

## Opening Remarks – Ron Creary

Allow me to present myself. I am Ron Creary, Chair of the Board of Directors of CHSSN. On behalf of the Directors & employees of CHSSN, I would like to welcome you to this important conference. I believe this is the first time all of our partners have been brought together to share information & expertise and exchange on the issues pertinent to improving service delivery to members of the English-speaking population of Quebec.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome representatives of the MSSS and its network of public health & social service establishments, the *Institut national de santé publique du Quebec* (INSPQ), as well as Health Canada who has generously provided financing for this conference, the university milieu, our sister organization, Societe Santé en Francais, and our member community organizations from the 4 corners of the Province.

This conference brings together English-speaking people from all the regions of Quebec, to exchange with representatives of the various actors in the public health system, to share success stories and collaborate to meet the challenges that lie before us.

CHSSN is devoted to supporting the English-speaking community of Quebec in its quest to access services in their language.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our population live on the Island of Montreal. BUT  $\frac{1}{4}$  does not. The challenges on and off Island are far different. We realize that a one-size-fits-all approach will not work across the province. We hope that the discussions of today & tomorrow will help improve service delivery in all the regions of the Province.

We also realize that effective service delivery is a product of a two-way street. Establishments must be ready and capable of communicating and providing services to our community, but our community must also be ready to work with their local & regional establishments to establish needs and ways to meet these needs.

Our population is aging as the middle population group is disappearing in the regions, our baby-boomer professionals are retiring, family doctors are scarce, and wait lists are growing in certain areas. In spite of these issues, we have one of the best and most comprehensive health systems in North America. A little time in front of the TV, on-line or with a newspaper will show us the difficulties our neighbours to the south are having with their health system. Our system is committed to serving people in their localities without reference to their ability to pay. Over the years, we have seen that the public system is prepared to service all of their community including members of our community. CHSSN is committed to helping this process evolve and develop. We have had success in the past and we are confident we will have more success in the future.

Dialogue and collaboration are the way to better service delivery for members of our community. This conference is dedicated to just that.

Again, a special thanks to those people from the MSSS, the INSPQ and from our organization who put this conference together and to Health Canada for making it a possibility.

I would now like to introduce the first speaker of the day. Please welcome the interim PDG of the Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de la Chaudiere-Appalaches, Mme Dyane Benoit.