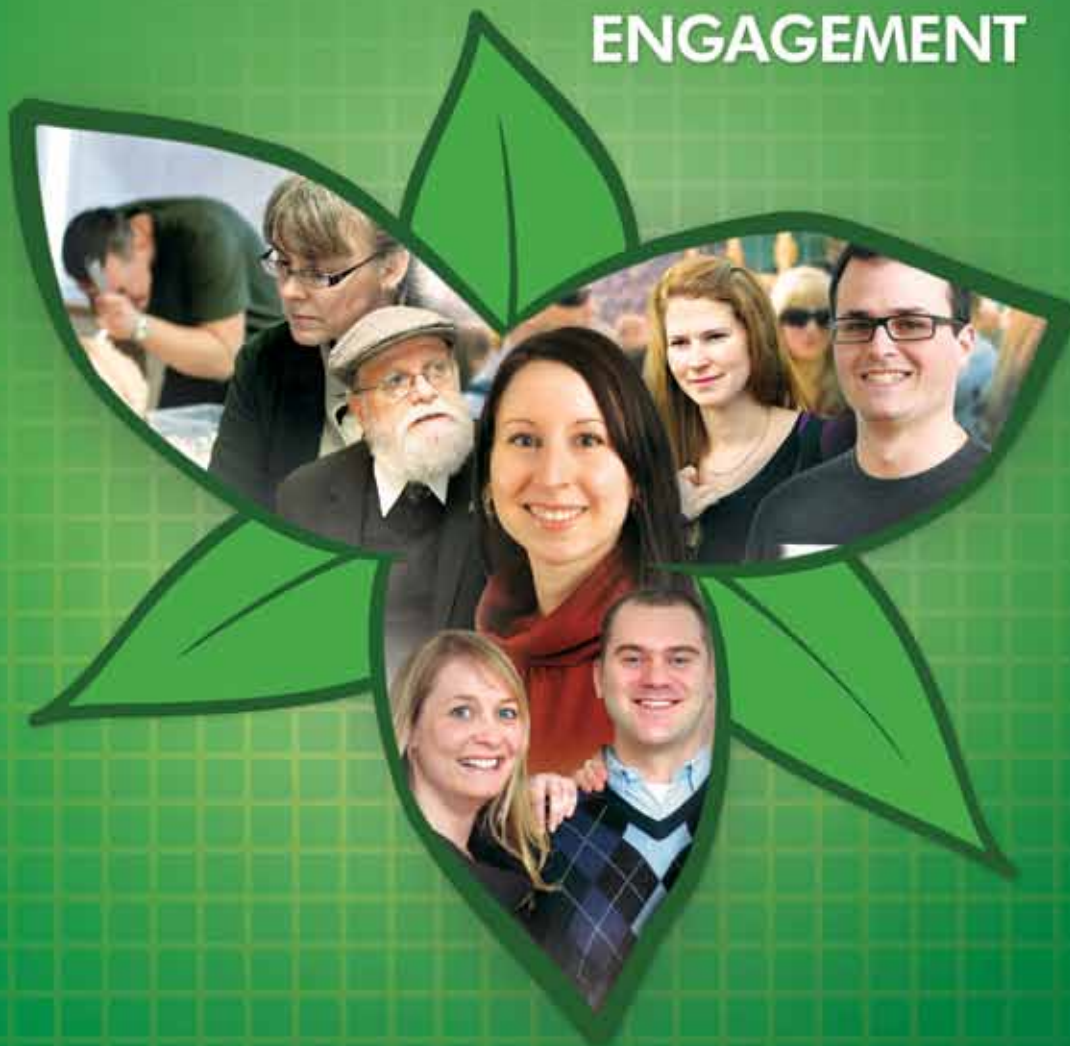


# FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



INSIGHT | GUIDANCE | ACTION



Northern Ontario  
School of Medicine  
École de médecine  
du Nord de l'Ontario  
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2009  
REPORT



TRISAC



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« Engagement communautaire francophone :

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Opinions expressed in this document are those of the participants and do not necessarily reflect those of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

Information presented in this report was current at the time of printing.

**Report prepared by:**

Francine Chartrand Dutrisac,

Trisac Inc.



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# Executive Summary

This report presents a review of consultations that the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) held with Francophone communities located within its service area, the entire North of this province. It relates the comments and suggestions about NOSM made by Francophone communities with the aim of helping the institution to better fulfill its mandate of social accountability and community engagement concerning them, and in partnership with them.

The general mission of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine<sup>1</sup> consists of training physicians who are qualified and ready to practice in urban, rural and remote regions, and more particularly in Northern Ontario. Given the importance of Francophones and Aboriginal peoples in these communities, NOSM has ensured that their needs must be taken into account in all of its spheres of activity. As such, NOSM has made a commitment to meet the needs of the Francophone population in Northern Ontario.

## Approach and Methodology

The School is interested in listening to the voice of external communities. In this context, the Francophone population was invited to participate in a process of reflection and dialogue. During the consultation process, essential questions were raised that would lead to a better understanding of the role of the School in Northern Ontario Francophone communities as well as determine their linguistic and cultural needs in order to develop improved communications and visibility strategies.

Two hundred and twenty-five (225) individuals participated in this process. Among them, 10 were from the social services sector; 63 from the health sector of which 12 were physicians and 6 representatives of community health centres; 41 from the education sector and 20 from governments and municipalities. There were 14 NOSM learners and residents, 14 NOSM employees, 11 representatives of seniors' groups and 52 participants from the community and from Northern Ontario companies.

Consultations to define and discuss opportunities for improving Northern Ontario School of Medicine programs and services offered to Francophone learners were held between January and June 2009, in the Northwest and Northeast regions of the province. These consultations also allowed for the emergence of a better reciprocal understanding of the expectations and needs of Francophone communities and of their mutual engagement.

## Observations and Results

Communities have embraced the School as an innovative institution due to its positioning ("A School of the North, by the North, for the North"), and its curriculum grounded in distributed learning and its community placements that produce a different kind of physician able to practice in the unique environment that is Northern Ontario.

Moreover, these Francophone communities acknowledge the leadership of NOSM. They see it as a School that is

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<sup>1</sup> Opened in 2005, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine is a joint initiative of Lakehead University and Laurentian University.

conscious of cultural diversity, but which has more work to do in terms of inclusion, particularly in regards to the ongoing development of community engagement. This perspective is also inherent in the recent and numerous partnership agreements that have transpired, a success story that clearly points to the creation of many more such endeavours in the near future.

These consultations also demonstrated that Francophone communities would like NOSM to become a leader in the field of research. The principal ideas that were raised related to the need to increase research on Northern Ontario health determinants, with the understanding that including Francophones and Aboriginal peoples in research on health issues in Northern Ontario represents a challenge.

This brief analysis of the internal and external environments confirms the needs to examine the process by which services are actively provided in French. The most important results of the consultation can be grouped into eight main, well-defined directions for strategic development.

1. Bilingual French language communications;
2. More bilingual services, activities and, programs;
3. Increased presence in Francophone organizations and communities;
4. Increased Francophone placements;
5. In general, increased available spaces and recruitment of Francophone learners;
6. Develop and promote research;
7. Better support for local groups and reenergize the Francophone Reference Group;
8. Grow partnerships with Francophones.

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine will be able to

align its strategic planning and development around these priorities.

## Steps Towards Solutions

Various measures for implementing these strategic directions were suggested:

- ✓ The development of better communications in French with learners, partners and communities;
- ✓ Increased community access to NOSM services, programs and activities;
- ✓ A strategic Francophone communications plan;
- ✓ Support for community groups;
- ✓ Increased presence in communities and with partners;
- ✓ Positioning NOSM for increased funding;
- ✓ Development of a plan to recruit health professionals to teach and supervise Francophone learners.

## Priority Action

The main message that emerged concerned change: quick, sweeping change for the School in the area of French language communications, services and programs, knowing that the communities will be called on to match the pace.

It now falls to NOSM to incorporate the comments expressed by Francophone communities into action to fulfill its social accountability mandate and provide more space for Francophones who are ready to collaborate with the School. The clear objective here is that, based on this consultation, NOSM can now implement the ideas expressed in this report to guide its promotional activity and improve its standing in these communities, develop a French language communications plan and propose strategies that are aligned to its next strategic plan.





# Introduction

## A Well Mapped Path

This report presents a review of the consultations held by the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) in Francophone communities that fall within its service area, i.e., the entire North of this province. This introduction immediately describes the objectives of this consultation with Francophones. Moreover, in order to adequately understand to which communities the process was addressed, the first chapter provides an overview of the population of Ontario, and more specifically, a detailed portrait of the Northern Ontario population including the Francophone communities of this region. These geographical and demographic intersections prove to be essential to understanding the groups that were consulted and with whom NOSM is attempting to engage. It also describes the profile of learners called upon to become physicians and leaders within these communities. Chapter 1 sets the stage in order to better grasp the issues and realities faced by Francophone communities.

Chapter 2 offers an overview of NOSM's mandate and its community engagement which focuses on the development and nurturing of sustainable relationships with communities and its established School partners in various sectors. Although the School affirms its engagement with the population it serves, opinions as to the true presence of NOSM in Francophone communities were unanimously favourable to improving local NOSM presence and involvement. The School does enjoy a very high level of credibility on which it should and can build, as does the Francophone Affairs Unit whose work the communities greatly value but want the Unit to become more visible. One of the solutions for providing greater NOSM visibility comes from community partnerships. This idea

lies at the core of Chapter 3. Consultations brought to light numerous examples of partnerships that can contribute efficiently to better integrating the School within Francophone communities, and vice versa. Three priority areas are identified in this chapter: health, education and community. NOSM was effectively called on to initiate and/or broaden links with the consultation participants and key Francophone groups in these areas. This is therefore one of the challenges faced by NOSM and is the focus of Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 summarizes the main issues raised by the community during the consultation. The inevitable challenge of our ageing population is one such issue, as is the obstacle language presents in the delivery of health services. Seniors tend to revert to their mother tongue in situations of vulnerability, as several Northern Francophone organizations made clear. NOSM communications and publications in French, availability of bilingual programs, and recruiting Francophone learners and health professionals were also among the challenges and issues expressed by consultation participants and examined in depth in this chapter.

Chapter 5 pulls together the major practical issues that the consulted communities would like the School to deal with in order to attain a higher level of Francophone inclusion. Firstly, they seek enhanced relations with the Francophone Reference Group, but also with NOSM administration, even to the extent of helping to redefine the School's mandate and make it better known in the communities. They also propose that NOSM target Francophone activities, programs and projects in advance and include them in its next strategic plan. But also, they mention the importance of increasing and diversifying funding for the School's Francophone components.





The consulted communities stated that they are ready for greater inclusion within NOSM and want a well positioned, renewed mutual relationship to grow.

Finally, the conclusion presents the results of the consultations grouped into eight main strategic directions around which NOSM can align its development and strategic planning. As this process has led to a better understanding of the needs and expectations of Francophone communities, it now falls to NOSM to incorporate the comments expressed by Francophone communities into action to fulfill its social accountability mandate and provide more space for Francophones who are ready to collaborate with the School.



# Context

“ The Francophone Community consultation is an exemplary project. The time is right for NOSM to survey Francophone communities and to ask itself questions on the services it provides to Francophones. The time is also right to initiate changes and concrete strategies for its next strategic plan. This is an excellent initiative by the School. ”

— Centre de santé communautaire du Témiskaming

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) recently set up a working group on promotion, recruitment and community engagement that was tasked with conducting an inquiry into the views of the Francophone communities of Northern Ontario. This consultation intended to encourage Francophones to get involved within NOSM at the community level and by doing so, increase the quantity and quality of French language services provided by NOSM.

The following presents one of the achievements of this new school of medicine defined as being “A School of the North, by the North, for the North.” It is important that all communities as well as the many partners of the School contribute to the direction of its French language services in order to ensure their relevance and impact on the communities. Francine Chartrand Dutrisac of Trisac Inc. was commissioned to complete the community consultation project.

The School is interested in listening to the voice of external communities. In this context, the Francophone population was invited to participate in a process of reflection and dialogue, in order to receive comments and suggestions related to services and programs in French. As a result of the consultation, the School will be able to identify information and strategies that will guide its promotional activities, better position itself in these communities, prepare a French language communications plan and propose strategies that are aligned with its next strategic plan.

NOSM must meet the needs of Northern Ontario people and communities, including Francophones and individuals whose working language is French. Given that about 24% of the population of the Northeast of the province is Francophone, NOSM will make every effort to ensure that cultural and linguistic needs of Northern Ontario Francophones are taken into account in all its activities. As a result, it encourages its learners to learn about Franco-Ontarian history, traditions and culture and to understand them, and provides the opportunity to learn French. It will also provide French-speaking learners with as many opportunities as possible to follow various parts of their study program in French, especially during their placements in Francophone agencies, health-related services and communities.

*“To allow vibrant Francophone communities to flourish, this energy should be harnessed, and the School’s educational and cultural activities should be based on a shared vision of French-language education in a minority setting and on solid partnerships between the School, families and the community as a whole.”<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>2</sup> Website of the Ontario Ministry of Education, Aménagement linguistique – A Policy for Ontario’s French-Language Schools and Francophone Community, consulted on July 4th, 2009. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/policy/linguistique/guide/index.html>



## Scope

In most cases, the consultation process involved individual interviews. As part of the process, 176 interviews were conducted with key resource contacts. One of the main instruments used in the consultation was the interview guide. This questionnaire notably included open-ended questions designed to facilitate both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Apart from this data-gathering tool, a limited survey was made of Francophone community leaders, and telephone interviews were held with other participants based more on semi open-ended questions. A specific questionnaire was developed for some groups. In addition, using the same interview guide, two focus groups were held that included various representatives from the above-mentioned sectors. The list of the groups represented in the consultation can be found in Appendix 2.

Consultations took place between January and June 2009. The report's observations and conclusions were drawn in light of the answers given by the participants as well as by collating information taken from current literature during the consultation.



## Profile of Participants

The consultation project team participated in the selection of participants using established criteria, which led to 225 individuals being interviewed as part of this project. Among them were 10 from the social services sector; 63 from the health sector of which 12 were physicians and 6 representatives of community health centres; 41 from the education sector and 20 from governments and municipalities. There were 14 NOSM learners and residents, 14 NOSM employees, 11 representatives of seniors' groups and 52 participants from the community and from Northern Ontario companies.



## Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Francine Chartrand Dutrisac would like to thank everyone who generously agreed to participate in interviews and all those who provided support and logistics in the organization of interviews. Appendix 2 provides the complete list of the main participating organizations. It should be noted that many representatives of the community also participated.

The author wants to thank the Northern Ontario School of Medicine for its commitment, and especially Dr. Marc Blayney for his availability and Danielle Barbeau-Rodrigue, who accompanied this consultant during the interviews. The author also thanks the Francophone Affairs Unit for its support.

Thanks also go to Mathieu Séguin, graphic designer at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine for his collaboration in page design and graphic art expertise.



# Chapter 1

## Landscape of Francophone Communities

“ No tool is more powerful than demography as a means to understand the past and envisage the future. ”  
Prediction and demographic understanding are tools we need in order to influence what lies ahead.

— **David Foot**<sup>3</sup>  
Professor of Economics and  
Demographics Expert

### 1.1 A Demographic Profile of Ontario<sup>4</sup>

Canada's largest province continues to grow in population<sup>5</sup> with a substantial demographic increase in young people and immigrants; nearly one Ontarian in four was born abroad. Ontario is the most densely populated province of the country. In 2006, 12,160,282 persons lived in Ontario, accounting for 38.5% of the total population of Canada.

More than 7.7% of Canada's Francophone population lives in Ontario. According to the statistical profile prepared by the Francophone Affairs Unit,<sup>6</sup> their share of the demographic total is highest in the Northeast (24%) and in the East (14.6%). Moreover, on June 4, 2009, Ontario became the first province in Canada to adopt a new definition of the Francophone population, one that better reflects the evolution and diversity of the province's Francophone communities. According to the new definition, Francophones account for 4.8% of the total

population of Ontario, 580,000 people in all.

The Aboriginal population is 242,490, and while it represents only 2% of the total population of Ontario, this group has significantly increased in numbers province-wide in recent years. The Métis, who make up 30% of the Aboriginal population, showed the highest growth rate (59.5%) followed by the Inuit (32.4%) and First Nations (20.4%).

In terms of age, individuals between 40 and 44 and between 45 and 49 represented, according to the 2006 census, the largest demographic groups in the province. Among all people aged 65 years and older, women are more numerous than men, a proportion that corresponds to the national trend.

<sup>3</sup> David Foot, <http://www.footwork.com/index.asp>.

<sup>4</sup> Ontario Trillium Foundation, *Your Community in Profile 2008*, [http://www.trilliumfoundation.org/cms/en/comm\\_prof08.aspx](http://www.trilliumfoundation.org/cms/en/comm_prof08.aspx)

<sup>5</sup> The increase in the population of Ontario between 2001 and 2006 (6.6%) represented half of the total increase in the population of Canada (5.4%).

<sup>6</sup> Office of Francophone Affairs: *Portrait of the Francophone Community in Ontario* according to Statistics Canada, 2006 census, information available online at <http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/fr/franco.html>.



## 1.2 Northern Ontario

Northern Ontario is comprised of two main regions, the Northeast and the Northwest. The Northeast region includes Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Sudbury, Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound and Temiskaming. The Northwest region includes Thunder Bay, Kenora and Rainy River.

The North, with an area in excess of 800,000 square kilometres, comprises almost 90% of the entire territory of Ontario, but only 6% of the province's population resides in this vast expanse (Table 1).

**Table 1**

Region <sup>9</sup>	Population	Francophone	%	Aboriginal	%
Ontario	12 160 282	553 665	5%	242 490	2%
Northern Ontario	843 853	139 950	17%	99 360	12%
Northeast	608 807	132 145	22%	52 905	9%
Northwest	235 046	7 805	3%	46 455	20%

### *French Language Services Act*<sup>7</sup>

Ontario has had a *French Language Services Act* in force for more than 20 years. This law guarantees the public the right to obtain services in French from the ministries and agencies of the Government of Ontario that are notably located in 25 designated regions.<sup>8</sup>

The preamble to this law acknowledges the contribution of the cultural heritage of the Francophone population and wishes to preserve it for future generations. The Francophone presence in Ontario has a history going back some 400 years.

The *French Languages Services Act* was amended in May 2007 to create the office of the French Language Services Commissioner that receives and processes complaints relating to the act and investigates them to assure compliance with the law.

Other provincial and federal laws guarantee rights to Francophones. In particular, at the provincial level, the *Education Act*, *Courts of Justice Act*, *Child and Family Services Act* and at the federal level, the *Official Languages Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* are noteworthy.

<sup>7</sup> Available at [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/french/elaws\\_statutes\\_90f32\\_f.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/french/elaws_statutes_90f32_f.htm).

<sup>8</sup> Website of the Ontario Office of Francophone Affairs: <http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/flsa.html>

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada, 2006 Community Profiles. <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E>

## 1.2.1 Profile of the Northeast Region

### 1.2.1.1 Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Sudbury (ACMS)<sup>10</sup> (Table 2)

This region consists of the Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin and Sudbury and City of Greater Sudbury census divisions.<sup>11</sup> Contrary to what is seen in the rest of the province, the youth population is in decline by some 10%<sup>12</sup> here. Only the Manitoulin and Greater Sudbury sectors show an increase in the youth population. As for persons older than 65 years of age, their proportion is higher here than in the rest of the province.

Aboriginal and Francophone communities alone account

**Table 2**

Region <sup>13</sup>	Population	Francophone	%	Aboriginal	%
Algoma	117 461	8 850	8%	12 925	11%
Cochrane	82 503	39 215	48%	9 665	12%
Manitoulin	13 090	350	3%	5 035	38%
Greater Sudbury	157 910	45 700	29%	9 635	6%
Sudbury	21 392	6 160	29%	2 890	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>392 356</b>	<b>100 275</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>40 150</b>	<b>10%</b>

### Communities Offering Learner Placements

Cities <sup>14</sup>	Population	Francophone	%
Greater Sudbury	157 909	45 700	29%
Sault Ste. Marie	74 950	3 285	4%
Elliot Lake	11 550	2 030	18%
Timmins	42 995	16 970	39%
Kapuskasing	8 510	5 820	68%
Hearst	5 620	4 985	89%

for about 36% of the population of this region. Nearly four Aboriginals in ten are Métis, and this number constitutes approximately 20% of Ontario's total Métis population. The Francophone community accounts for 25.6% of the region's total population and represents about 20% of Ontario Francophones or about 100,275 individuals in absolute numbers. The majority lives in Greater Sudbury, Hearst, Kapuskasing and Timmins.

### 1.2.1.2 Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Temiskaming (MNPST)<sup>15</sup> (Table 3)

In 2006, 216,452 individuals or 1.8% of the population of Ontario inhabited this part of the Northeast. It is the only Northern Ontario region that showed significant

**Table 3**

Region <sup>16</sup>	Population	Francophone	%	Aboriginal	%
Muskoka	57 563	810	1%	1410	2%
Nipissing	84 688	21 525	25%	7 315	9%
Parry Sound	40 918	1 175	3%	2 215	5%
Temiskaming	33 283	8 360	25%	1 815	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>216 452</b>	<b>31 870</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>12 755</b>	<b>6%</b>

### Communities Offering Learner Placements

Cities <sup>17</sup>	Population	Francophone	%
North Bay	53 965	8 450	16%
West Nipissing	13 490	9 130	68%
Temiskaming Shores	10 735	3 420	32%
Mattawa	2 005	800	40%
Bracebridge	15 652	195	1%
Huntsville	18 280	335	2%

<sup>10</sup> See note 4.

<sup>11</sup> Data drawn from the Statistics Canada Population Census of 2006 and therefore based on the standard geographical regions of the census.

<sup>12</sup> See note 4.

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada. 2007. Sudbury, Ontario (table). 2006 Community Profiles of the 2006 Census, product 92-591-XWF in the catalogue of Statistics Canada. Ottawa. Distributed on March 13th, 2007.

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E> (site consulted on December 12th, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> See note 6.

<sup>15</sup> See note 4.

<sup>16</sup> See note 9.

<sup>17</sup> See note 6.



population growth. The population of MNPST is older in comparison with the province as a whole. In fact, of all Ontario regions, this one has the highest proportion of individuals aged 65 years and older; one inhabitant in five is a senior.

This region also includes a higher concentration of Métis. In 2006, 12,755 persons declared themselves as Aboriginal, with a little more than half being First Nations and 46% Métis. In Temiskaming, the Métis were the largest group (61.5%) among all Aboriginal people of the region.

By contrast, the Francophone population of the region represents 15% of the region's total population – this proportion is greater for all of Ontario (4.6%).

### 1.2.2 Profile of the Northwest Region (Table 4)

This region, which comprises Thunder Bay, Rainy River and Kenora,<sup>18</sup> has a population of 235,046 or about 2% of all Ontarians.<sup>19</sup> The Northwest is characterized by a strong Aboriginal community of 46,455 individuals that account for 20% of the region's total population. Of this number, 17% are Métis. In spite of its growing Aboriginal population, mirroring province-wide population trends, the Northwest saw hardly any population increase between the 2001 and 2006 censuses. In addition, the region has one of the highest unemployment rates in the province and shows a great disparity in salary levels.

In 2006, 3.3% of the region's inhabitants declared French as their mother tongue, somewhat less than the comparable provincial average of 4.1%. Moreover, the northwest Francophone community is in decline. There were 11.2% fewer Francophones living here in 2006 than at the time

of the 2001 census. The highest regional concentration of Francophones is in Thunder Bay with 2,935 Francophones or 2.7% of the population.



Table 4

Region <sup>20</sup>	Population	Francophone	%	Aboriginal	%
Thunder Bay	149 063	6 060	4%	15 490	10%
Rainy River	21 564	330	2%	4 620	21%
Kenora	64 419	1 415	2%	26 345	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>235 046</b>	<b>7 805</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>46 455</b>	<b>20%</b>

### Communities Offering Learner Placements

Cities <sup>21</sup>	Population	Francophone	%
Thunder Bay	109 140	2 935	3%
Marathon	3 865	460	12%
Greenstone	4 905	1 400	29%
Fort Frances	8 100	110	1%
Kenora	15 175	360	2%
Dryden	8 195	210	3%
Sioux Lookout	5 145	95	2%

<sup>18</sup> See note 4.

<sup>19</sup> Idem.

<sup>20</sup> See note 13.

<sup>21</sup> See note 6.





## Francophones

As stated in Dr. Southcott's<sup>22</sup> report, the majority of Francophones reside in the Thunder Bay District. In 2001, 3,200 Francophones resided in the City of Thunder Bay. For the same period, 1,925 Francophones resided in Greenstone, 570 in Manitouadge and 530 in Marathon. The cities of Dryden and Kenora saw an increase in their Francophone population possibly as a result of amalgamations.

<sup>22</sup> Dr. Chris Southcott, Ph.D. Lakehead University (2003). La communauté francophone du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario en 2001 : Nouvelles tendances socioéconomiques. AFNOO. <http://www.afnoo.org/Projets/pro.htm>

## 1.3 The Northern Ontario School of Medicine

Opened in 2005, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine is a pioneering faculty of medicine. The School is a joint initiative of Lakehead and Laurentian Universities with main campuses in Thunder Bay and Sudbury, and multiple teaching and research sites across Northern Ontario. By educating skilled physicians and undertaking health research suited to community needs, the School will become a cornerstone of community health care in Northern Ontario.

The School serves a territory of more than 800,000 square kilometres and counts more than 70 communities in which its learners can receive part of their clinical training. Among these are a dozen small urban or large rural communities that host all third year NOSM learners for their Comprehensive Community Clerkship.

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has an interest in engaging with these minority situation communities, as much for Francophone as for Aboriginal populations, in line with its social accountability mandate. The School sees to making its programs and services meet the individual and collective health needs of these communities. Finally, with a teaching staff numbering more than 800

from all regions of the North, more than 200 employees and multiple educational and research sites throughout the North, NOSM ensures a coherent and preferential education to some 56 medical learners each year.

### 1.3.1 Learners

The majority of NOSM learners come from Northern Ontario. Of the 90% of learners who come from Northern Ontario, half (45%) are from remote rural communities.

Among the 58 learners accepted in 2008, 15 were Francophone, a proportion of 26% of the total (Table 5). In addition to these 15 Francophone learners, 25 learners have some knowledge of French. At present, 32 learners study at NOSM campus in Sudbury while 24 are located at the Thunder Bay campus each year.

In the course of their medical program, the learners accumulate numerous hours in communities in order to improve their knowledge. Some 40% of their time is spent in Francophone or Aboriginal urban or rural communities right through their training.

**Table 5**

Numbers	2005	2006	2007	2008
Applications for admission	2,098	2,050	2,274	1,892
Applications by Francophones	146	146	213	215
Interviews granted	395	391	408	395
Interviews granted to Francophones	70	63	85	87
Admission offers extended to Francophones	14	16	21	16
Learners admitted	56	56	56	58
Francophones admitted	10	12	15	15
Francophone percentage of the class	18%	21%	27%	26%
Learners with some knowledge of French	6	16	12	25



# Chapter 2

## Role of NOSM — Social Accountability

### 2.1 Mandate

The general mission of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine consists of training qualified physicians who are ready to practise in urban, rural and outlying regions, more particularly in Northern Ontario. Given the importance of the Francophone and Aboriginal populations from the North of the province, NOSM has made certain that the needs of these groups are taken into account in all of its spheres of activities. While the Government of Ontario established NOSM as an English-language teaching institution, the School is committed to meeting the needs of the Francophone population.

In so doing, the School has adopted a social accountability mandate that addresses the needs of all Northern Ontario populations including Francophone and Aboriginal. As a result, NOSM is dedicated to better serving these communities through its community engagement mandate.

#### 2.1.1 Community Engagement

Through its community engagement practices, NOSM seeks to establish sustainable relationships both within the School and with the geographical, Aboriginal and Francophone communities of Northern Ontario. Whether in the fields of education, student recruitment or retention, NOSM aspires to contribute to improving the health of these communities through its relationships and commitment to them.

It became clear by the end of the consultation that participants were unanimous in their impression of the true presence of NOSM in the Francophone communities: the School is not sufficiently present in communities

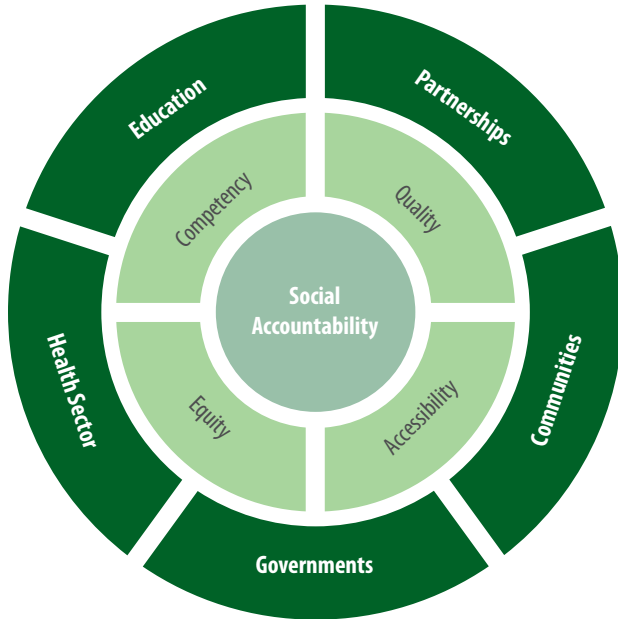
despite its claim to being engaged with the populations its aims to serve. The School will therefore need to make more efforts to show that it is accessible and constant in its efforts to fulfill its social accountability mandate. So far, the environmental analysis (E-Scan) and the Francophone community consultation project have proved to be excellent tools for showing the engagement of the School and Francophone communities. Moreover, participants expressed the hope that the environmental analysis project could become the cornerstone of the next School symposium on Francophone affairs.

*"The School is little known in the region, especially among Francophones."*

*"The School is unknown in the community."*

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine drew inspiration from the concept of social accountability developed by the renowned Dr. Charles Boelen<sup>23</sup> in order to illustrate its community engagement policies and develop its strategies for community partnerships (Illustration 1). In fact, NOSM's orientation is based on identifying five essential actors in the field of health services: political decision-makers, health services administrators, health professionals, academic institutions and communities. It was often repeated during the consultations that Francophones need to feel accepted within NOSM, and not just tolerated. With the help of this diagram, the School can show the Francophone community that it is included and that Francophones do have their place as key actors in this academic environment.

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Charles Boelen, Towards Unity for Health. World Health Organization, Geneva (2001). [http://www.who.int/hrh/documents/en/TUFH\\_challenges.pdf](http://www.who.int/hrh/documents/en/TUFH_challenges.pdf).

**Illustration 1**

Distributed learning in a community setting is one of NOSM's teaching principles. This means that the School spares no effort to make communities from Northern Ontario an essential element in its teaching program, a measure that makes NOSM unique among medical schools. The School's community engagement model is based on its collaborative relationships with communities and learners. As an example, Local NOSM Groups will help to enhance both the School's reputation as a preferred choice for Northern learners and also enhance the North's reputation as a worthwhile place to practice medicine. Therefore, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine will continue to build on the credibility it has achieved since it opened.

“ Wanting to reach out to outlying communities and develop placements that can also provide awareness of these communities seems to be a better quality model at all levels. ”

## 2.2 Credibility

“ Nothing negative is ever heard about the School.”

Since its creation, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine has enjoyed a good reputation and growing credibility. Moreover, among participants who were very familiar with the School, a high proportion mentioned during their interview that they never hear negative comments about NOSM. Even if several participants confirmed that they never hear about the School in their community,

many participants did state that they have heard positive comments about the School's learners. This was particularly the case in Kapuskasing, Hearst, Smooth Rock Falls and Sturgeon Falls, among others. Many participants affirmed the pride of Francophone communities and their youth at finally having a medical School dedicated to training future physicians willing to remain in the North. There is no doubt whatsoever that the School has made a good impression on these Francophones; those who are aware of it, look

favourably upon it. They want this positive buzz to last and hope that NOSM can take advantage of its popularity to improve its outreach and involvement with them.

*“Communities are proud to have a School of the North, by the North, for the North.”*

Not only does NOSM take advantage of its local and regional credibility, but it has also made a name for itself internationally, in particular through the international ICEMEN<sup>24</sup> Conference held in June 2008 in Sudbury and Thunder Bay. According to the Founding Dean and Professor, Dr. Roger Strasser, many conference participants congratulated NOSM on its demonstrated capacity to fulfil its social accountability mandate through distributed learning in community settings. This capability was especially appreciated by Francophone communities, who expressed the hope that NOSM stays the course with this program that they see as maintaining “a superior level of clinical quality.”

Participants stated that if NOSM offered Francophone learners the possibility of studying in French, there would be an increase in Francophone applications for admission. This would not only encourage the learners to practice medicine in their own language, but also to remain in their Francophone community, provide health services there and meet the mandate entrusted to the School by the Government. This was one of the most frequent comments that emerged from the consultations and shows the importance of NOSM's economic presence in some communities.

Finally, several consulted communities strongly suggested that NOSM analyse the economic impact of its presence on Northern communities. The contribution of the Francophone Affairs Unit is inevitable, notably through the Symposium which has already had a positive impact on these communities. This contribution should be taken into account in the economic and community development of Northern regions.

*“Research shows that a learner, who is trained in the community, stays in the community. This approach contributes to the recruitment and retention of physicians and health professionals in the North.”*

— A Francophone Reference Group member

## 2.3 NOSM's Francophone Affairs Unit

NOSM's Francophone Affairs Unit (FAU) plays an important role in the achievement of the School's mandate. With its newly expanded mission, the Unit develops and implements innovative Francophone initiatives. The FAU also contributes to training of health professionals and communities with an emphasis on cultural competence.

The results of the consultations proved very favourable to NOSM's Francophone Affairs Unit. In fact, participants expressed great satisfaction at the Unit's performance and encouraged the School to maintain and expand it.

The consultations showed that a solid proportion of participants highly appreciated the performance of the

<sup>24</sup> International Conference of Community Engaged Medical Education in the North. *Attracting Attention Across the World*, Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Community Report 2008, pp.20-21.

team led by Danielle Barbeau-Rodrigue. In fact, they ranked NOSM's Francophone Affairs Unit seventh in the list of best NOSM practices, just behind the 2007 Symposium. The most frequent comment heard here was that NOSM's Francophone Affairs Unit activities are always well organized, well presented and appreciated even more. Some people even directly credit the FAU with having led Francophone communities to become familiar with NOSM. This is an important observation, knowing that one of the tasks of the FAU is to disseminate information to Francophones about the School's programs and services. The same is true about information released by the FAU. Whenever Francophone community representatives received information in French about the School, they maintained that it came from Francophone Affairs rather than from the School administration itself. Up to now, everything indicates that the FAU is well on the way to satisfactorily accomplishing its mission, according to comments made by participants.

*"Aside from Francophone Affairs Unit information, I receive little general information from the School."*

*"Information from Francophone Affairs is very good."*

However, many participants stated that, if the goal is to adequately reach Northern Ontario Francophones, much remains to be done in this area. It is important that NOSM not only preserve the place of the Francophone Affairs Unit within the institution, but also provide the unit with the necessary resources and means to efficiently carry out its mandate. In other words, according to the majority of the comments made during the consultation, the School needs to better support and equip the FAU in all of its endeavours concerning human and financial resources.

The Unit instituted numerous successful initiatives, including recruiting, supporting and, providing an

awareness of how to be physicians respectful of the Francophone culture. The Unit requires the resources to continue along this positive path. The successful 2007 Symposium was greatly appreciated by those who participated, and their comments suggest that regional mini-conferences could be a worthwhile addition to the larger Symposium format.

*"There were many French resources available at the Symposium. This was a quality activity, especially the presentations."*

*"The Symposium was very well organized. The informative workshops were highly successful. The event also provided a good opportunity to identify Francophone communities. NOSM took the Francophone aspect seriously. The School showed openness toward Francophones."*

As recruiting Francophone learners is one of the responsibilities of the FAU, the Symposium was a popular topic in the interviews. People left the Symposium impressed, and yet, they wished that NOSM could prompt the Government to create a greater number of places for Francophone learners. At least one in two people asked for more openings for Francophones at the School.

Finally, the Francophone Affairs Unit has established a partnership culture with communities and organizations to promote health and well-being in Francophone communities. But here too, it seems that people want more since 95% of participants expressed a desire for increased partnerships with Francophone communities. These communities want more than ever to be proud partners of NOSM and to contribute to its community engagement and to its efforts to recruit Francophone learners from their region.



# Chapter 3

## NOSM and Francophone Communities — Future Perspectives

The recognition afforded to Northern Ontario Francophone communities both establishes and solidifies their existence. In a minority context, they greatly need this, as this comment by a Francophone from a small Northwest community shows:

“*The small communities have adjusted so as to not hold out hope for their Francophone identity. They were so neglected that they forgot that they have rights, but these rights in and of themselves mean nothing if they are not supported by available services. If I need to ask, and find the guts to ask, but then am denied, how many more times in my life do I have to be turned away before I learn to speak English and be served like everyone else with a smile for having a cute accent?*”

For the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, it is a question of acknowledging the importance of Francophone communities by developing links with them based on new and renewed partnerships.

### 3.1 Partnerships and Community Presence

Francophone communities have confirmed their deep appreciation for the inclusiveness and openness shown by NOSM towards their culture as well to Aboriginal culture. The School is sensitive to the realities and the diversity of the North and, in this sense, Francophones ask that it renew the same types of partnerships which have been so well established from the very beginning of the School's existence. The French language placements in these communities also rank among the most highly appreciated initiatives of the School and its learners. Feedback was very positive throughout all regions that were consulted. But communities do hope that the School increases its presence and partnerships with the Francophone population. They want to see it become more involved with Boards of Directors of various socio-economic, cultural, and educational organizations, etc. However, even if participants stated how much they appreciate the School's presence in their community, this does not

provide them with a direct point of contact. NOSM should consider this aspect of community relations with the intention to increase partnerships in health care, education and community, which should be, according to answers given during the consultations, the main priority areas where establishing new partnerships can improve the visibility of NOSM.

#### 3.1.1 The Health Sector

Consultation participants were asked to identify possible partners within their communities who could contribute to improving synergy with NOSM. In forty percent (40%) of answers, the health services sector was mentioned as having the most potential for partnerships. Hospitals ranked first on the list of potential partners likely to support NOSM in its efforts, followed by community health centres. The population wants to encourage NOSM to



become a true Francophone health leader in collaboration with community health centres and Community Care Access Centres (CCAC). NOSM has existing relationships with these potential partners and is making every effort to broaden them.

Hospitals usually play a coordinating role with respect to community placements, therefore, increased partnerships with agencies were also discussed as a necessary step to ensure community involvement. This role could be better synchronized with all other community organizations to enable a better understanding of placements and other options.

Health professionals, health networks and LHINs<sup>25</sup> follow in order on the list of potential NOSM partners where efforts should be concentrated. In light of interview answers, agreements and collaboration with health services providers could assist the School to become a more effective leader and catalyst within the Northern Ontario health system. For instance, Francophone health professionals in Hearst would like to be more involved with learners. Their counterparts from other areas of Northern Ontario expressed the same wish a great many times.

Francophones also targeted the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS) as an organization where links to the School could be improved. They would like to see a NOSM presence within the CNFS and joint activities where there is a logical alignment between the two organizations, whether via interprofessional activities or CNFS projects.

*"I would like all Francophone health services partners, including NOSM, to systematically synchronize their health care training and promotion, including professional development and CNFS activities."*

Public Health Units were also mentioned in the list of partners that could support NOSM efforts to improve links with the health care services sector. Other proposals encouraged broader NOSM involvement on round tables, committees and boards of health-related organizations such as LHINs, North and Near-North health networks, the RIFSSSO,<sup>26</sup> municipal, university and college health advisory committees as well as various levels of government. In short, there is a sense of urgency in the expectation that NOSM needs to act and play a progressively increasing role at this level.

Finally, NOSM would benefit tremendously by offering health promotion and prevention sessions in partnership with other health services providers. The Vale Inco Hospice expressed an interest in making NOSM aware of its French and English language training needs for professional staff (nurses, etc.). It would appreciate having access to bilingual professional training programs, thus creating a good opportunity for NOSM to create exemplary and sustainable partnerships between the health and education sectors.

### 3.1.2 The Education Sector

Education was ranked second, at 38%, in the list of areas identified by participants as having the most potential for partnerships with NOSM. They see education as an area in which NOSM should feel at ease in initiating partnerships, given its educational and teaching role, and these efforts could begin with school boards, colleges and universities.

NOSM could benefit from a greater visibility in Francophone communities by establishing postsecondary partnerships. Laurentian University suggests a one stop shop for French-language health training programs.

<sup>25</sup> Local Health Integration Networks

<sup>26</sup> Regroupement des intervenantes et intervenants Francophones en santé et en services sociaux de l'Ontario.

*"Postsecondary institutions would benefit by developing a joint activity plan to ensure a better coordination of initiatives within the health-related programs."*

— Employees of Laurentian University

*"Ensuring a NOSM Francophone Affairs Unit Director, developing initiatives to promote bilingualism of future physicians and joint marketing activities with Laurentian University would be preferable"*

— Employees of Laurentian University

As for Lakehead University, it wishes to promote Francophone cultural activities in the region and encourages all NOSM learners to participate. The Languages Department wishes to establish closer links with NOSM and invites NOSM Francophone learners for dialogue and presentations.

*"The University organizes information and open house sessions and we would like a NOSM presence at these activities"*

— Employees of Lakehead University

It is naturally logical for the persons who took part in the consultation to feel that NOSM should seek an association with Collège Boréal. In their view, the School should not neglect the potential of Collège Boréal campuses located in the North nor its 16 health-related programs. Collège Boréal and its campuses have expressed an interest in establishing partnerships and aligning certain health programs given in French with NOSM. For instance, the College could develop and offer a module on Francophone cultural competence specific to Northern Ontario for NOSM.

Participants from the education sector acknowledge and applaud the Northern Ontario School of Medicine for its successful efforts to serve the communities within the vast territory of Northern Ontario. In fact, with campuses in Thunder Bay and Sudbury, NOSM covers an area of more than 800 thousand km or about 90% of Ontario.<sup>27</sup> It goes without saying that to succeed in reaching future learners and communities across such a vast territory, dependable, motivated and dedicated educational partners are needed

to work with the School. Communities feel that NOSM can find natural partners here in the six French language School boards of Northern Ontario.<sup>28</sup> In particular, they encourage the School to develop official partnerships with Francophone schools that offer the Specialist High Skills Major program in Health. This kind of partnership would be greatly beneficial NOSM, as well as developing contacts with secondary school guidance counsellors to plan presentations in Grade 11 and 12 classrooms.

*"First, identify the target groups and develop best strategies for communicating with schools, school administrators and guidance counsellors (bilingual or Francophone)."*

*"You need to use school boards and high schools, take advantage of their networks to disseminate NOSM information. Only bilingual or French information would be distributed."*

In addition to NOSM host universities (Laurentian and Lakehead), Université de Hearst has also expressed an interest in hearing more from the School: "We have campuses in Hearst, Kapuskasing and Timmins, but unfortunately, practically nothing is heard about NOSM in general." Furthermore, the university is willing to make its campuses, equipment, facilities, and amphitheatre available for such initiatives and could even share in joint bilingual advertising.

But beyond reinforcing its educational partnerships, NOSM does continuously search for innovative solutions to increase the low numbers of Francophone physicians in the North of the province. This philosophy is one that is appreciated across-the-board in the educational milieu. It is therefore obvious and all the more appropriate for NOSM to build fruitful relationships with these Francophone partners. Doing so would again demonstrate its determination to engage with communities.

### 3.1.3 The Community Sector

Twenty-two percent (22%) of answers concerning the identification of potential partners for the School identified

<sup>27</sup> See note 5.

<sup>28</sup> Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord, Conseil scolaire catholique de district des Grandes Rivières, Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel Ontario, Conseil scolaire public Grand Nord de l'Ontario, Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario and Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales.

the community sector. Participants see prestige in having NOSM present at their activities, they are proud of this connection and want it to continue. They are open to and definitely favour agreements and partnerships with their Northern Ontario School of Medicine and wish to be more involved.

*"You need to keep the School slogan (A School of the North, by the North, for the North) because we are so proud of our School."*

— The Chapleau community

Various needs were expressed by a number of groups, including the Métis Nation, which suggested that NOSM should have a presence in the Francophone Métis offices of the Northeast in Cochrane, New Liskeard and Sudbury.

*"NOSM should have an official partnership with the Métis Nation of Ontario and become its active partner, participating in cultural promotion by developing and offering Métis culture awareness sessions."*

Partnerships with the Centre des femmes francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario were also suggested during consultations. This collaboration with the Centre could provide the School with guidance in its awareness activities regarding mental and physical health of battered women.

Francophone seniors were also among the groups that expressed a desire to share experiences and to participate in health-related activities conducted by NOSM. Moreover, many people recommended that NOSM use the extended network of the Fédération des aînés et des retraités Francophones de l'Ontario to reach the community. The same is true for the francophone Université du troisième âge. The School can definitely count on this organisation to develop community projects.

In fact, these networks can serve as lines of communication for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The School can make effective use of their resources and member publications to circulate information and news. Moreover, this is an area in which the communities would appreciate improvement, i.e., the dissemination of NOSM

news. For example, in Thunder Bay, the Association des Francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) proposes that it work with the School. In the same way, NOSM can make use of the powerful network of Francophone groups such as ACFO<sup>29</sup> including the Greater Sudbury and Temiskaming chapters, to initiate projects that involve Francophone communities. Francophone organisations have great success in rallying their members to a cause and would be very useful to NOSM in its outreach to the population.

Consultations brought to light numerous other examples of organisations that can use their networks to contribute efficiently in enhancing the School's presence in Francophone communities, and vice versa. Participants suggested the Club Richelieu, L'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay, Au Château de Nipissing Ouest, Centre Francophone in Sault Ste. Marie, Centre culturel Louis-Hémon for Chapleau Francophones, Chambers of Commerce and l'Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins, to name just a few. Finally, the Carrefour francophone de Sudbury also seeks NOSM involvement at several levels. Firstly, it recommends active, early, in-the-field participation by the School and encourages NOSM to dare to stand out from other medical schools by serving the population even better in their own language and culture.

The community wants to make clear that it is indisputably behind NOSM and ready to support it and be part of its efforts. People consulted in Thunder Bay and Timmins, for example, wished to have a better Francophone representation from their community on the NOSM Board in order to accurately report on School activities, a perfect example of the School's social accountability mandate. The Kapuskasing community added that NOSM support for communities could lead to the creation of a critical mass of people ready for change. In the view of this community, NOSM needs to put more time and resources into creating opportunities, partnerships and Francophone matching, for example in placements. In this way, everyone would feel even more involved in the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, and the more Francophones feel involved, the more they become excellent ambassadors for the School.

<sup>29</sup> Associations canadiennes-françaises de l'Ontario.

## 3.2 Programs and Placements in Communities

Placements top the list of best practices that contribute the most to the successful accomplishment of the School's mandate in terms of community engagement. Placements, especially third year clerkships, are highly ranked in satisfaction both by learners and host organisations.

*"The third year Comprehensive Community Clerkship and the residency programs are great. The Timmins community is thrilled to have future physicians. It's a real plus!"*

— Timmins community

*"Learners interning in hospitals make a real difference. They come here with a good attitude and a desire to serve patients well. It totally changes the atmosphere."*

— Sudbury community

Learners who are involved in the community and exposed to various specialties acquire specialized clinical skills, and this is greatly appreciated. In addition, comments were unanimous in that NOSM curriculum allows for integrating theory and practice. This is an innovative program, one that facilitates both practical and theoretical learning and should be seen as an original program based on learning through direct patient interaction. This also assures on-the-ground presence by NOSM learners working with health professionals in the North. Also, the fact that these young people are themselves "of the North" leads to a better understanding of the culture of the North, in particular in regard to the physician-patient relationship.

*"A School of the North, for the North, by the North: learners from the North are more at ease in serving the population of the North. They are conscious of and*

*understand Northern reality, diversity, language and culture. They are capable of seeing the geographical component of medicine. In this context, future physicians will have closer links to their patients."*

Even if academic training takes place entirely in English, the School tries to reinforce the French aspects of its clinical placements by matching learners with Francophone preceptor-clinicians. However, a strong majority of participants in the consultation expressed a wish to see increased possibilities for Francophone learners to do their placements in French. They perceive this last point as being essential to the complete and ongoing development of Francophone learners.

In this regard, NOSM must ensure that learners can practice in French and are matched with Francophone physicians whose practices are in Francophone communities.

*"At the student level, some feel it strange to take notes in French and speak to patients in a non-medical language. Learners need help to allow them to feel comfortable speaking their own language."*

— A Sudbury physician

Learners matched with English-speaking physicians have less chance to interview Francophone patients in French, because they have to make themselves understood by the attending physician. People initially want to see improvements to NOSM's presence in Francophone communities, followed by better alignment with agencies, health care centres and clinics that host Francophone learners.

In addition, health professionals, physicians, learners and municipalities want to have access to a map that would display NOSM placement, clerkship and residency rotations. Not only are many unaware of the communities where learners participate in placements throughout Northern Ontario, but they would also like to see a better distribution of placements favouring outlying communities as compared to the larger urban centres.

Communities also draw the attention of NOSM to the fact that community health centres provide interdisciplinary learning, while the program currently requires supervision by physicians alone.

*“NOSM should take greater advantage of the interdisciplinary nature of community health centres that can provide learners with excellent experience. Learners need to gain experience in this area and the model is unique in terms of providing primary healthcare. During their placements, learners learn about all areas of the team’s expertise, which is unique in certain Northern Francophone communities. Primary health care belongs to all disciplines – the myths about primary care being the province of medicine alone need to be broken.”*

— Centre de santé communautaire du Témiskaming

Community representatives involved in NOSM placements also recommend that the welcoming of the learners to their community needs to be better synchronized with all Francophone community agencies, not just hospitals. In their view, this change would lead to improved understanding of the placement options that are available.

But generally speaking, the Francophone communities that were invited to participate in the NOSM consultation have an excellent opinion of the multiple placements,

which they see as a new way of training new physicians. Immersing learners in Francophone and Aboriginal communities during their four years of training is an extraordinary initiative, according to them.

Finally, it is important that NOSM ensure higher visibility of the fact that while its teaching program is in English for the time being, Francophones are welcome at the School and can choose French-language learning opportunities and experience the opportunity to live part of their placement in French.

*“The Northern Ontario School of Medicine must provide more training and placements in French and offer four-week placements in Francophone communities as it eventually moves to offer a French-language program at the School.”*

Although the Comprehensive Community Clerkship and placements are a tremendous and unique general experience, the challenge of increasing NOSM French-language opportunities remains real.





# Chapter 4

## Challenges — Time for a Change

During the community consultations, NOSM's many strengths were confirmed and brought to light. Since its establishment, recognition for this newest and most innovative School of medicine in Canada in the last thirty years has been expressed by most communities. Nevertheless, as the School constantly seeks to improve, it looks for opportunities to rise to challenges and better serve its learners and meet their expectations, with the intention of preparing them properly for their professional career in health. For this reason, NOSM invited organisations, learners, professionals and members of the Francophone community to identify the School's most pressing challenges.

### These challenges were in the following areas:

- ✓ Demography
- ✓ Communications
- ✓ Bilingual programs
- ✓ Recruitment

## 4.1 The Demographic Challenge

“As population aging increases pressure on the health system, reform becomes all the more urgent.”

— **David Foot**<sup>30</sup>  
Professor of Economics and  
Demographics Expert

Population aging represents a true challenge for Northern communities and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The consultations highlighted that, in the opinion of participants, this is one of the most important challenges faced by NOSM, in addition to distance, isolation and recruitment. Combined with a lack of Francophone physicians in Northern Ontario, the aging of community

populations is accompanied by sizeable health needs, particularly so in the North.

In fact, Northern Ontario has a higher rate of the aging population. According to the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) data on health services in the North East<sup>31</sup>, the proportion of seniors aged 65 and older (17%) is higher

<sup>30</sup> See note 3.

<sup>31</sup> Réseau local d'intégration des services de santé du Nord-Est, Profil démographique, socio-économique et portrait de la santé de la population du RLIS du Nord-Est, November 2008.

than the provincial average of 14%. In Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound and Temiskaming, one person in five is a senior, this region (district), therefore, has the highest proportion of seniors in all of Ontario.

Moreover, the North West Local Health Integration Network<sup>32</sup> pointed out that the proportion of persons 65 and older represents 13.8% of the population and is forecast to rise to 26.4% before 2031.

Forecasts also point to people between 50 and 65 years of age becoming the largest age group within 10 years. This is alarming for the health system as a whole and for medical faculties such as NOSM.

For this reason, the Institut franco-ontarien has proposed a comprehensive community needs analysis to better understand their health status. The impact of population aging will no doubt be felt at the health care level including the general state of health of Francophones. Moreover, a higher incidence of chronic disease in the Northeast region has been observed, apparently related to the aging of the community. This example is a good illustration of the fact that health care needs will increase as the population ages.

The School needs to take account of this data because it will be faced with a shortage of physicians to treat these elderly patients. Participants stated that they were gravely concerned about this issue and had doubts as to the sufficiency of the numbers of NOSM physicians graduated each year.

*"56 physicians per year it is not sufficient to meet the growing health care needs of an ever-aging population."*  
— Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario

NOSM has a role to play in addressing this problem, given its mandate, but also given its accountability, which is first and foremost to train competent physicians who are ready to serve Northern communities and their progressively aging population.

Many suggestions emerged from the consultations to prepare NOSM to deal with this situation. Communities propose that the curriculum be adapted to take into account the population aging phenomenon, define older target groups for care and increase NOSM presence in retirement homes, seniors clubs and rest homes with a view to providing awareness and prevention activities.

*"Since the elderly represent a significant segment of the retiree population, NOSM could provide a joint program on prevention of falls and management of chronic diseases, specialised subjects and shared, mini-med school style lectures."*

— Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury

Another major challenge for seniors is language. The 2006 Statistics Canada study<sup>33</sup> showed that Francophones outside Québec are deeply committed to their language. It is very important to them to receive services in their own language. Moreover, studies have concluded that the elderly communicate in their mother tongue in situations of vulnerability, as many Northern Francophone organisations stated.

*"The biggest fear of the elderly is not illness, but the impossibility of communicating with health care professionals in their language."*

In the coming decades, the challenge for NOSM will be to train physicians who can meet the people's needs, and especially those of the Francophone population.

<sup>32</sup> North West Local Health Integration Network, Population Health Profile, July 2009.

<sup>33</sup> See note 8.



The School must consider the fact that there will be approximately 37,000 Francophone seniors in Northern Ontario requiring medical services by 2031. This is a significant number of people who will require health services in French. Communities also mentioned that it is essential for the School to “get with the program” and train bilingual physicians.

As a result of the aging Baby Boomers, palliative care will be in great demand. Communities therefore expect the School to develop expertise in palliative care skills for future physicians. Also, in order to maintain a robust level of health in the Northern Ontario population, people are looking for programs of prevention, information and research to be implemented. This was in fact the thrust of the public health research, education and development proposal put forward by the Institut franco-ontarien as one of its 2005 recommendations:

*“Given the important proportion of seniors in the Franco-Ontarian population, resources need to be committed to better understand the situation and characteristics relating to the health and well-being of this age group<sup>34</sup>.”*

The response to this recommendation will emerge from research. Consequently, the School should energize its research component and promote it to Francophone communities and organisations. The School must guide and direct its research to meet these needs and become a leader in Francophone health research.

4.1.2 Research on Francophone Health

Research is a major component of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine’s strategic positioning. It reflects the mandate of the School, which is to be socially accountable to the various cultures of Northern Ontario. NOSM has

done much to merit praise in the field of research, and the consulted communities showed great interest in NOSM’s accomplishments in this area. And yet, many observed that much remains to be done to make this School achievement known: 75% of participants were unaware of the particulars of NOSM’s research initiatives.

Those who were not aware that NOSM has a research component stated that they not only wanted to know about the School’s research studies and results but expressed a strong interest in research centred on Francophone health issues. Since there is little data available on this subject, NOSM has an opportunity to take a leading role and to position itself strongly in this field.

Many participants including health care professionals consider research to be an important aspect of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The health care team at Hearst’s Hôpital Notre-Dame indicated that NOSM needs to become a leader in research related to Francophone and Aboriginal health issues. A group of physicians from the Sudbury region also stressed the importance of research on Francophone health problems. They all see that the Northern Ontario School of Medicine needs to develop a national and international presence in regard to research on issues, challenges and trends connected to Francophone health.

For its part, the Vale Inco Hospice wants to become a Centre of excellence in palliative care training and research. This research undertaken in partnership with colleges and universities would provide an opportunity for collaboration with NOSM. Community health centres also pointed out the lack of data and research on community health and hope that the School takes the lead in this research.

<sup>34</sup> Programme de recherche, d’éducation et de développement en santé publique et l’Institut franco-ontarien, Deuxième rapport sur la santé des Francophones de l’Ontario, Ontario, 2005, recommandation 2, page 143.



*"Conduct more applied research in the community."*

— Representative of the Centre de santé communautaire de Kapuskasing et région

*"Our Centre greatly needs good research data. We need partnerships to help us respond to this compelling Francophone health need."*

— Representative of the Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury

*"In terms of research, the School needs to be more present at the Société Santé en français."*

— Representative of the Centre de santé communautaire du Témiskaming

At NOSM, the key research topics include determinants of health and the improvement of the health status of the Northern Ontario population. Since data on the health of Ontario Francophones is still in short supply, the School would benefit from pursuing further research in this area. Furthermore, as indicated in the Second Report on the Health of Francophones in Ontario prepared by the Public Health Research, Education and Development Program and the Institut franco-ontarien:

*"It is regrettable that there has been little follow-up to the recommendations of the first report. Many of them remain relevant and important. It is hoped that the new developments concerning the Francophone population such as the Consortium national de formation en santé, the Société Santé en français and growing Francophone health networks will help to raise the level of commitment in the various areas identified in the recommendations. Health research institutes can play a greater role in issues relating to the Francophone population in Ontario and Canada."*

With this second report, researchers have set the stage for more extensive studies on Francophone health issues by making initial data available to university researchers. Follow up studies could be undertaken on such issues as the progress of chronic disease, the health status of seniors, the impact of distance and access to health care in French in the North. As such, Francophone communities encourage NOSM to secure new research funding available from the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS), whereby the CNFS supports research on the health of Francophone communities in a minority situation.<sup>35</sup>

There is no doubt that NOSM has every reason to promote its research component at all levels, especially in regard to research on Francophone health issues. The School is committed to define, develop, deliver and promote its distinctive model for medical training and research into issues designed to improve health in Northern Ontario.

The establishment of a Research Chair on Francophone health has therefore been suggested to the Northern Ontario School of Medicine as a way of dissipating the perception that innovative research is lacking in the North and finally positioning the School as a leader in this field.

<sup>35</sup> More details at <http://www.cnfs.net/recherche/mission-et-objectifs>.

## 4.2 The Challenge of Language and Culture

NOSM is always looking for best ways to reach its various constituencies, including learners, professionals, communities and its partners. During the consultation, it was clearly stated by participants that NOSM is serious in its efforts to make the School better known and that a strong will exists to improve Francophone services content at all levels. The School needs to be aware and to consider the various issues listed below if it expects to meet one of its most important linguistic challenges and continue to move forward with its excellent positioning, particularly within Francophone communities.

### 4.2.1 Communications

*"Communicating in French is not simply a matter of straight translation. Our culture is unique, and our realities different."*

Regional participants were unanimous in stating that NOSM needs to seriously increase and improve its French-language communications with both learners and health professionals. The following section presents what Francophone communities wish in terms of NOSM commitment, and it all starts with the issue of communications. While all participants deemed NOSM marketing and communications in English excellent and very well done, 95% thought that the School was not efficient in its French language communications.

*"The School communicates relatively well, just not in French. The community wants to receive information in French."*

The results of consultations revealed many important facts:

- ✓ Only 36% of participants had consulted the website more than five times, since the site is predominantly in English. Participants indisputably want a French section of the NOSM website;
- ✓ 62% have never received the School's Northern Passages newsletter and an even higher percentage never saw the Community Report;
- ✓ 74% of participants never participated in NOSM professional training sessions, while 59% did not even know of their existence;
- ✓ Even if 52% did not participate in both Francophone Symposiums, 83% claim to be interested in the Symposia or in professional training sessions.

Learners and residents maintained that all School communications they receive are in English. The only information in French that comes their way, by e-mail for example, emanates from the Francophone Affairs Unit. Health professionals and the community at large shared this view on FAU information in French.

Francophones appreciate the NOSM website but would like a section in French. Participants from all regions identified the unilingual English website as a main concern or obstacle for Francophone communities seeking to communicate with the School.

*"To my surprise, when I Googled 'École de médecine,' nothing came up."*

*“On the site itself, only the School mission section is in French. This is not sufficient.”*

*“If we want to attract Francophone learners, we need to present, in French on the website, the advantages of studying at NOSM.”*

In the opinion of more than 80 % of participants, the NOSM website is the first point of contact for these groups. There should be, at the very least, a section in French that can be accessed by visitors through a “Français (French)” link. This section would also include essential information about the School, general information, its admission requirements, program details, etc... It is crucial for learners that their modern teaching institution provides a place for French on its website.

The issue of unilingual English publications emerged just as strongly in response to the question of improvements that could be made to School communications in French. Comments were unanimous and very positive as to the quality, interest and pertinence of the Community Report and Northern Passages. However, consultations brought out the fact that the small number of French-language articles is unsatisfactory and does not reach the Francophone audience. Moreover, Francophone participants from the educational sector added that because they are in English, these publications could unfortunately not be distributed in Francophone schools and school boards. However, as partners, they are willing to help promote NOSM and distribute its promotional and information materials.

*“NOSM needs to develop a capacity for bilingual communications. Its partners can only circulate information internally if it exists in both French and English.”*

However, participants are realistic. They do not expect all School communications to be bilingual and translated. They do feel, however, that a greater number of major and important documents should be made available by NOSM in French. Learners who took part in the consultations also stressed how important it is for them to be able to apply for bursaries available to Francophones in French. It would also be a lot easier for them to write their support and donor “thank you” letters in their own language. All in all, Francophones who took part in the consultation stated that they appreciated the School’s efforts and progress up to now and encouraged NOSM to pursue this practice. Francophone communities trust NOSM to make them feel valued and know that there is much to be gained in acknowledging the uniqueness of Aboriginal and Francophone cultures.

One of NOSM’s strongest attributes is its excellent “A School of the North, by the North, for the North” slogan on which its mandate rests. This slogan was appreciated by the majority of the Francophone learners who participated in the consultation in each of the regions that was visited<sup>36</sup>. They spoke of the pride they feel in being associated with the School and identify with it strongly. They encouraged the School to use the slogan to help increase NOSM’s visibility in Francophone communities.

Expectations are similar on the part of health professionals. They believe that it is advantageous for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine to publish information on research and on the health status of Francophone communities, while accentuating the School’s excellent reputation by providing as many lectures and seminars in French as possible and by offering open house activities for Francophones.

NOSM is a pioneer in its field, and Francophones are proud

<sup>36</sup> The list of organizations that participated in the consultation in Appendix 2 also shows which regions were visited.

to be part of it and acknowledged. Though NOSM deploys considerable efforts to establish links with Francophones, they believe that the School must obtain the means and resources to allow for a greater Francophone footprint in its communications. To help the School move forward successfully, participants suggested that NOSM appoint a Francophone resource person exclusively responsible for communications with Francophones. They found it essential, even vital, for the School to be able to count on such a resource person who could also act as School spokesperson in the Francophone community. This person responsible for French-language communications could develop a French-language or bilingual communications policy. Other tasks could include, adding the School's Francophone partners to its mailing list, which does not currently seem to be the case according to a number of participants who are highly interested in receiving more information on NOSM activities and do not.

Finally, communities where Francophone associations and groups are present and active wish to be informed about NOSM activities whether by a member of the local NOSM group, a health professional or a student from their region. Very positive comments were formulated about Dr. Roger Strasser, Dr. Jean Anawati and Mrs. Diane Breton for promoting the School and making people aware of its exemplary practices. Several participants repeated the importance of people who are highly visible and involved in their Francophone community to be ambassadors for NOSM. People also appreciate contacts with the founding Dean and hope that this access continues. This is a concrete way for them to feel the School's true engagement with their community.

#### 4.2.2 Student Profile

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine is proud of its learners and of the rigorous selection of each of its classes that are, in the participants' view, the absolute best. Since NOSM learners are future professionals and embody hope for many Northern Ontario Francophone communities, it is not surprising that these communities are strongly interested (72 %) in hearing about their learners, who they see as true models.

Francophone NOSM learners are highly regarded and well perceived by the communities of the North. Their success stories need to spread like good news and NOSM needs to use this as a way to interest young Francophones. There is much to brag and share through the media about the success stories of these young Francophone learners. As previously mentioned, the consultation highlighted that communities would like NOSM to significantly raise its visibility and presence in the Francophone media. Conveying the uplifting profiles of learners would certainly benefit the School and also meet the expectations of the community.

People want to see and get to know Francophone learners through statistics and their profile information. For instance, they would like to obtain information on the number of Francophone learners and residents admitted to the School, their origins (90% come from the North) as well as the number of bilingual and Aboriginal learners. In this regard, knowing that several young Francophone Métis women are studying at NOSM would constitute an extraordinary model on every level. This is why the population hopes that NOSM will highlight its best asset, the learners.

Besides wanting to receive news and information on the profiles of Francophone learners, consultation participants expressed the strong desire for NOSM to maintain contacts with its graduates. In their view, maintaining these connections and following their careers will, over time, turn

them into NOSM ambassadors and potential partners. This would significantly help the School move forward in regard to its communications with Francophone communities, and this progress is an important factor in accomplishing the School's mandate.

*“It would be interesting for us to receive information in French on medical student profiles, interests and progress so that our youth can identify with a student and understand how they got to where they are.”*

### 4.3 Bilingual Programs

Quality is assuredly at the core of any discussion about teaching programs at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. This excellent, well-established reputation is indisputably beneficial to the School and must be maintained. But as far as the linguistic challenge is concerned, French or bilingual program offerings are always of concern. This opinion was shared by a significant proportion of consultation participants.

*“NOSM training is of high quality and innovative, but predominantly in English. This is a problem, since many regions have a significant Francophone population, and some learners will go on to practice there.”*

NOSM tries hard to take account of the culture and the linguistic needs of Northern Ontario Francophones when planning its activities. If it wishes to remain true to its social accountability mandate, the School really has no choice but to make this a core issue. It is first and foremost a response to a truly pressing need expressed by Francophone communities. They insist on the importance of providing bilingual or French programs.

One of the objectives of the School is for each class to reflect the Francophone demography of Northern Ontario.

Hence, in pursuing this interesting practice, it is important that the School consider the significant proportion of learners who speak French and who will be ready to practice in their own language at the end of their studies. In 2008, 215 Francophone student applications were received. Francophone learners made up 26 % of the class. In addition, in 2008, nearly half (43 %) of the class have some knowledge of French. When these numbers are combined for the class of 2008, the number of NOSM learners who either know French or can speak it rose to nearly 70 %. This is a very high number and clearly shows that offering bilingual programs would benefit both the School and its learners.

Francophone communities feel that it is vital that NOSM be recognized as a bilingual medical School to allow it to recruit and train Francophones “Of the North, by the North, for the North.” Because after all, it would contradict the School's mandate to continue to promote NOSM in Francophone Schools with the intention of recruiting Francophone learners with English-only documents and training. However, Francophone communities and NOSM learners particularly showed judiciousness and realism on this issue, as this School learner expressed it:



*"NOSM has limited resources to achieve immediate and full bilingual status in the North – it is better to plan for full bilingualism within a period of 10 years. To assure success, a solid and sustained program in one language must come first. Francophone physicians will then need to support the French-language program to assure its success later on."*



Although they are passionate about instituting teaching programs in French, the Francophones who were part of the consultation did not stress any urgency to reach this goal, because the goal is to meet much more than expectations. Meeting needs that are becoming ever better defined will take time and require strategic planning. Communities are aware of this and recognize that patience is a virtue here but are open to collaborating as partners in

the concrete development of programs in French. In short, they remain lucid and aware of the challenge they have laid at NOSM's door, like the recruitment challenge, but retain an abiding hope on this issue.

### 4.3.1 Cultural Competencies

Cultural competencies are fundamental to learners' ability to grasp and properly understand the Francophone and Aboriginal cultures of the patients they are called upon to care for. Knowing how important this is, NOSM already includes these components in its curriculum, to supplement the training of its learners in the best way possible and prepare them adequately for the realities of Northern Ontario's different cultures. Learners interviewed indicated they appreciated these cultural program components, but nevertheless had some reservations and made useful comments for improving the curriculum in the long term.

*"In Module 105, learners see Francophone patients, meet their needs and have a positive impact on health care services in French vis-à-vis the linguistic barriers. This is a good thing, serving the Francophone population. We can dispel the myth from "It would be nice" to "It is necessary."*  
– NOSM learners

*"The ability to communicate in French with Francophone patients is all the more important in the diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems."*

*"Make learners aware of the "French fact," because patients love speaking to their physicians in French."*  
– NOSM learners



Still, a constantly recurring theme in comments made on this subject was observed during the consultation process. All health professionals and representatives from the educational sector deemed it very important for NOSM to broaden Francophone content in the curriculum and support the cultural activities of Francophone learners. This was strongly echoed by learners who would like to see a lot more Francophone content in their program relating to cultural competence. Several even expressed a wish for a better equilibrium in the presentation of Aboriginal as opposed to Francophone content.

*“There is still work to be done at the Francophone level. Cultural education is more orientated around Aboriginal culture. Many cultural and linguistic barriers remain.”*

–NOSM learners

This last point also applies to the Métis Nation. Consulted on NOSM cultural competence teaching, this community essentially noted the same gaps raised by Francophones.

*“Considerable attention has been paid to Aboriginal culture and the curriculum reflects this. It would be desirable to move toward including awareness of Métis culture, which is different from First Nations culture.”*

– Métis Nations of Ontario

Maintenance and fine-tuning of cultural competence in NOSM curriculum would seem to be therefore inevitable, considering that a priori, language constitutes the vehicle and the instrument by which culture is manifested. This move will be notably beneficial to the reinforcement of the cultural identity of Francophone learners and prove that NOSM supports the linguistic and cultural development of

its learners in their privileged academic environment. NOSM must therefore continue to make its learners aware of the fact that in a situation of vulnerability, Francophone patients will tend to naturally return to their French culture and language that makes it easier for them to express their problems. NOSM's social accountability mandate intersects with the cultural and educational mission of French-language schools in Ontario which emphasizes their heritage. For this reason, NOSM needs to add more Francophone content to its curriculum to satisfy its community engagement practices and better prepare physicians and staff<sup>37</sup> to adapt to the cultural realities of Northern Ontario's communities.

Finally, NOSM stands out from other Ontario training institutions. However, by putting more emphasis on cultural competence, NOSM will further stand out and, at the end of the day, this approach will become a strength in the competition to recruit learners.



<sup>37</sup> Upon recommendation by participants representing the community and members of the Francophone Reference Group of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

## 4.4 Recruitment

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine receives a great number of applications each year. For 2008-2009, this number was 1,892. Out of 58 successful applicants, 15 (26% of the total number) were Francophone. The Kapuskasing community wanted to congratulate NOSM for having exceptionally recruited 10 learners from their municipality. But recruitment proves to be a never-ending challenge for the School, especially in the context of physician scarcity. NOSM has to face this problem and prepare to resolve the mounting problem of Francophone and bilingual physician shortage in Northern Ontario.

But above all, the School needs to look at succession planning and find new resources to assure its own administration. It needs to be able to count on learners who are ready to become involved in its activities and help it to achieve its mandate and its success. As with learners, professionals make a valued contribution to the proper functioning of the School. They see to teaching and to training future physicians, and assure the School's involvement in communities, notably through placements. These partners are a key element of placements, because, in the end, these placements are essential to assuring recruitment and the success of the institution.

But learners and health professionals also need to answer the call. NOSM has to confront a very real challenge. To meet it, it seems clear in the light of these consultations that the School needs to continue to work towards setting up a task force dedicated to recruiting both learners and health professionals.

### 4.4.1 Learners

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine enjoys an exceptional reputation for the quality and selection process of its learners. Applicants from the Francophone community are well represented during the admission interview process and the Francophone component in the point system is fair, equitable and well established. Generally, people are satisfied with the admission process. Nevertheless, where problems are most frequently seen is not in the recruitment process itself but in actual enrolment. A strong majority (71%) in Francophone communities asked that a greater number of places be opened to learners each year. As the Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario indicated, "Fifty-six learners per year it is not sufficient, (...) especially given the scarcity of physicians."

NOSM must be ready to meet urgent health care needs of the North of the province. These needs become more acute in the smallest outlying communities that require Francophone physicians.

The role of NOSM regarding learner recruitment is essential and goes beyond simply selecting based on the size of Francophone and Aboriginal communities. The School contributes to broaden and strengthen these groups, linguistically and culturally. Its impact will echo positively through the health care system.

*"The School will bring something new to the table. Its social accountability mandate will help future physicians to break out of their current shell and no longer feel afraid to declare themselves as Francophone. And Francophone physicians will find it easier to identify with the system."*

– NOSM student from Thunder Bay

The consulted communities identified another problem in the area of recruitment. In their view, it is highly contradictory to attempt to recruit Francophone learners using materials in English only and offer a curriculum and teaching program in English. Logic dictates that in order to recruit Francophone learners, the Medical School needs to be promoted in French, with French documentation and subsequently offer curriculum in French. It is a question of adapting the curriculum to produce competent future physicians for the community.

*"The strength of the School's program to attract residents is based on its good reputation. But the School needs to be able to provide French-language services in its postgraduate program. More material in French is needed to attract Francophone or at least bilingual learners and residents."*

– NOSM resident from Thunder Bay

A number of measures were suggested by participants as solutions to the above-mentioned problems. Here are a few:

- ✓ Improved awareness to increase application volume;
- ✓ Develop a French language services policy;
- ✓ Organize recruitment fairs and tours in the North as is done in larger urban centres with the intention of

offering Northern learners the opportunity to learn and practice in the North as a first choice;

- ✓ Promote a second career in medicine to health professionals;
- ✓ Analyze NOSM admission applications compared to those of other faculties of medicine;
- ✓ Offer information sessions in schools on how to become a physician, the optimal profile students should develop if they aspire to a career in medicine, and prerequisite science courses;
- ✓ Recruit in colleges and universities by means of visits and tours.

Finally, student recruitment remains a challenge for NOSM. Devoting time to this problem can shed light on the School's initial mandate, as well as meeting the province's linguistic development policy which is "to increase the vitality of Ontario's educational institutions by favouring the recruitment and retention of pupils from Francophone schools and contribute to the sustainable development of the Francophone community."<sup>38</sup> Since the Northern Ontario School of Medicine's social accountability mandate is to meet individual and collective health care needs, for Francophone, Aboriginal, urban, rural and remote communities (among others) there is an opportunity to achieve the mandate by providing the best possible environment to its learners and future health care professionals. This will also answer an urgent need of these communities in the area of recruiting health care professionals for Northern Ontario.

<sup>38</sup> See note 2.



#### 4.4.2 Health Care Professionals

In fulfilling its mission, NOSM held its Second Francophone Symposium<sup>39</sup> in 2007. The main theme was recruitment, of learners, residents and Francophone communities as well as physicians and health care professionals. There is no doubt that the School already faces and will continue to deal with a serious shortage of health care professionals. Distance is also a major issue for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and Francophone communities. More than ever, patients have to travel considerable distances to be treated.

*"The challenges faced by the Sault Ste. Marie community are the shortage of family practitioners and little access to Francophone specialists. Patients have to go out of town to be treated. And there are few bilingual physicians. The physicians are supposedly bilingual, but they can't speak French. NOSM needs to train bilingual physicians and teach learners the importance of serving Francophones in their own language."*

– The Sault Ste. Marie community

NOSM will also need to find Francophone professionals who can supervise learners in French. Francophone

learners need Francophone mentors to strengthen and facilitate their learning. French-speaking mentors act as role models and can have an incalculable impact on the quality and training results of these future physicians who, in turn, will perhaps teach at NOSM in addition to serving their community. But this requires determination and goodwill, as many health professionals are interested in teaching even though they already have their hands full.

Everyone, including NOSM, needs to be creative and adaptive in the face of the predominant shortage of physicians. Recent demographic studies show that there will be a significant shortfall in the labour force in the coming years, not only in Northern Ontario but throughout all of Canada. In the Fall of 2008, the Far Northeast Training Board<sup>40</sup> warned of the urgent need to analyse the impact of population aging on the labour market, mainly in the field of health care. Moreover, in its Ten-Year Outlook for the Canadian Labour Market (2005-2015), Human Resources and Skills Development Canada<sup>41</sup> notes that:

*"Increased health care needs resulting from the aging of the population will result in demand outpacing supply for several health care occupations. Occupations such as physicians, optometrists, health diagnosing and treating professionals, head nurses and supervisors, nurse aides*

<sup>39</sup> Second Northern Ontario School of Medicine Francophone Symposium, Timmins, September 21-22, 2007.

<sup>40</sup> Far Northeast Training Board. Les professions du secteur de la santé dans la région de la commission de la formation du Nord-Est. Prévision du marché du travail. September 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Available online at [http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications\\_resources/research/categories/labour\\_market\\_e/sp\\_615\\_10\\_06/page06.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/research/categories/labour_market_e/sp_615_10_06/page06.shtml)

*and orderlies are expected to continue to face shortage pressures over the next decade. [...] future supply would have to outpace future demand in order to alleviate the current pressures.”*

The Réseaux de santé en français de l'Ontario made this problem the focus of their recommendations in their provincial report entitled *Préparer le terrain : soins de santé primaires en français en Ontario*.<sup>42</sup> The report makes it clear that in addition to the challenges of linguistic or cultural barriers and access to quality care, there are significant variations in the availability of health care services in French, difficulties in recruitment and a lack of bilingual professionals. The second recommendation of the report stipulates that “it is necessary to ensure competent Francophone human resources where there is need”. According to the report, the conditions required to successfully implement this recommendation include: offering college and university programs in French in the various fields of health, offering professional development in French, collaborating with the Consortium national de formation en santé, offering coordinated professional development programs in French, including a cultural competence component and ensuring human resource succession planning.

In his *Special Report on French Language Health Services Planning in Ontario, 2009*,<sup>43</sup> the French Language Services Commissioner, François Boileau, also mentioned the problem of scarcity of human resources. He notes that needs are blatant everywhere in the field of health care.

*“There is a severe shortage of physicians, nurses and other health professionals and the situation is becoming critical. (...) We could see a lack of quality health care combined with overworked Francophone medical staff, resulting in an increase in the amount of overtime,*

*as well as significant costs caused by inefficiency that sometimes may even lead to absenteeism.”*

For this reason, communities have great expectations of NOSM. In addition to the isolation common to outlying regions, Francophone and rural communities of the North already suffer from a shortage of health care professionals. Recruiting Francophone health professionals consequently represents a twice the challenge. The hope is that NOSM can train future physicians for the North who will remain in the region.

*“Despite NOSM's excellent model, it must continue to ensure recruitment and community placement. The communities of the North are isolated and the challenge is to provide professionals and physicians for small communities.”*

– Réseau de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario

*“Its slogan: “A School of the North, by the North, for the North”. Research shows that individuals who are trained in the community will remain in the community. This approach facilitates the recruitment and retention of physicians and health care professionals in the North.”*

– A community member and member of the Francophone Reference Group

If hopes are so high, it is because figures prove that needs are real and pressing. According to recent Statistics Canada data on health professionals<sup>44</sup> for 2006, about 14%<sup>45</sup> of Ontario health professionals had some knowledge of French. For the Northeast of Ontario, the proportion was closer to 36%. The figure dropped to a little more than 31% for nurses and other health professionals of the Northeast who say they use French at work.

<sup>42</sup> Les Réseaux de santé en français de l'Ontario, *Préparer le terrain : soins de santé primaires en français en Ontario*, 2006.

<sup>43</sup> Ontario French Language Services Commissioner, *Special Report on French Language Health Services Planning in Ontario*, 2009, [http://www.flsc.gov.on.ca/files/Special\\_Report.pdf](http://www.flsc.gov.on.ca/files/Special_Report.pdf) (site consulted on May 28th, 2009), pp 9 and 27.

<sup>44</sup> BLASER, Christine. 2009 Health Care Professionals and Official-Language Minorities in Canada N. 91-550-XWE in the Statistics Canada catalogue, Ottawa, Ontario, 60p, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?lang=eng&catno=91-550-X> (site consulted on April 20th, 2009).

<sup>45</sup> This corresponds to 49,975 individuals.

With the inevitable aging of the population, Francophone communities will more and more need to communicate with their physicians in French about health issues. It was therefore strongly suggested complete an inventory of Francophone health professionals in collaboration with NOSM partners and communities so as to better understand the situation. NOSM will then be in a better position to understand the needs in health care training. It can then meet the challenge in partnership with health care professionals and communities that host learners.

#### 4.4.3 Host Communities

The learners have the unique opportunity to spend a good part of their training in communities that are dispersed throughout all of Northern Ontario. These communities host learners for periods of time that vary from a few weeks to an academic year. More than 70 communities offer student placements at various times of the year (See map, Appendix 3). They affirmed their pride in having a School “Of the North, by the North, for the North” during the consultation, especially since NOSM placements lead to a closer relationship with their physicians, notably due to the arrival and presence of NOSM learners in their communities.

While they make an extraordinary contribution to the work of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, they expressed the need for increased support in order to host learners and residents. For many of these Francophone communities, distance is a factor that works against them even if they have a lot to offer learners as far as placements are concerned. They recommend that a study be made to examine the result of efforts made by these communities to attract and retain physicians who have graduated from Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

Communities solicit the constant support of NOSM to be able to host learners properly. They need help in the area of recruitment, but also help to meet the needs of learners during their placements. Francophone communities can better accomplish this with the support of Local NOSM Groups whose mandate includes hosting School learners and integrating them into the community.

#### 4.4.4 Local NOSM Groups

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has a network of local groups in many Northern municipalities. At present, there are about a dozen of these groups in all, widely scattered across the vast territory served by NOSM. Nevertheless, these groups remain largely unknown (90%) to Francophones in spite of efforts made by the School to set up these very useful groups that coordinate local NOSM activities in the communities.

Many participants expressed a wish to be included in these Local NOSM Groups, but were never asked. Moreover, they were unaware of the groups’ mandate, which is to guide NOSM activities and programs in local communities and neighbouring regions and to ensure connections with local actors on behalf of NOSM, sharing ideas and information with the community. Their role is also to recruit and support preceptors while helping to plan learner and resident placements in their community.

At present, two groups, one in Timmins, the other in Kapuskasing, function well and receive positive comments from their community.



*"The group in Kapuskasing is well organized. Also, the physician recruitment and retention committee, which is a sub-committee of the Town Council, is well represented, well organized and directly connected to NOSM's local group."*

– Councillor, Town of Kapuskasing

*"There are three Francophones in this Group and they send bilingual donation request letters to communities."*

– Centre de santé communautaire de Kapuskasing et région

*"The Group is active, we are aware of its activities and of what takes place, and as a plus, there are Francophones members. Nevertheless the College would like to participate."*

– Collège Boréal, Timmins

*"Timmins is very well organised, its Local NOSM Group networks efficiently. It works well."*

– Councillor, City of Timmins

Now aware of the mandate and presence these groups elsewhere in the North, other communities that are smaller in terms of population proportion would like to establish mini-groups. For the most part, they already host second-year NOSM learners.

For their part, health professionals and community members who know of, or participate in these local groups pointed out that NOSM needs to provide more support for these groups. The School must call on existing Francophone organisations and jointly assess what they are capable of providing to learners. One of many suggestions proposed that these organisations attend the orientation sessions provided to learners at the beginning of their placement in a community. This way, the

groups would be more inclusive and would allow health professionals to have direct contact with them, something that came up frequently during the consultation.

*"Some work remains to be done in regard to Francophone representation. It is important that members understand that they represent the entire community and that Francophone participation represents an added value. NOSM must definitely play a more important role in supporting these groups."*

– Members of various Francophone communities

All participants pointed out that there needs to be better Francophones and Aboriginal representation within the School's local groups. This wish was also strongly formulated by the Métis Nation of Ontario that would like to be part of the groups and be involved even more on this level.

All things considered, participants all agreed that it is necessary to maintain these groups' presence within the Francophone communities of Northern Ontario, even to the point of suggesting that a remunerated position be created to act exclusively as a link between the School, communities and members of Local NOSM Groups.







# Chapter 5

## Moving Forward — A Roadmap

Francophone communities greatly appreciated being consulted by the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and saw in it a sign of acknowledgement and respect. They also recognized a real intent to increase its presence in communities and enhance the place reserved for Francophones at the School. Francophones are ready to fill this new space and hope for a fresh start now that NOSM is well positioned.

In this regard, the Francophone communities profoundly seek improved Francophone inclusion in the School. The Francophone population that participated in the consultation stated that it was ready to demonstrate its collaboration and was passionate about reaching that goal. Being proactive is called for, starting with the Francophone Reference Group.

### 5.1 The Francophone Reference Group

“The Francophone Reference Group must be more strategic. It provides no feedback and we hear nothing about important achievements. There must be a clearer understanding of its role and responsibilities, change its membership, if necessary, and, make sure to recruit members who have strategic skills. The members of the FRG must be representative of the Francophone population of the North and especially, work to advance the School's interests. Committee members need to understand their role more clearly and act accordingly.”

— A community member

Right from the start, NOSM set up an Aboriginal Reference Group and a Francophone Reference Group (FRG). The latter is composed of about twenty members that include key actors in the community who mainly represent the interests of Francophones to the School. However, while the Group speaks on behalf of its communities, Francophone communities stated 9 times out of 10 that they were unaware of the existence of the reference group, its activities, and that the first time they ever heard about the group was during the consultation. Very few

participants stated that they knew about the existence of this group. Even if some persons stated that they were aware of the existence of the Francophone Reference Group, they remained nonetheless completely unaware of its mandate and activities.

This group reports to the Dean and its mandate is mainly to make recommendations on the initiatives, strategies and activities that meet the needs of Francophone communities or that can have an impact on them. It has

other responsibilities also, such as ensuring links and communication between Francophone communities and the School administration. On these last points, participants believed that the FRG needed to be more proactive, improve its relations with NOSM's administration and ensure better links with communities.

A physician pointed out that, "This committee must be proactive and have the right perspective to move projects forward. It needs to draw up an action plan and break out of the circle of 'us poor Francophones in a minority situation.'" The committee must be composed of visionaries who are not afraid to stand up and take their place. Establish a long-term vision (5-10 years) that involves the Francophone community and the School. Recruit someone who can show leadership and that is favourable to the progress of NOSM."

*"The group must implement a long-term vision and represent all segments of the community. It needs to aim for an integrated model. Show leadership and the ability to communicate a process. The FRG needs this transformation and must be inclusive of the health system. It must represent not only the different levels of the health care sector but also give consideration to people in the community (users). Develop a mandate, plan for the future, and instil cultural and linguistic pride in our youth."*

– A FRG member

*"I was a member in 2003. The structure does not work. It is now being questioned, which is a good thing. But action is called for, and the group needs to be proactive. An opportunity exists to make a difference and move forward more strategic action in supports of the School's efforts to meet its social mandate. Define issues, begin to act: we can make a fresh start towards improving Francophone culture."*

– A physician

*"Previously, the group was rather reactive and this is sometimes necessary. Nevertheless, it is time to change and become proactive. The committee exists to move projects forward and help NOSM progress and improve services in French. The committee is an integral part of NOSM. In fact, they are partners."*

– A former member of the FRG

Issues around links ensured by the Francophone Reference Group were raised, specifically those with the Métis Nation. It was mentioned that it would be appreciated to have a Métis representative within the Francophone Reference Group to ensure links between Francophones and the Métis.

Concerned about listening to Francophone communities and maintaining its alliance with them, NOSM continues to offer its full collaboration to the smooth functioning of the FRG, which is essential if Francophones are to continue to be properly represented. It is also clear that the School needs to fully support a new mandate of the FRG, given that expectations of this group are well defined within the community. Participants would like to be more informed about the major thrust of projects led by this group. They expressed the desire to have a FRG that is much more strategic with a concrete action plan.



## 5.2 Strategic Planning and Development

“The School needs to show leadership in the area of cultural inclusion within its development plan and demonstrate strategic planning initiatives towards the Francophone community. An excellent opportunity exists and should be grasped to prove that NOSM is an institution in the image of Northern Ontario learners and stands out in sharp contrast to other medical schools. At the end of the consultation process, it had become clear that avenues for action included in this report should form part of the next NOSM strategic plan.”

The introduction to this report highlighted the fact that NOSM had a valuable opportunity to consult communities and propose changes to its next strategic plan.

Learners are of a common mind in this respect and look to the consultation as a way of creating momentum for their medical school. They believe that NOSM needs to take advantage of being in a “learning curve and using its best cards to ensure and plan for the future of Northern communities.”

In anticipation of its next strategic plan, it is highly desirable, according to comments, that NOSM plan ahead and target Francophone activities, programs and projects. On this matter, many participants were insistent that a call for input from Francophone communities be made in the framework of public consultations in preparation of the next strategic plan.

While these initiatives are only a few examples that could guide NOSM's strategic planning, participants appeared confident that the School would succeed in adequately implementing them. From their perspective, the School also represents an answer to the important challenges of

distance, language and culture. It is clear that people are interested in ensuring NOSM's success while underscoring the need for it to become more proactive with respect to existing community committees. For example, it was suggested that NOSM increase its presence on strategic round tables in the education and health sectors as well as on some municipal, socio-economic and advisory committees, while also improving Francophone representation on its own Board of Directors.

Many participants also expressed the wish that NOSM communicates its vision and strategic plan to the public at large. The Francophone community showed considerable interest in NOSM's “A School of medicine of the North, by the North, for the North” slogan. Francophones clearly want to play a part and look forward to being included in the next strategic plan.

## 5.3 Funding

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has a lengthy and well established reputation in the regions it serves. The School teaching model is unique, grounded in the search for excellence, and respectful of the cultural diversity that reflects Northern Ontario.

In the course of its vast consultation within Francophone communities, a recurrent comment emerged in answer to questions on the means that could be envisaged to confront various challenges faced by NOSM. Many participants stated that the School needed to identify new sources of funding to help it better serve Francophones.

A broad range of support programs with Francophone components could be examined in this respect. Canadian Heritage, for example, offers the Official Languages in Education Program (OLEP) that is open to postsecondary institutions in particular. The School should also seek funding for academic and research projects from the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS). By focusing its research on health issues of Francophones in a minority situation, NOSM could access CNFS funds that stem from Health Canada's Contribution program to improve access to health services for official language minority communities.<sup>46</sup>

Francophone health and education professionals clearly indicated that the School should move forward in accessing available funding programs for which the School qualifies. The above examples could help NOSM develop a teaching framework that is more centred on Francophone and bilingual learners and to make use of its influence to define northern learning initiatives.

In addition to the Bourse francophone Maureen Lacroix, other bursaries are specifically available to Francophone learners. However, due to the increase in the number of Francophone learners, it would seem desirable to increase the number of bursaries available to them, as has been proposed by NOSM's Advancement Unit. Nevertheless, fundraising initiatives that take place in Francophone communities and that reach out to Francophones must, of necessity, be conducted in French.

Finally, in light of the suggestions that were made, it is clear that NOSM should seek additional sources of funding that can be accessed and will not only assure growth, but will especially assure the well-being of its learners. It is vital that the School consider these suggestions in order to better respond to the demands and needs of Francophone communities as it pursues its mandate of social accountability.



<sup>46</sup> Health Canada's website for the Official Language Community Development Bureau, <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/branch-dirigen/rapb-dgrp/pd-dp/olcldb-baclo-eng.php>



# Conclusion

The consultation held with Francophone communities defined and expressed a number of opportunities for improving the programs and services offered by the Northern Ontario School of Medicine to its Francophone learners. The consultations also resulted in a better understanding of the expectations and needs of Francophone communities in regard to shared engagement with the School.

The comments that were expressed lead to two major observations: 1) Communities perceive the School as an innovative institution due to its positioning (A School of the North, by the North, for the North); and, 2) NOSM's curriculum centred around distributed learning and community placements that facilitate the training of a different kind of physician, able to practice in the unique environment of Northern Ontario.

Moreover, communities recognize the leadership of NOSM

and see it as a School that is conscious of cultural diversity. However, acknowledge that more work still needs to be done in terms of inclusion, particularly in the area of improved community engagement. This also applies to its numerous recent partnerships that offer the hope of seeing new ones being created in the near future.

The consultations also showed that Francophone communities would like NOSM to become a leader in research. The principal ideas raised related to increasing



Photo taken at the first graduation in May 2009.

research on Northern Ontario health determinants and challenges, specifically those faced by the Francophone and Aboriginal populations.

This brief analysis of the internal and external environments confirms the need to examine the process by which services are actively provided in French. It opens a number of paths towards developing improved Francophone community engagement. The main conclusions of the consultation can be clearly summarized in eight strategic areas of development around which the Northern Ontario School of Medicine can include in its next strategic plan.

1. Bilingual or French language communications
2. More bilingual services, activities and programs
3. A greater presence in Francophone organizations and communities
4. Increased Francophone placements
5. In general, increased available spaces and recruitment of Francophone learners
6. Develop and promote research
7. Better support for Local NOSM Groups and reenergize the Francophone Reference Group
8. Grow partnerships with Francophones

A number of suggestions were made as to initiatives that NOSM could take to implement the above points. Improve sensitivity in regard to the needs and priorities of Francophones, firstly within NOSM itself, then in

reaching out to the communities, with respect to program procedures, better communication in French with learners, partners and communities. Also considered important were improved community access to NOSM services, programs and activities. Other suggestions included a Francophone strategic communications plan, enhanced support for community groups, improved presence in communities and within NOSM partners. In addition, positioning the School for funding increases were points added to the development of a plan to recruit health professionals to teach and supervise Francophone learners.

This is now an opportunity for the School to build on the suggestions from Francophone communities in order to fulfill its social accountability mandate and broaden its inclusion of Francophones who are ready to lend a cooperative hand.





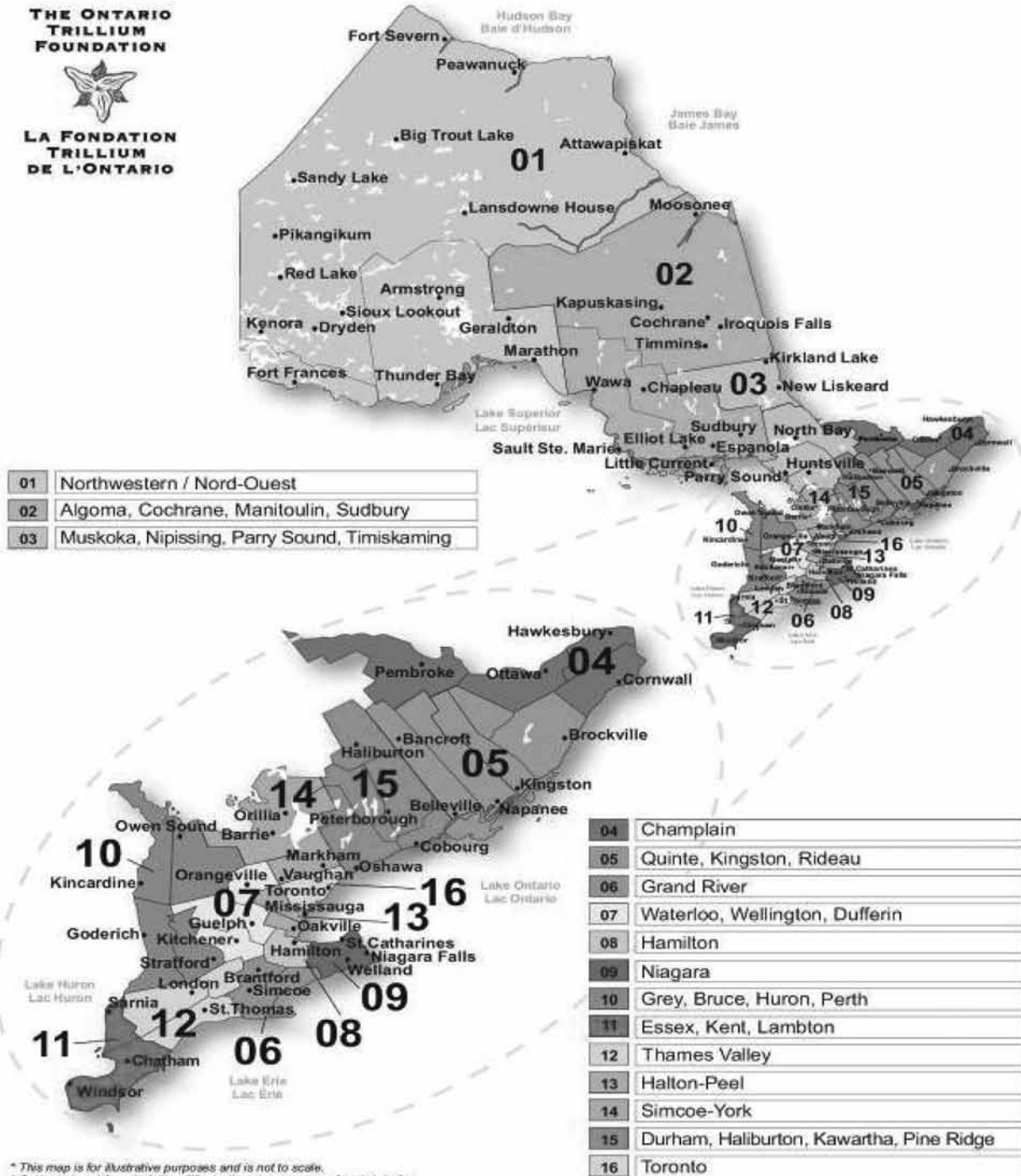
# Appendix 1

## Map of Ontario\*

THE ONTARIO  
TRILLIUM  
FOUNDATION



LA FONDATION  
TRILLIUM  
DE L'ONTARIO







## Appendix 2

### List of Organizations that Participated in Consultations and Surveys

ACFO - Témiskaming

5th Wheel Training Institute

L'Accueil francophone de Thunder Bay

ACFO du Grand Sudbury

AFNOO - Association des Francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario

L'Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins

Alliance des caisses populaires de l'Ontario limitée

Association des infirmières et infirmiers autorisés de l'Ontario

Au Château old age home

Carrefour francophone de Sudbury

Centre Culturel Louis-Hémon

Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires du Nord Ouest – Geraldton

Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires du Nord-Est

Centre de santé communautaire – Nord-Ouest

Centre de santé communautaire de Kapuskasing et région

Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury

Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury – Chelmsford

Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury Est

Centre de santé communautaire du Témiskaming

Centre de Santé communautaire Nipissing Ouest

Centre des femmes francophones du Nord-Ouest – Geraldton

Centre des Femmes Francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario

Centre Francophone – Sault Ste-Marie

Centre Victoria pour femmes

Chapleau Health Services

Chapleau Senior Citizens

City of Elliot Lake

City of Greater Sudbury

City of Timmins

Clinique d'infirmières praticiennes

Club 50- Rayside Balfour

Club d'Âge d'or de Chapleau

Club des aînés de la Rivière des français

Club des aînés l'Étoile du Nord

CNFS – Université Laurentienne

Coalition des communautés en santé de l'Ontario

Collège Boréal – Hearst

Collège Boréal – Kapuskasing

Collège Boréal – New Liskeard

Collège Boréal – Nipissing

Collège Boréal – Sudbury

Collège Boréal – Timmins

Collège Boréal Foundation

Comité de Recrutement & Rétention – Kapuskasing

Comité de Recrutement et Rétention – Hearst

Commission de formation du Nord-Est

Conseil scolaire catholique de district des Grandes rivières

Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel Ontario

Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord

Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales

Conseil scolaire public du Nord-Est de l'Ontario

Conseil scolaire public Grand Nord de l'Ontario

Desjardins – Caisse Populaire des Voyageurs

Physician – New Liskeard

Physician – North Bay

Physician – Sturgeon Falls

Physician – Thunder Bay

Physicians – Hearst

Physicians – Sudbury

Dryden Regional Health Centre

École secondaire catholique de Hearst

École secondaire catholique de La Vérendrye

École secondaire catholique Thériault

École secondaire catholique Trillium

École secondaire du Sacré-Cœur

École secondaire Franco-Cité

École secondaire Villa Française

Équipe de Santé familiale, Elliot Lake

FormationPlus

Foyer des Pionniers

Groupe des Infirmières et Infirmiers Francophones de l'Ontario

Healthcare Recruitment & Retention, Elliot Lake

Hearst University College

Hornepayne Community Hospital

Industry Canada – FedNor – Sudbury

Industry Canada – FedNor – Thunder Bay

Institut franco-ontarien

Intégration Communautaire du Nipissing Ouest

Jeanne Sauvé Family Services

La Coopérative funéraire

La Fédération des aînés et des retraités Francophones de l'Ontario

La Ronde

Lakehead University

Le coin des Mots

Le Loup 98.9. FM

Le Voyageur

Mattawa Hospital

McCausland Hospital Terrace Bay

Member, Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Members of the community – Chapleau

Members of the community – North Bay

Members of the community – Sudbury

Members of the community – Témiskaming Shores

Municipality of Rivière des Français

Municipality of West Nipissing

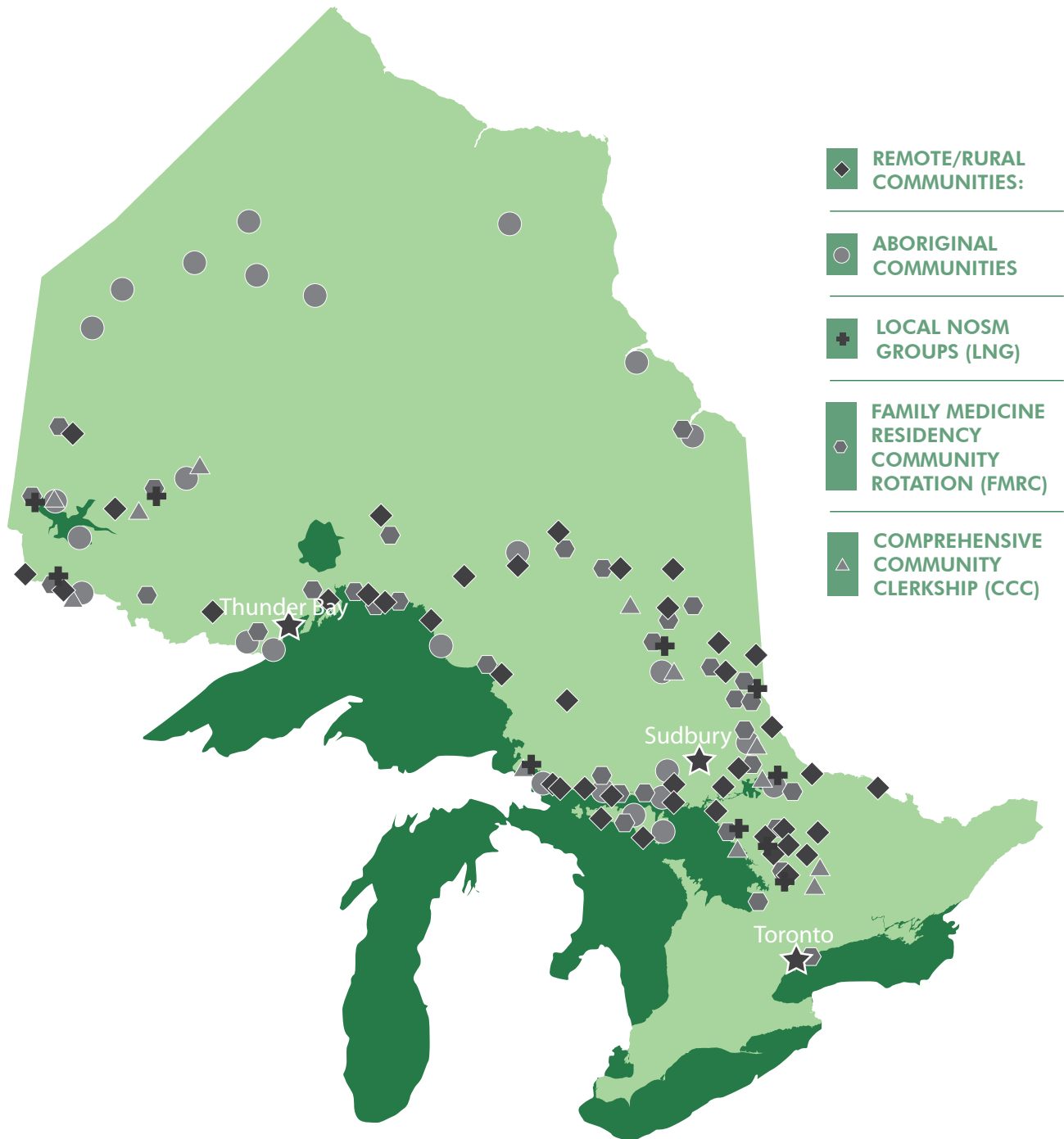
Municipality West Nipissing  
Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound  
Nipissing Local Training & Adjustment Board  
North Bay General Hospital – Services de santé en français  
Northwestern Health Unit – Kenora  
NOSM employee – Timmins  
NOSM employees – Sudbury  
NOSM employees – Thunder Bay  
NOSM Francophone Reference Group  
NOSM resident – Thunder Bay  
NOSM student – North Bay  
NOSM student – Témiskaming Shores  
NOSM learners – Sudbury  
NOSM learners – Thunder Bay  
NOSM learners – Timmins  
Notre-Dame Hospital (Hearst)  
Ontario Ministry of Education  
Radio-Canada  
RAFO Rive-Nord  
RDÉE Ontario  
Réseau de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario  
Réseau francophone de Santé du Nord de l'Ontario  
Réseau francophone de Santé du Nord de l'Ontario – Bureau Thunder Bay  
Réseau local d'intégration des services de santé du Nord Est (RLISS)

Réseau local d'intégration des services de santé du Nord-Ouest (RLISS )  
Service de santé en français  
Smooth Rock Falls Hospital  
Sudbury & District Health Unit  
Sudbury Regional Hospital  
Sudbury Regional Hospital – Services de santé en français  
The Métis Nation of Ontario  
Town of Kapuskasing  
Université Laurentienne  
Vale Inco Hospice  
West Nipissing General Hospital



# Appendix 3

## Map of Distributed Learning Sites







Northern Ontario  
School of Medicine  
École de médecine  
du Nord de l'Ontario  
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### **East Campus**

Laurentian University  
935 Ramsey Lake Rd  
Sudbury, ON P3E 2C6  
Tel: (705) 675-4883  
Fax: (705) 675-4858

### **West Campus**

Lakehead University  
955 Oliver Rd,  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1  
Tel: (807) 766-7300  
Fax: (807) 766-7370

[www.nosm.ca](http://www.nosm.ca)