

## BC Poverty Reduction Small Group Discussion Report

### Introduction:

Date	March 16, 2018
Community	Kensington – Cedar Cottage
# of Participants	15
# of Organizations	1

### About the Participants:

Participants were seniors (over the age of 60), who are monolingual speaking only Cantonese or Mandarin. As stated in our application, this group in Kensington-Cedar Cottage area face higher levels of poverty and they are the highest population group represented in the local Greater Vancouver Food Bank Community Hub. Data also indicates that this is the highest number of seniors across the lower mainland compared to all other Greater Vancouver Food Bank sites.

### About the Findings:

Tell us about the types of insights and feedback received to the following questions:

1. What are the issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?
2. What would address these issues and help you or others out of poverty?

**Issues:** [Provide the results of your discussion of the issues – it should be transcribed from your flip chart notes]

- The housing rental fee is too expensive; they have to cut down the budget of socializing and buying healthy food. They do not have reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.
- The language barrier is a big challenge for them to access the service,

such as family doctor, better at home services and other kinds of supportive programs. It is not easy for them to access the language specific service especially for specialists and they cannot afford the fee of translation service. Some of them, they go back to their home country to seek for specialist service.

- The Old Age Security is not enough to maintain their daily living expenses.
- They need to give up the dental or optical regular check up, cause they does not have enough money to do so. Some of the seniors, they go back to their home country to seek for dental service, they believe that the fee is much more cheaper than Vancouver, but as the same time, it may arouse another issues such as dentures not fitting for them; they do not notice that cataracts may effect their daily life.
- “Property rich but cash poor”, some of them their home mortgage-free, but their annual income is low, they still wrestle with paying their bills and are increasingly racking up consumer debt.

## Possible Solutions

[Provide the results of your discussion of possible solutions– it should be transcribed from your flip chart notes]

- Cover dental, optical care, and prescription drug coverage.
- Make sure people on welfare and disability assistance receives enough to make ends meet.
- Expand home support and residential care services
- To encourage or assist the senior employment
- Commit to building at least 10,000 affordable homes per year.
- Invest in a diverse range of affordable housing options, including for renters.
- Enhance home and community care to help more seniors stay healthy and independent in their homes even if they can't pay for these services privately.
- Improve retirement security by further enhancing the CPP and increasing old-age in-come supports for low-income seniors.

- Significantly increase welfare and disability rates to the market basket measure, and index them to the cost of living.
- Enhance the outreach service for helping the seniors to navigate existing social service and how to apply it.

### Solutions and Actions That Can Make a Difference

(a) Looking at the list of issues and solutions generated, what types of solutions did the individuals who participated in your meeting identify as most important to them? [Each participant should receive four (4) sticky dots to put on the solutions that from their perspective are most important]. Your summary report should include any of the solutions that received a dot from those that received the most dots to those receiving only one dot.

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- Commit to building at least 10,000 affordable homes per year.
- Enhance the outreach service for helping the seniors to navigate existing social service and how to apply it.
- To encourage or assist the senior employment

(b) What emerged as the top 3 solutions or ideas based on the conversations and the individual priority setting?

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- Significantly increase welfare and disability rates to the market basket measure, and index them to the cost of living.
- Commit to building at least 10,000 affordable homes per year.