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# NB MLT Bridging Program

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Report on  
Marketing and  
Communication  
March 31, 2014

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Janelle Bourgeois  
NBSMLT Executive Director

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# NB MLT Bridging Program

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## Introduction

### *Background*

On November 12, 2013, the New Brunswick Society of Medical Laboratory Technologists (NBSMLT), in partnership with the *College Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick* (CCNB), launched the Medical Laboratory Technology-Bridging Program. The official launch of the program was held on December 2, 2013 in Dieppe, NB. This program will help internationally educated MLTs (IEMLTs) obtain Canadian certification and practice in New Brunswick. It is the only program of this kind offered in both official languages in Canada. This program is supported by the Atlantic Connection Steering Committee with funding from Health Canada. The program has also received financial support from the Province of New Brunswick.

This project has been in development for the past 2.5 years and is now starting the pilot phase.

### *Purpose of Report*

The purpose of this report is to clearly explain how the NBSMLT used a collaborative approach through networking to market the program and recruit IEMLTs. The process that was used was very effective, not expensive and is sustainable as long as partners are engaged and that there is a need for a bridging program. The report will also examine results generated through marketing and communication activities.

Over the course of this project, there have been many opportunities to share the initiative with interested stakeholders. Articles were written and many presentations highlighting the Bridging Program model and the NBSMLT's success to build the network of partners required in moving the project forward. Up to this point, little effort was placed in marketing or recruitment for the program. Efforts were focused on getting the word out that a bilingual bridging program for IEMLTs was coming to the Atlantic Provinces, highlighting the flexibility and accessibility of the program and explaining that it could be expanded throughout Canada through ways of partnerships with CCNB and other educational institutions. Through focus groups in 2012, marketing and recruitment strategies had been identified and a document was prepared so it could be used as a guide when the program was launched.

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Since the launch of the program, significant efforts have been placed on Marketing of the program to attract IEMLTs and recruit students in the program. So far, marketing efforts have yielded positive results. There are currently 5 IEMLTs enrolled in the program. There has been an increase number of IEMLTs contacting the NBSMLT office for more information on bridging/licensing of 300%. These results will be explained at the end of this report.

## Consultations

In 2012, the NBSMLT held seven (7) Consultation meetings with key stakeholders in New Brunswick to identify recruitment strategies for IEMLTs. Educators, employers, government organizations and settlement agencies were consulted. A list of recruitment strategies was prepared (see Appendix A). The list was separated *into two categories: recruitment strategies within Canada and recruitment strategies outside Canada*. This document is currently serving as a guide for marketing of the program.

In addition to this guide, the NBSMLT consulted with other groups from January – March, 2013 to discuss marketing/promotion activities for the program:

1. NBSMLT Public Relations Committee
2. Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)
3. Government of New Brunswick, PETL Population Growth Division
4. Nova Scotia IEMLT working group
5. Marketing Firm : Boutique Pro Web

### 1. NBSMLT Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Committee met on January 22nd, 2014. The following suggestions were made for promotion and marketing of the Bridging Program:

- Advertise the program on the CSMLS community page, forum for IEMLTs
- Send posters and brochures to settlement agencies
- Approach International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science to know if we can post a link or the bookmark on their website. Promote at the international conference. Contact Susan Atkinson for more information.
- Get in contact or partner with MLT programs in other countries, similar to the partnership with Lyon.

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The Public Relations committee is following up with the International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science to get more information on promotional opportunities for the Bridging Program.

The Public Relations committee also was approached by a New Brunswick trained Medical Laboratory Technologist currently working in France. She has volunteered to help the NBSMLT promote the program within her network in France. A work plan was drafted and sent to her in February (Refer to Appendix B). The plan listed objectives and activities to be carried out.

The Public Relations Committee has Marketing/Promotion of the Bridging Program as a standing item on their agenda and will continue to generate ideas.

## 2. Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB)

CCNB has been promoting the Bridging Program within their network. A summary of promotional activities that will attract potential students are the following:

- Prepared the Bridging Program Web Portals in French and English
- Organized and hosted the official launch on December 2, 2013
- Article on the program was published in Acadie Nouvelle on December 4, 2013
- Placed key words in search engines
- Prepared and printed promotional bookmarks
- Partnership with Saskatchewan and possibly Nova Scotia. A conference call with Saskatchewan took place in January 2014. Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Technology (SIAST) and CCNB are very interested in a partnership to allow students to complete the simulated lab training and clinical placement in their province.
- CCNB is also promoting the program through their Website and Facebook.
- This new program has been shared with CCNB international recruiters so they can promote it while abroad. Bookmarks were provided to these recruiters.
- Recruiters promoted the program on a recent recruitment mission in Belgium.
- The bilingual Bridging Program is included in the CCNB information kit for online training that is used by recruiters, sales staff, deans and campuses.

## 3. Government of New Brunswick, PETL Population Growth Division

A meeting with Population Growth Division, immigration agent was held in January. At this meeting a few ideas for promotion of the program were discussed.

- Share information with all settlement agencies in Canada. A contact at the Canadian Embassy helped disseminate the information.
- Share information with *le Réseau de développement économique (RDE)*. A contact name was provided and a request was sent out.

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- It was also mentioned that international applicants may be able to complete the simulated lab and clinical placement by a clinical placement agreement. CCNB will determine the best approach to attract IEMLTs to the program. Each situation may vary depending on the needs and opportunities.

## 4. Nova Scotia IEMLT working group

The Nova Scotia IEMLT working group agreed to help the NBSMLT in promoting the Bridging Program.

They have provided the following suggestions (excerpt from minutes of the January 13, 2014 meeting) :

- Increase visibility on websites – eg. ISIS, NS Office of Immigration, Labour & Advanced Education, Working in Canada, others?
- Publish journal articles – eg. CSMLT, CIIP, News & Views
- Use the bridging program for “re-entry” candidates as well internationally trained. (The Nursing Bridging Program does this and it assists with keeping the numbers up).
- The Nova Scotia Office of Immigration could be more proactive in recruiting Medical Lab Technologists. This is what NB has done.
- Need time for the word to get out; demand for the program will grow as this happens

The following table is a summary of action items that the Nova Scotia group has identified to help promote the program.

**Table 1.1 – Summary of action items identified by the NS IEMLT working group.**

<b>ACTION:</b>	ISIS will put information onto web, facebook, twitter
<b>ACTION:</b>	Follow up with – Atlantic Jewish Council to ensure that they are aware of the labour market need for MLTs
<b>ACTION:</b>	Chair of group to talk to the Office of Immigration – suggest that MLT be considered one of the province’s priority professions

## 5. Marketing Firm: Boutique Pro Web

A meeting was scheduled on March 19<sup>th</sup> with Marketing Firm *Boutique Pro Web* in order to discuss options on how to optimize visibility of the NBSMLT Website and Bridging Program. There is an opportunity for Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Preliminary assessment of the SEO showed weak results. The 2014-2015 marketing budget will be used to improve the NBMSLT’s SEO and attract more IEMLTs to the NBSMLT website.

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## Marketing and Communication Activities

The NBSMLT has kept track of the communication and marketing activities since the launch of the Bridging Program. The NBSMLT has received support from the CSMLS Communication Director as well as the Marketing Department at CCNB. The following table summarises the promotional activities of the Bridging Program:

**Table 2.1- Summary of promotional activities of the NB Bridging Program for IEMLTs.**

<p><b>November 12, 2013</b></p>	<p><b>Bridging Program link was sent to all of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian Alliance of Medical Lab professional Regulators</li> <li>• NBSMLT Board</li> <li>• Program Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Canadian Association of Medical Lab educators</li> <li>• CSMLS</li> <li>• CAFI</li> <li>• Atlantic Connection Project Leads</li> <li>• Mohawk College</li> <li>• NB Network of Health Regulators</li> <li>• NBSMLT Legislation Committee</li> <li>• IEMLT Working group of NS</li> <li>• Canadian Medical Association</li> <li>• BC society of Medical Laboratory Science</li> <li>• MAGMA</li> <li>• Michener Institute</li> <li>• Associate Deputy Minister Post-Secondary Education Training Labour</li> </ul>
<p><b>November 18-25, 2013</b></p>	<p>Participated at Destination Canada employment forum with CNFS and CCNB. The NBSMLT met with a total of 24 laboratory professionals. Seven of these were internationally educated MLTs. We were able to promote the Bridging Program in Belgium and France to delegates as well as immigration officers around Canada and Embassy representatives. CCNB gave a presentation to Students at the Institution de formation technique de laboratoire médical in Lyon, France on November 25th.</p> <p>1 candidate enrolled in the Bridging Program and 2 students from the Lyon program approached the NBSMLT for more information on Prior Learning Assessment.</p>
<p><b>December 2, 2013</b></p>	<p>Official Launch with 33 out of 47 people attended. Radio interview was aired Article published in Acadie Nouvelle.</p>
<p><b>December 3, 2013</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press release (French and English) and picture shared on Facebook, LinkedIn, posted to NBSMLT and CCNB website. CCNB</li> </ul>

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	<p>Facebook post published on December 2, 2014 received 937 views, with 25 likes and comments. The posting was also shared by other Facebook users.</p> <p>Press release sent to NBSMLT and CCNB stakeholders, including members of the Program Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Bulk emails was sent in the week after the official launch to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NBSMLT members</li> <li>• PEISMT members</li> <li>• MLT Network across the Country</li> <li>• NSCMLT members</li> <li>• NLCMLT members</li> </ul>
<b>January 3, 2014</b>	Meeting with Lab Manager at the Dumont (Mme. Cormier represents Vitalité on Program Advisory Group).
<b>January 6, 2014</b>	<p>Bulk email sent to IEMLT contact list (mostly international, some within Canada)</p> <p>Article sent to CSMLS to publish in National Medical Laboratory Science Journal (in both languages)</p>
<b>January 6, 2014</b>	Forums for IEMLTs and Mentorship program were created. The forum allows IEMLTs to discuss among themselves and also mentors/mentees to exchange on the NBSMLT Website.
<b>January 13, 2014</b>	IEMLT Working Group in NS added <i>Promotion of NB Bridging Program</i> as an action item for the meeting.
<b>Feb 2- 7, 2014</b>	<p>Press Release to Canadian Embassy</p> <p><i>Reseau Development Economique (CDE)</i> was contacted and asked to disseminate information.</p> <p>Followed up with various organizations to ask if they would consider placing the link of the MLT Bridging program on their website.</p>
<b>February 24, 2014</b>	<p>Conference call with CCNB, Employers and government of New Brunswick to discuss the student exchange with Lyon, France.</p> <p>3 students from Lyon will be completing a clinical placement of 4 weeks in New Brunswick. Hopefully, students who are interested in Canadian certification will be recruited.</p>
<b>Feb 27, 2014</b>	<p>Presentation at the Maintaining the Connections in Dartmouth NS</p> <p>Follow up with RDE</p> <p>Reseau d'immigration francophone added link to Website.</p>
March 20, 2014	Publication in Acadie Nouvelle (local French newspaper) on MLT shortage and Bridging Program.

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The NBSMLT is also involved on various committees of the Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour, which provides a forum to highlight the New Brunswick Bridging Program. A letter was sent to the Minister to provide an update on initiatives lead by the NBSMLT to address foreign qualification recognition of IEMLTs. The Minister congratulated the NBSMLT on their initiatives to add the foreign qualification gaps of IEMLTs.

The CSMLS provides promotional bookmarks with the technical report of the Prior Learning Assessment. This helps promote the program directly to the targeted market.

## Marketing Tools and Materials

The following Marketing Tools or Materials were developed:

- Information bookmarks (in both French and English)
- CCNB Bridging Program Web Portal (in French and English)
- Button on NBSMLT home page for easy access to the program site.
- Drop down menus on the NBSMLT Website for step by step instruction for IEMLTs
- Content for CCNB one pagers (in French and English)
- Survey for requesting feedback on clarity of NBSMLT Website developed and sent to IEMLTs

## Results and Future activities

### *Results*

Below is a table summarizing tangible results from the marketing/communication activities of the Bridging Program.

Indicator	Result
# participants at the official launch	33 participants attended the official launch of the program out of 47 invitations sent.  <b>This is a 70% participation rate.</b>
# of IEMLTs contacting the NBSMLT office.	From November 12, 2013- March 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2014 there has been 23 IEMLTs from within Canada or outside of Canada who have contacted the NBSMLT for information on Bridging or Licensure. From November 12, 2012- March 31, 2013, there was 6 IEMLTs who had contacted the NBSMLT for this information.

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	<p><b>Conclusion: Since the launch of the Bridging Program, there has been a 3.8 fold increase of IEMLTs contacting the NBSMLT office.</b></p>
# of Students recruited to the Bridging Program	<p>There are currently 5 students enrolled in the program. One student in the French program and 4 students in the English program.</p> <p><b>Total recruitment: 5 students</b></p>
# of students from Lyon program that came for clinical placement.	<p>2013: 4 students came for clinical placement. 2014: 3 students are coming for clinical placement.</p> <p><b>Total of 7 students from the MLT program in Lyon will have completed a clinical placement in New Brunswick.</b></p>
# Websites that added the Bridging Program link.	<p>The link is currently on 13 websites throughout Canada. Five of these websites are Provincial Regulators for Medical Laboratory Technologists and 1 Association. Two settlement agencies in the Atlantic Provinces have added the link. The number is anticipated to increase as there are follow ups.</p> <p><b>Link is on 13 websites.</b></p>
# publications in Media or Journals	<p>1 radio interview, 2 publications in Acadie Nouvelle and 1 article published in the Canadian Society of Medical Laboratory Technology (CSMLS) professional journal.</p> <p><b>Three publication and one radio interview.</b></p>
# Mentor Mentee Matches	<p>Seven (7) matches as of Jan 28/14, there was one (1) rematch feb24/14</p>

### *Future plans*

The NBSMLT and CCNB intend to keep marketing and promoting the program through their networks.

The following are among the plans to attract IEMLTs to Canada and increase enrollment to the program:

- Submit a proposal to the provincial government for funding support to explore more partnerships with other schools internationally (Spain, Portugal, Suisse, Strasbourg, Montpellier, Belgium).
- Determine if Lyon program is interested in International Canadian Medical Association (CMA) international accreditation. The CMA is extremely interested.
- Work with International Recruiters of CCNB and NBCC to establish first contact with international MLT School.
- Increase visibility of NBSMLT website.
- Work with CCNB to make Bridging Program link more visible on google and make it easier to navigate between the French and English Program.

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## Conclusion

So far, there are five (5) students registered in the program (1 Francophone and 4 Anglophones). There has also been an increase of interest of close to 400% from IEMLTs across Canada and internationally to come to New Brunswick to enroll in the program and/or consider working in New Brunswick. Partnerships with other educational institutions will be explored. Such partnerships will attract IEMLTs to the program and help other provinces with integration and retention of IEMLTs to meet their own employment needs. Very little funds were involved in marketing and promotion of the program and the results have been very positive so far. Partners and key stakeholders have helped the NBSMLT with its “targeted marketing strategy”. The CSMLS provides the NB Bridging Program information to prior learning assessment clients. This model that is the one that is most flexible while offering clinical placements and the only program offered in French, which could be among the reasons why the program is attracting many IEMLTs to New Brunswick.

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#### Recruitment Strategies for IEMLTs

During the months of August and September, 2012, seven (7) consultation meetings were held with key stakeholders in New Brunswick were held to provide an update on the Bridging Program and specifically discuss recruitment strategies for IEMLTs.

The following list will serve as a guide to recruit IEMLTs for the NB Bridging Program:

<b>Recruitment within Canada</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Settlement agencies: especially employment counselors that are PETL employees working at settlement agencies.</li><li>• Business network - Moncton</li><li>• Presentation at the NBMC annual meeting in November (to inform Atlantic Settlement Agencies).</li><li>• Presentation at the UMCE congress in March 2013 (also to inform Atlantic Settlement Agencies)</li><li>• Horizon Health Diversity Committee</li><li>• Employer recruiters from Réseau de santé Vitalité and Horizon Health will promote the program at career fairs.</li><li>• CNFS will promote the program at career fairs and other events.</li><li>• CNFS will direct IEMLTs to the NBSMLT.</li><li>• NBSMLT will work with Employers (HR) to ensure IEMLT requests be forwarded to the NBSMLT or CSMLS for PLA information.</li><li>• Provincial MLT regulatory body websites</li><li>• CSMLS Website</li></ul>
<b>Recruitment outside Canada</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Target recruitment<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ NBSMLT has to identify countries that offer MLT program similar to Canadian programs. Population Growth can target these countries. Ex: IFTM (Lyon, France) is a good</li></ul></li></ul>

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	<p>starting point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Other countries to explore:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Germany</li><li>▪ Belgium</li><li>▪ Suisse</li><li>▪ Portugal (En)</li><li>▪ Mexico</li><li>▪ USA</li></ul></li><li>● Attend international events such as Destination Canada</li><li>● CIIP</li><li>● Population Growth Website portal</li><li>● IQN</li><li>● ICAR</li><li>● Embassies</li><li>● Hospital Human Resource Departments</li><li>● International associations</li></ul>
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### Plan de Travail pour Promotion internationale du Programme de Transition (TLMT)

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#### Mise en situation

L'Association des technologistes de laboratoire médical du Nouveau-Brunswick (ATLMNB) en collaboration avec le Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB) a lancé en décembre 2013 un programme qui permettra aux Technologistes de laboratoire médical, formé à l'étranger, d'obtenir la certification canadienne pour travailler au Nouveau-Brunswick. Il s'agit du seul programme du genre, offert dans les deux langues officielles, au Canada.

Le programme de transition d'une durée maximale de 32 semaines se veut un modèle durable qui sera accessible partout au Canada. Il comprend des cours théoriques, offerts en ligne, des cours techniques et des cours de compétences générales nécessaires à l'intégration dans le système de santé canadien. Le TLMT comporte également un programme de mentorat qui facilitera davantage cette intégration. Quant à sa portion pratique, elle est offerte et évaluée en laboratoire médical simulé, ainsi qu'au moyen de stages en milieu hospitalier.

Le besoin d'un tel programme a été soulevé par l'ATLMNB, qui estime une forte pénurie de main-d'œuvre dans ce domaine, puisque la moitié des technologistes de laboratoire médical (TLM) au Nouveau-Brunswick seront admissibles à la retraite au cours des dix prochaines années. Le programme de transition a été développé afin de répondre à cette pénurie prévue puisque 90% des technologistes formées à l'étranger doivent satisfaire aux normes canadiennes.

Visitez le site de l'ATLMNB pour plus d'informations : <http://www.nbsmlt.nb.ca/intl-mlts.asp>

Voici le lien direct au programme :

<http://www.coursenligne.net/index.cfm?Obj=programs&id=101>

Le comité de Relations publiques de l'ATLMNB propose un plan de promotion. La présidente du Comité est disponible pour de l'aide par courriel : [Danielle.McLennan@vitalitenb.ca](mailto:Danielle.McLennan@vitalitenb.ca)

Les succès et le bon fonctionnement de l'ALTMNB sont fort dépendants des **bénévoles** comme vous qui aident à augmenter la visibilité de notre profession. Dans ce cas, votre aide contribue à un effort international au réseautage. Les TLM ont tous des caractéristiques semblables, peu importe leur pays d'origine. Nous avons tous à gagner si nous ouvrons les canaux de communication.

#### Objectif

Attirer des TLM formés à l'étranger (ou ailleurs en Europe) vers le programme de transition. Nous avons des objectifs spécifiques qui contribueront à la promotion du programme.

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## Sous objectifs :

1. Créer une liste (nom et information) d'institutions de formation en France qui offrent le programme de TLM et dans au moins 2 autres pays en Europe.
2. Liste d'associations nationales (genre SCSLM) dans les pays de l'Europe. (d'autres idées)
3. Se créer un réseau TLM en France et discuter des opportunités au Canada.
4. Identifier des conférences (genre LABCON) en Europe, surtout en France.

Voici un tableau des activités proposées et les résultats attendus.

1. Créer une liste (nom et information) d'institutions de formation en France qui offrent le programme de TLM et dans au moins 2 autres pays en Europe.		
Activité	Résultats attendus	Date limite (si possible)
I. Recherche d'institutions de formation en France qui offre un programme TLM semblable au programme canadien.	Une liste de programmes TLM en France avec lien au site Web et/ou personne contact.	Avant le 31 mars 2014.
II. Recherche d'institution de formation dans d'autres pays en Europe qui offre un programme TLM semblable au programme canadien (Belgique, Suisse, Allemagne, autre).	Une liste de programmes TLM ailleurs en Europe avec lien au site Web et/ou personne contact.	

2. Liste d'associations nationales (genre SCSLM) dans les pays de l'Europe.		
Activité	Résultats attendus	Date limite (si possible)
I. Recherche d'associations semblables à l'ATLMNB ou la SCSLM.	Lien des sites Web ou personnes avec qui communiquer.	30 juin 2014

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### 3. Créer un réseau TLM en France et discuter des opportunités au Canada.

Activité	Résultats attendus	Date limite (si possible)
<p>II. Discuter avec les TLM en France et bâtir un réseau pour la promotion du programme de transition (à travers LinkedIn ou autre)</p>	<p>Établir un groupe de TLM en France qui connaît les initiatives de l'ATLMNB et qui s'intéresse à émigrer vers le Canada.</p>	<p>Septembre 2014.</p>
<p>III. Distribuer les signets et partager le site Web de l'ATLMNB et du CCNB pour le programme.</p>		

### 1. Identifier des conférences (genre LABCON) en Europe, surtout en France.

Activité	Résultats attendus	Date limite (si possible)
<p>I. Identifier des conférences (semblables aux conférences TLM au Canada et au Nouveau-Brunswick).</p>	<p>Envoyer l'information pour l'inscription aux conférences qui portent sur le laboratoire médical (en France et/ou en Europe).</p>	<p>Envoyer l'info à Danielle McLennan au fur et à mesure.</p>