

Active Offer of FLS in Health

Management Fact Sheet

What is Active Offer of FLS (French Language Services)?

Active Offer begins when :

Awareness is created within an organization and health service providers are proactive and supportive to the offer and provision of quality French language services.

Active Offer happens when...

*Francophone members of the public are **informed** about available services in French, have **access** to these services and are **satisfied** with the quality of these services.*¹

Quality French-language services are “**actively offered**” if the following elements are present:²

- ☑ a “client” or “service-focused” approach;
- ☑ knowledgeable and well-trained staff who have a clear understanding of their corporate and individual responsibilities regarding FLS;
- ☑ a willingness, where necessary, to look at alternative or innovative ways to meet FLS obligations and the needs of the Francophone community; and,
- ☑ time to “plan ahead”.

How does Active Offer of FLS fit into the health care system?

Active offer is an important factor when engaging patients in the local health system transformation. It provides for a better quality of service that is responsive to client needs and has a positive impact for clients, institutions and communities, as a clear understanding of one’s health. It makes for a healthier individual and environment.

Local health service providers who are identified or, under the *French Language Services Act*, designated to provide FLS, are encouraged to be proactive in establishing and offering services in French, **rather than relying on the public having to request them**. As crown agencies, LHINs are also accountable for providing FLS using an active offer approach.

As stated by the French Language Services Commissioner – François Boileau – in his *Special Report on French Language Health Services Planning in Ontario, 2009*: “It has been shown, time and time again, that active offer has a considerable impact on the demand for services. The more actively a service is offered, the more demand there is for it. This is as true for health as for any other sector.”

How do I promote an Active Offer of FLS?

- ☑ Educate staff and management on the *FLS Act*³ and the FLS requirements under the *Local Health System Integration Act*⁴.
- ☑ Ensure visual cues in the service environment that let the public know that services are available in French (i.e. signs, name tags, etc.)

¹ From “*OPS Framework for Action: A Modern Ontario Public Service*”, 2006

² From “*Practical Guide for the Active Offer of French-language Services in the Ontario Government*”, Office of Francophone Affairs, April 2008

³ http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90f32_e.htm

⁴ http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2009/elaws_src_regs_r09515_e.htm

- ▼ ▼ Offer services simultaneously in French and English (i.e. on the phone, at the reception desk, at admission, in print, etc.)
- ▼ ▼ Develop mechanisms for non-bilingual staff to handle requests for services in French – in person or over the phone.
- ▼ ▼ Identify and carry out an assessment of bilingual staff and the resources needed to ensure an active offer of FLS (i.e. language testing and training, bilingual reference tools, etc.)
- ▼ ▼ Develop a mechanism to identify French-speaking clients in order to facilitate needs assessment and matching of clients with French-speaking staff.
- ▼ ▼ Engage the Francophone community as an active partner in designing programs and services that meet the community's own needs (i.e. FLS Committee, consultations, etc.)
- ▼ ▼ Integrate FLS in strategic plans and develop policies and procedures pertaining to FLS (i.e. in HR policies, complaint mechanism, etc.)