

June 8, 2020

Mr. Craig Thompson  
Executive Director  
Office of the Patient Ombudsman

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

Dear Sir:

On behalf of the *Regroupement des entités de planification des services de santé en français*, we welcome the announcement by the Office of the Patient Ombudsman of an investigation into the experience of residents and caregivers in long-term care homes that experienced an outbreak of COVID-19.

As your office moves forward, we would like to highlight the importance of including a Francophone perspective within the scope of this work. For more than 10 years, Ontario's six French Language Health Planning Entities have seen firsthand the benefits of the early inclusion of Francophone stakeholders and communities in government initiatives. More specifically, we suggest:

- applying a culturally and linguistically adaptive lens throughout the process
- ensuring meaningful engagement of Francophone residents and their families about their experience throughout the COVID-19 outbreak

Currently, more than 620,000 Francophones live in Ontario and more than 19.5 per cent of this population is over the age of 65. This proportion is higher than the general population which sits at 16.2 per cent.

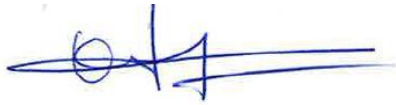
Long-term care residents are among the most vulnerable members of our society. A vulnerability which is further amplified among Ontario's Francophone population as the ability to speak a second language often deteriorates with age.

Since 2010, Ontario's French Language Health Planning Entities work collaboratively with local, regional and provincial partners, including partners within the long-term care sector, to improve access to French Language Health Services. Our joint endeavours have delivered real improvements for Francophone seniors and their families.

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Office of the Patient Ombudsman in monitoring the impact of COVID-19 and responding to the concerns expressed by patients and their families. The results of your investigation will undoubtedly help build a more compassionate, resident-centred long-term care system for the future.

We would be pleased to discuss how we can contribute to the success of this investigation through engagement of Francophone communities. Please contact Estelle Duchon at [e.duchon@entite4.ca](mailto:e.duchon@entite4.ca) to arrange a meeting. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Ministry of Long-Term Care.

Respectfully yours,



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Entité de planification des services de santé  
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Sébastien Skrobos, Executive Director  
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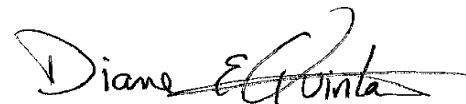
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Encl.: Brochure - Building patient centred care for Francophones