

POLICY TITLE Human Resources French Language Policy for Health Care Services	Policy Category/Number	HCS 200.28
	Date Approved	March 8, 2016
	Applicable to	Bilingual Regional Health Authorities and Facilities, Diagnostic Services Manitoba, CancerCare Manitoba, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba
	Next Review Date	Two years from approval date
	Date Reviewed	
BRANCH/DIVISION Corporate Services Provincial Policy and Programs	Date Revised	
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY Director, Corporate Services		Page 1 of 3

FINAL

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Proficiency in French/English is a legitimate skill and valid selection criteria for the recruitment into positions that are designated as bilingual or have a bilingual/French requirement.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 “The French Language Services Policy of the Government of Manitoba recognizes the fact that the French-speaking population of Manitoba is a constituent of one of the fundamental characteristics of Canada. The policy’s purpose is to allow this community and the institutions serving it to access comparable government services in the language of the laws of Manitoba.” (French-Language Services Policy of the Government of Manitoba - www.gov.mb.ca/fls-slf/pdf/fls_policy.pdf.)
- 2.2 “The services provided by the Government of Manitoba are offered, to the extent possible, in both official languages in areas where the French-speaking population is concentrated.” (French-Language Services Policy of the Government of Manitoba - www.gov.mb.ca/fls-slf/pdf/fls_policy.pdf).
- 2.3 In October 2004, Santé en français was granted the mandate by the Government of Manitoba to be the official representative of the Francophone community in the areas of health and social services, and to play a leadership and coordination role to help foster access to quality French Language Services (FLS) in these areas. In this role, Santé en français commissioned a report on the aspects of language proficiency as a hiring criterion. The report, delivered in June 2011 and titled “*Exploratory Study on Language Proficiency as a Hiring Criterion*” recommended that Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors (MHLS) adopt a French language health services policy that covers human resources issues and all matters relating to the designation and staffing of bilingual positions.
- 2.4 Santé en français introduced in 2013, its provincial vision for the organization of French language health and social services in Manitoba where it promotes that the recruitment of appropriate human resources is a fundamental component of the offer of health services in French. As proposed in the Santé en français strategic plan, the organization of services and human resources will need to evolve in order to mutually reinforce each other.
- 2.5 Santé en français proposed that, in accordance with the *Designation Policy for Francophone and Bilingual Facilities, Programs and Services* and *The Regional Health Authorities Act* or its *Regulations*, a working committee be created to draft a policy to guide Manitoba Health in policy development clearly indicating that bilingualism (fluency in French/English) is recognized as a legitimate (bona fide) qualification for all positions where French language proficiency is a requirement.

3.0 PURPOSE

- 3.1 To provide guidance to Designated Health Care Facilities, Programs and Services and Regional Health Authorities in Manitoba in order to offer a consistent approach in the management and planning of human resources related to the delivery of French-language services in designated health care facilities, programs, services and regional health authorities in Manitoba;

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Agencies- RHAs, facilities programs and services to which this policy applies- identified in header to policy

Bilingual-Designated Regional Health Authority: regional health authority that has the obligation of providing health services in the French language in areas where the French-speaking population is concentrated.

Bilingual facility: a facility that delivers its services in both English and French and whose primary language of operation is English.

Designated Francophone or Bilingual Facilities, Programs and Services: Facilities, programs and services which provide health services in French or in both official languages in areas where the French-speaking population is concentrated.

Francophone facility: a facility whose primary language of operation is French, which delivers its services in both English and French, or in French only.

Independent facility: an independent legal entity, such as a non-devolved institution not directly administered by a department or an RHA.

Parapublic: an organization linked with government which benefits from a greater autonomy than public or governmental organizations and whose management systems closely resemble those of the private sector.

Program: a general or major division of responsibility within a public or parapublic organization that is made up of a number of distinct, specialized or related services.

Provincial program: programs which are offered across the province of Manitoba.

Services: the performance of an organized set of activities for the benefit or well-being of members of the community at large or individuals within specific groups of the community.

Santé en français: *Santé en français* (formerly *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba*) is the official representative of the Francophone community in the areas of health and social services and is contracted by MHHLS to provide bilingual-designated regional health authorities with assistance with the provision of French language services.

5.0 Policy

Bilingualism (fluency in French/English) is a legitimate qualification for all positions where French language proficiency is a requirement.

6.0 CORE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Standards, Procedures, Guidelines

- 6.1 **STANDARDS** – Designated francophone or bilingual facilities, programs, services & regional health authorities must provide their services in accordance with the Manitoba government policy on French-language services and the concept of active offer, including, but not exclusive to the following:

- 6.1.1 Language requirements for all vacant and for new positions are determined in consultation with the region's or facility's French Language Services Unit
- 6.1.2 Proficiency of candidates' ability to offer/deliver health services in French must be assessed:
- 6.1.3 Assessment of language proficiency occurs before hiring
- 6.1.4 Assessment of language proficiency is done by a qualified bilingual person or by a language assessment service as determined by the RHA or facility
- 6.1.5 Language assessment results are tracked and monitored

6.2 Procedure

Agencies to which this policy applies are expected to:

- Designate bilingual positions or set a target for the number of positions to have a French language requirement
- Incorporate language competence as an essential hiring criterion in Human resource policy and practice
- Determine the language requirements of each position or classification of position required
- Recruit qualified candidates with the required language proficiencies
- Articulate principles and values for language competencies
- Work with Santé en français to facilitate and legitimize French/English Bilingual proficiency when recruiting
- Develop and implement standards for language competence
- Develop language proficiency outcome measurements and evaluate the agency's performance on an annual basis
- Evaluate candidate language proficiency during performance appraisals
- Include a summary of the above to Santé en français within the annual report required under the FLS Plan Reporting Policy

7.0 POLICY DOCUMENTS

- **FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES REGULATION (RR46/98)**
- **THE REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES ACT**
- **FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES POLICY**
- **FRANCOPHONE AND BILINGUAL FACILITIES DESIGNATION REGULATIONS (...)**

8.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- **GAUTHIER REPORT (1990)**
- **CHARTIER REPORT (1998)**
- **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EXPLORATORY STUDY ON LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AS A HIRING CRITERION**
- **MANITOBA GOVERNMENT POLICY ON FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES (WWW.GOV.MB.CA/FLS-SLF/FLS_POLICY.PDF)**
- **ACTIVE OFFER POLICY (WWW.GOV.MB.CA/FLS-SLF/ACTIVEOFFER.HTML)**