



May 18, 2021

Submission to the Standing Committee on General Government Re: Bill 276, Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act, 2021

Submitted by Meghan Perrin, Francophone and Policy Lead, Alliance for Healthier Communities

The Alliance for Healthier Communities is Ontario's voice for health equity through comprehensive primary health care. The Alliance's 109 Community Health Centres, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics and Community Family Health Teams work in partnership with their partners across the health and social care continuums, including long-term care homes.

While this bill sets to amend multiple acts, this submission focuses specifically to the amendments outlined in **Schedule 9** to the ***French Language Services Act***.

The Alliance supports the proposed amendment to the ***definition of "government agency" in the French Language Services Act to permit the designation of municipal homes and joint homes as public service agencies***. We welcome this expansion of the eligibility for designation under the *French Languages Services Act* to include municipally run long-term care homes.

The ability for these organizations to be legally recognized by the Ontario Government will further support their ability and commitment to provide high-quality and deliberate French language health services to their residents. The ongoing process of designation and the ability for these homes to work with the French Language Health Service Planning Entities and proceed to designation (full or partial) ensures the sustainability of French Language long-term care services.

Furthermore, this will help improve equitable access for aging Francophones who must most often make the difficult decision of finding a LTC home that can meet linguistic and cultural needs or one that is close to home.

This is important not only because the ability to speak a second language deteriorates with age, but the ability to receive services in one's own language provides benefits to residents' overall health and wellbeing, including reduction in falls and hospitalizations, as well as in social isolation, which is a predictor for poor physical and mental health outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration.

For more information, please contact:

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