

BC Poverty Reduction Strategy Report

Date	March 15 th 2018
Community	Steeves Manor
# of Participants	9
# of Organizations	1

About the Participants:

The discussion was for Steeves manor residents only as Kitsilano Neighbourhood house has a Resource Centre in this building. The Resource centre provides programs for the residents and we took the opportunity to invite them to a small group discussion about poverty. Steeves manor is a BC Housing complex providing affordable accommodation to seniors and older adults living on disability assistance. Many of the residents are or have been experiencing poverty and some have also experienced homelessness.

About the Findings:

During the discussion the lack of money was a reoccurring theme. When discussing the lack of money it all narrowed down to the feeling of security when having money and the insecurity when not having it. Health was also a reoccurring topic, the lack of affordable and accessible health care were big issues.

What's important to mention is, when doing the priority settings many of the participants objected that three sticky dots was too little, they meant that there's more than three things that is of importance for a poverty reduction strategy. To notice this we decided to hand out five sticky dots instead of three to get a better picture of what was the most important solutions.

Issues:

- Lack of money
- Lack of security
- Lack of activities and social engagement
- Issues with people stealing because they lack basic items for living
- People cannot live relaxed in their own environments
- Not able to socialize and feel safe and secure, cannot always go to specific social engagements due to medical appointments
- Cannot just go get a coffee whenever they feel like it
- We need to focus efforts to bring Canadians out of poverty rather than spending on new comers to Canada
- Children living in poverty
- Single parents
- Lack of social programs downtown Vancouver
- Lack of sustainable food programs
- Free money is an issue (Welfare). You cannot just give people money without giving them knowledge of how to budget and work. Handing out money doesn't cover it
- Immigration policies that spend more on newcomers to the country rather than those who already live in poverty in Canada
- Government policies that segregate the provinces. There needs to be a federal plan that addresses poverty in the whole country.
- Lack of affordable food
- Lack of affordable and accessible wheelchairs
- Substance use
- Lack of accessible technology (cannot afford a cell phone)
- Not enough funding for those people who are on disability. If someone qualifies for disability they should not be expected to work. The monetary allotment that someone on PWD can earn should just be given to them
- The public perception that some people are better than others. No one is better than anyone else. All people face difficult circumstances from place to place.
- Current programs and people are not filling the need

- Handouts do not work
- People need to work and learn if they are able
- Automation is taking jobs from individuals who could benefit from the work
- Lack of money management (this needs to be taught)
- People need to mend and heal from within
- Stigmatization in the neighbourhood that they currently live in
- Cannot access affordable eyes glasses due to no business in Kitsilano offering a government payment plan
- Facing prejudice once a store owner learns that they are on government assistance

Possible Solutions:

- Community building
- Family
- Faith/Spirituality
- Free and accessible transit
- Budgeting information included on ministry cheques
- More info and resources
- Better health and dental coverage for people on governmental assistance
- Extra funding for glasses
- Autonomy to make personal financial decisions
- Support youth out of poverty
- Better communication between the government and citizens
- Increase assistance payments for people on long term disability
- Cheaper services
- Individual (case by case) health and prescription assessments/fundings
- Governmental accountability
- Better access to adequate health services and resources
- Social service workers who are knowledgeable and care
- Pay better attention to those in need
- Prioritize government budgets for people on PWD and OAS
- Consider people's pets and provide increased funding for those who own one

- More funding
- All funding disbursement should be on the same day (income assistance, OAS, CPP, disability etc.)
- All utilities included in rent – provide a phone
- Tiered disability payment system (depending on severity and longevity of illness-disability)
- Access to resources
- Money for families
- Get people off welfare (provide them with supports and learning programs)
- More gardens and teaching about gardening

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?
- Increase assistance payment for people on long term disability
 - Free and accessible transit
 - Governmental accountability
 - Budgeting information included on ministry checks
 - Better health and dental coverage for people on governmental assistance
 - Extra funding for glasses
 - Autonomy to make personal financial decisions
 - Tiered disability payment system
 - Community building
 - Family
 - Faith/Spirituality
 - Social service workers who are knowledgeable and care
 - Pay better attention to those in need
 - Prioritize government budgets for people on PWD and OAS
 - Consider people's pets and provide increased funding for those who own one
 - Get people off welfare (provide them with supports and learning programs)
 - More gardens and teaching about gardening

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

1. Increase assistance payment for people on long term disability
2. Free and accessible transit
3. Governmental accountability

BC Poverty Reduction Strategy Report

Date	March 22 nd 2018
Community	Kitsilano
# of Participants	8
# of Organizations	1

About the Participants:

There were 8 participants present. The participants were older adults and seniors between the ages of 64-80 who lived either in Kitsilano or on Vancouver's Westside. The individuals identified themselves as either living in poverty or being at risk of living in poverty.

About the Findings:

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?

Housing was a reoccurring theme during the discussion, primarily a lack of affordable housing for seniors. The participants agreed that secure housing would make them feel safer. Another reoccurring theme was health care, primarily the lack of post treatment care and the need for it to be of better quality and more accessible for seniors. The participants also discussed the need for centralized services or a phone line dedicated to providing seniors resources.

Issues:

- Low ceiling for SAFER
- Lack of affordable housing
- Renovictions
- Complicated BC housing application process, i.e. private, non profit
- Lack of quality care
- Foreign property ownership
- Minimal housing options

- Means tested, lots of paperwork OAS, CPP GIS
- Fast moving technology
- Requirement for internet, smartphone etc.
- Many times being referred to website which can be difficult to access for seniors
- Automated services
- More difficult for seniors to access social media
- Assumption to rely on technology
- Income challenges
- High cost, lack of finances
- Extended health care not available i.e. physiotherapy, massage, dental, eye care, mental health, hearing
- Prescription medicine costs
- Advocacy/Representation on a provincial platform
- Lack of recreation
- Transportation barriers
- Mobility, handicap barriers
- Monopoly in seniors services
- Lack of options, i.e. transportation, Translink etc.
- Expensive insurance
- Lack of free activities
- Homelessness

Possible Solutions:

- Adjust Shelter Aid for elderly residents
- Seniors only rental housing
- Bureaucracy is a barrier
- Less automated services and more human services
- A minister for seniors
- Match seniors with for example students to help each other.
- Be selective on distributing money
- Guaranty of affordable housing for seniors
- Guaranty of housing for people on low income
- A percentage of new built housing allocated for low income/seniors by law

- Preloaded card for seniors to pay taxi, HandyDart, ambulance
- More in-home care with better quality
- Electrical bikes/scooters for seniors
- Better post treatment care and transportation
- Make it easier for seniors to get help
- Teach seniors about nutritional diet
- Easy access to information regarding entitlement to services at home
- Easy centralized access to information and referral provided
- Government be agreeable on helping seniors
- Government should provide education for younger generations on cost of retirement and budgeting
- Campaign on ongoing basis “value of seniors”

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?

- Guaranty of affordable housing for seniors
- A minister for seniors
- Match seniors with for example students to help each other
- Government should provide education for younger generations on cost of retirement and budgeting
- A percentage of new built housing allocated for low income/seniors by law
- More in-home care with better quality
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- Campaign on ongoing basis “value of seniors”

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

1. Guaranty of affordable housing for seniors

2. A minister for seniors
3. a) Match seniors with for example students to help each other
3. b) Government should provide education for younger generations on cost of retirement and budgeting