limited employment options, means attracting and keeping young people in the area is not only challenging but must become a major area of focus for the English-speaking community, in the Gaspé MRC and throughout Québec.

Figure 10: Labour force participation by language group³⁰



In 2010, the CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé territory ranked third among CISSS territories in Québec, excluding Montreal and Laval, with 26% of the English-speaking population over 15 years old unemployed. According to the 2011 census, 19.6% of English-speakers are unemployed, in comparison with 10.2% of French-speakers.³¹

Further, the proportion of English-speakers earning less than \$20k is much higher at 48.2% than the proportion of French-speakers (see Figure 4).

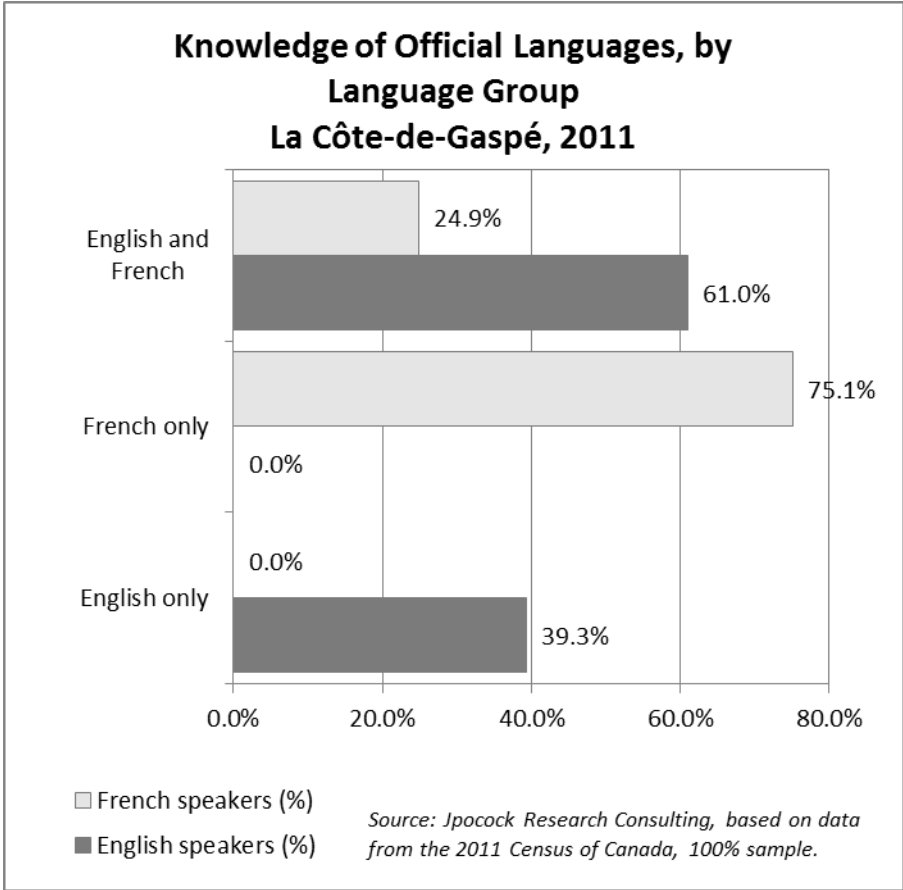
³⁰ Joanne Pocock, "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Labour Force Participation, by Language Group," in *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

³¹ Ibid.

A major factor in retaining English-speaking youth in Quebec is employability, which is frequently tied to issues of language. Figure 9 details the knowledge of official languages in La Côte-de-Gaspé; however, based on previous data and research, we can assume that the younger generations have higher rates of bilingualism than other groups, such as seniors. And yet, “despite the strength of fairly high levels of bilingualism among English-speaking youth (77.4% among those 15-24 in 2011) language barriers continue to be cited as a challenge in achieving their aspirations in terms of education, employment, social inclusion, community leadership, and optimal health.”³²

The ability to converse in French does not necessarily add to a sense of belonging for English-speaking youth and, thus, may not translate into retaining this demographic group. In fact, it may have the opposite effect of being an attractive asset while job searching out of province, as opposed to a necessity in-province.

Figure 11: Knowledge of official language groups³³



³² Gonsalves et al., *Partnering*, 5.

³³ Joanne Pocock, “La Côte-de-Gaspé: Knowledge of Official Languages, by Language Group,” in *Quebec’s English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock (Québec: CHSSN, January 2015).

Strategies in place:

Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi:

The goal of this organization is to accompany and guide young adults aged 16-35 with social and economic integration and to then transition them toward employment or a return to school. There are several activities and services offered, including job search strategies and references, mock interviews, personal counselling, work on behaviour problems with students, providing workshops to all school levels, helping youth to return to the region, and helping students develop their entrepreneurial skills. The aim of all of these services is to help improve the quality of life for the young adults who remain in the area.

McGill Training and Retention of Health Professionals Project:

A focus of this project is to identify and retain local students who may be interested in pursuing a career in the health and social services field. Vision works in partnership with education institutions on various activities to encourage students to consider and follow a career in health and encourage them to return to the region for work after completing their studies.

Cegep and Adult Education:

The Cegep de la Gaspésie et des Îles has an English sector where students can undertake a DEP or DEC in various courses. Bursaries and free housing exists for students of select courses and who live more than 65 kilometers away from campus, within the region of the Gaspésie.

Wakeham Adult Education Centre offers courses for adults and students who are looking to upgrade their schooling or complete a diploma in certain programs, such as auxiliary nursing and accounting.

Future development:

Bilingualism:

As noted above, young English-speakers tend to have higher rates of bilingualism than other English-speaking age groups. However, the ability to converse in French is quite different from working effectively in a French language environment. Workplace terminology and the ability to write proficiently in French are important components in establishing success, confidence, and retention in the workplace.

Retaining youth locally:

On the one hand, young people are socialized to leave the areas like the Gaspé.³⁴ On the other hand, “while English-speaking youth report feeling excluded and lacking a legitimate place in today’s Quebec society they are unified in their aspiration to maintain a distinct identity, celebrate their diverse cultures, and take pride in the contribution of their communities to Quebec’s heritage.”³⁵

There is thus a great challenge in encouraging youth to return to the region as educated, qualified, bilingual professionals and to thus take an active interest in the community, thereby maintaining the culture and traditions of the English-speaking community in Gaspé, and taking on leadership roles in community organizations that allow their heritage to be celebrated.

³⁴ Richard L. Element, “Narratives of Home and Away: Rural Youth Migration from the Gaspé Peninsula” (Master’s Thesis, Concordia University, 2003).

³⁵ Gonsalves et al., *Partnering*, 7.

Employment options:

With rising levels of retirement, there is a prospect for growing employment options in the region. The English-speaking community should position itself to take advantage of the emerging employment options that are anticipated.

Photo 7: Learning about healthy food options



Access to Health Services

In 2010, it was discovered that young people aged 18-34 years are, among all age groups, the least likely to have access to public health information and the various programs offered through the CISSS.³⁶ Conversely, in a recent survey, “respondents aged 15-24 reported the highest levels of psychological distress.”³⁷ Further, English students are more likely to have health problems than French students, such as being overweight, with corresponding self-image issues, experiencing anxiety and depression, missing meals, and missing a positive sense of belonging to a community.³⁸

Photo 8: The Douglstown Community Garden



Access to programs in the health and social service sector is especially important for this group. A recent study has determined that, in comparison with the province of Quebec, youth in Gaspé are more likely to engage in the following self-destructive behaviours: smoking cigarettes, consuming alcohol, experimenting with drug use, and engaging in sexual relationships. Further, these behaviours tend to occur at a younger age than the provincial average.³⁹

³⁶ Gonsalves et al., *Partnering*, 7.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Joanne Pocock, “Key Characteristics of the Clientele of the English Language School System” (paper presented at Concordia University, Montreal, Québec, January 24-25, 2013).

³⁹ Nathalie Dubé and Claude Parent, *L'Enquête québécoise sur la santé des jeunes du secondaire 2010-2011: La santé physique et les habitudes de vie des jeunes de La Côte-de-Gaspé-volet I* (Gaspé: Direction de santé publique Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, 2013).

Strategies in place:

Vision's 'I AM ME' Campaign

This campaign is implemented by Vision's Youth Liaison Officer (see p. 20). 'I AM ME' seeks to blend healthy body image with positive self-esteem by informing students of how unrealistic standards of beauty are today, helping them to see the beautiful side of themselves, encouraging them to focus on internal rather than external beauty, and reminding them of how people are important, unique, and beautiful because of who they are and what they can do. 'I AM ME' reaches beyond school environments to include parents and the community in re-building and maintaining self-esteem. This campaign also spills over into other areas, such as Pink Shirt Day, a Canada-wide initiative dedicated to increasing awareness of bullying and its effects.

CISSS de La Côte-de-Gaspé:

The CLSC provides the following services to the three English Schools in the Gaspé territory;

- Social Worker – 2 days per week
- School Nurse – 2 days per week
- Dental Hygienist – interventions twice per year

Centre de Réadaptation:

This organization designates case workers to individual students with physical or intellectual disabilities.

Centre Jeunesse:

The Centre Jeunesse provides youth protection services for students and their families. In some cases, young people are transferred to Montreal to receive services in English.

The Association for the prevention of addiction for the youth of Gaspé-Percé:

This organization works to encourage young people from Cap Gaspé to Cap d'Espoir to live wholesome, healthy, and productive drug and alcohol free lives. Their mandate is:

1. To educate community members and to promote awareness on the issues of addiction.
2. To help prevent drug and alcohol use amongst our young people.
3. To offer young people activities free of drugs and alcohol.
4. To develop a wide range of prevention and treatment services to help our young people who are faced with drug and alcohol problems.

Future development:

Student stress, anxiety, and self-esteem:

Low educational attainment and low income levels are associated with elevated levels of stress.⁴⁰ In the 2008 ‘Tell Them From Me’ survey, more than 50% of students reported that stress reduction programs should be a school priority. The ‘Friends for Life’ program was created to provide elementary school students with resiliency and coping skills to assist them manage anxiety and stress. Vision is working towards having this program implemented in our Elementary Schools.

Age gap:

Many of the services provided to and available for youth are geared towards high school and, to a lesser extent, post-secondary, students. However, for those who are unable to finish high school, choose not to, or are unable to pursue post-secondary education, it becomes much more difficult to find available resources for specific problems. Since the English-speaking community is working toward retaining their youth population, we need to likewise work towards providing them with the help and resources they may need once they are no longer in the school system.

Mental health services:

As discussed above, children and youth experience high levels of anxiety, depression, and psychological distress. In 2008, the highest levels of psychological distress were reported by the 15-24 years of age group.⁴¹ People within this age group likewise have a tendency to avoid services and receive little information on the factors that influence mental health. The misconceptions about mental health problems need to be addressed as well as the benefits of seeking support.

Drug and alcohol intervention services:

Treatment and recovery services are based in Montreal and the system is complex involving 4 levels of support. Providing a consistent pattern of prevention, intervention, treatment, and support services is challenging due to limited resources and the conflicting approaches of harm minimization and zero tolerance.

Representation on youth committees:

Youth representation on local and regional committees will directly influence the development of leadership skills and ensure English-speaking youth are taking their place in the community. There are many youth services directed to French-speaking young people, but the English community needs to be represented so they may also receive and utilize the services entitled to them.

⁴⁰ Joanne Pocock, *Quebec’s Social and Health Survey Information: Baseline Data Report, 2007-2008* (Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2008).

⁴¹ Pocock, *Quebec’s Social and Health Survey Information*.

Photo 9: Pink Shirt Day at Gaspé Elementary School, 2015



Conclusion

In sum, it is safe to assume that demographic groups of English-speakers in the Gaspé area would greatly benefit from a varied number of resources that are not currently available. Through examining the two age groups who are, arguably, in the most precarious position – the seniors who are not well-placed to cope with the debilitating effects of age and changing social circumstances and youth in danger of not becoming full participants in their communities or of doing so outside of the province – we are able to gain a particular perspective on what the English-speaking population needs. Helping our more vulnerable groups helps to maintain the community as a whole.

Clearly, many services, community-based, governmentally-led, or volunteer-oriented, are in place to deal with some of the particular problems described in this profile. However, not all of the needs of our community are being met and so we are not flourishing as we should. Further, many of the programs currently in place are in the beginning stages of development and are therefore subject to fluctuations in financial support, volunteer time, attention to the problem, and perceived need for the services they provide. Vision is attempting to address some of the health and social service aspects of our communities that can help the English-speaking communities on the Gaspé coast remain as vibrant, active, and socially involved as they were in the past.

Thus, in order to ensure that the needs of the population are being met, a certain amount of self-reflection is needed on the part of community members at different stages in time. This profile is one such method of self-reflection, based primarily on statistical data and subsequent analyses. Our sincere hope is that this profile will galvanize the population of Gaspé and, indeed, Quebec as a whole to come together and preserve the vitality and strength of our English-speaking populations.

Bibliography

- Centre de Santé et des Services Sociaux (CISSS) de La Côte-de-Gaspé. *Nos Points de Services*. Gaspé: CISSS, 2010. Available: http://www.CISSScotedegaspe.ca/?id=286&titre=Nos_points_de_services&em.
- Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN). *Baseline Data Report 2009-2010: Demographic profiles of Québec's English-speaking communities by selected CISSS Territories*. Québec: CHSSN, 2010.
- Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN). *Community Vitality Survey, 2010*. Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2010.
- Dubé, Nathalie, and Claude Parent. *L'Enquête québécoise sur la santé des jeunes du secondaire 2010-2011: La santé physique et les habitudes de vie des jeunes de La Côte-de-Gaspé-volet 1*. Gaspé: Direction de santé publique Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, 2013.
- Element, Richard L. "Narratives of Home and Away: Rural Youth Migration from the Gaspé Peninsula." Master's Thesis, Concordia University, 2003.
- Gonsalves, Allison, Russell Kueber, Paule Langevin, and Joanne Pocock. *Partnering for the Well-Being of Minority English-Language Youth, Schools and Communities*. Community Health and Social Services Network, 2015. Available: <http://chssn.org/pdf/En/CHSSN-LEARN-Booklet-2015-EN.pdf>.
- Government of Canada. *A Portrait of the English-speaking Communities in Québec*. Canadian Heritage, 2011. Available: [https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/vwapj/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf/\\$file/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/com-com.nsf/vwapj/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf/$file/CANHER_June2011_eng.pdf).
- Lussier, Marie-Hélène. *The Socioeconomic Status of Anglophones in Quebec*. Québec: Institut National de Santé Publique Québec, 2012.
- Pocock, Joanne. *Community Network Building: Baseline Data Report, 2006-2007*. Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2007.
- Pocock, Joanne. *Quebec's Social and Health Survey Information: Baseline Data Report, 2007-2008*. Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2008.
- Pocock, Joanne, Jan Warnke, and James Carter. *Socio-Economic Profiles of Quebec's English-Speaking Communities by CSSS and RSS Territories*. Companion Report to the CHSSN online table series. Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2010.
- Pocock, Joanne. "Key Characteristics of the Clientele of the English Language School System." Paper presented at Concordia University, Montreal, Québec, January 24-25, 2013.

- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Age Structure by Language Group." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Educational Attainment, by Language Group." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Income Level, by Language Group." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Knowledge of Official Languages, by Language Group." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Labour Force Participation, by Language Group." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Population by Mother Tongue." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne. "La Côte-de-Gaspé: Population Living Below LICO, by Language Group." In *Quebec's English-speaking Populations According to the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2011 Census of Canada: Population Size, Proportion and Age Structure by RSS, CISSS and CLSC territories*, by Joanne Pocock. Québec: CHSSN, January 2015.
- Pocock, Joanne, and J. W. Warnke. *Baseline Data Report, 2009-2010: Demographic profiles of Québec's English-speaking communities by selected CISSS Territories*. Québec: Community Health and Social Services Network, 2010.
- Statistics Canada. *La Côte-de-Gaspé, Quebec (Code2403)* (table). In *2006 Community Profiles*. 2006 Census, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, March 2007. Available: <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E>.