

## COMMUNITY REPORT ON POVERTY REDUCTION

Date meeting held: March 22, 2018  
Community: Quesnel & surrounding area  
# of Participants: 10 + moderator (Susan MacNeill )  
# of Organizations: 5

The participants / organizations came from our services sector, representing indigenous, homeless and mental health groups. We had a very small group due to this being the 3<sup>rd</sup> similar meeting held in Quesnel & not much time to do it.

### Insights & Findings:

1. Issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?
  - Lack of support for mental health & developmental disabilities
  - Lack of nutritious food for children & seniors
  - Having to be registered at the Salvation Army / government agencies in order to access food
  - Affordable decent housing; without druggies
  - Gaps in services
  - Lack of access to available information pertaining to me
  - Disabilities can be disabling and I can't get out to get food into house
  - Lack of funding for developmental disabilities and mental health people
  - Child care for shift workers
  - Pets in homes / rental / therapeutic to have a pet
  - Eating healthy foods costs too much
  - Youth central housing
  - Lack of Central Agency with all the information to the public
2. What would address these issues and help you out of poverty?
  - New Psychiatrist is arriving
  - Starfish backpacking Program is in the planning stages which will provide food for a weekend: 2 breakfasts, 2 suppers (Rotary is doing this)
  - Seniors are accessing food banks, social services; as are 2 working parent families
  - Local bus passes are available to those in need via the City. Discounts at the Recreation Centre for activities
  - Re think mutual shared space for services, so folks don't feel threatened when going to seek help'
  - Decrease gender wage gap
  - Information portal or directory for everyone to access – stop duplicating services if we all knew what was available and by whom
  - Housing – needs to be affordable, need a wrap around style of training and not necessarily rehab
  - Paid staff person to coordinate information highway

### Solutions that make a difference:

- I. Information needs to be collected, collated and disseminated for all to access; identifying all needs/paid staff
- II. Youth Housing – 2 phase programs
- III. Increase funding for all mental health, developmental and senior people
- IV. Affordable, risk free environments for seniors to live in with their pets

### The top 3 Priorities in our Community –

- I. Starfish Backpack Program available all year round
- II. Paid staff person to collect info of services and be an advocate for those seeking assistance – one stop
- III. Change the language around “not in my backyard”

### Report Submitted:

Susan MacNeill – Seniors Advocacy Service

