



Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction

**Victoria, BC
November 27, 2017**

Introduction and Event Summary

On November 27, 2017, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Victoria, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together over 140 participants including people with lived experience of poverty; poverty reduction front line workers and advocates; people from the non-profit and business sectors; and other community members from all walks of life.

The event began with a welcome from the local First Nation, followed by opening remarks from Shane Simpson (Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction), Mabel Elmore (Parliamentary Secretary for Poverty Reduction) and the four (4) members of the Minister's Advisory Forum on Poverty Reduction who are based in Victoria, BC.

Participants then engaged in round table discussions in groups of 6 to 8 people per table. Each table had a dedicated facilitator from a local community group or from SPARC BC who gently guided the conversations. Each table also had a dedicated note taker who recorded the participants' contributions on flip charts for all participants to see.

There were two rounds of discussions, guided by the following discussion questions:

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

Following the discussions, participants were invited to identify the four solutions from question 2 that are most important to them with a sticky dot. There was then a short report back round during which a participant from each table shared a few insights from their table with the rest of the room. The Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction shared some concluding reflections to end the evening.

Document Organization

This document contains the transcriptions of the flip chart notes for the November 27 event. The flip chart notes have been transcribed verbatim, correcting for spelling and grammar as needed, in order to preserve the original intent of each comment.

The transcript is organized as follows:

- Question 1 feedback has been transcribed word for word into one list; and,
- The feedback from Question 2 has been transcribed word for word and has also been categorized into two broad groupings to facilitate future analysis and reporting work:
 - o Policy Related Comments; and,
 - o Program and Service Related Comments.

Sticky dot votes have been noted in brackets next to the solutions in Question 2, where applicable.

Question 1: What are the issues facing you and people in poverty right now?

- Lack of storage space leads to things stolen
- “Shelter shuffle”
 - o Push from shelter to shelter
 - o Only a few weeks, you’d have to leave and lose your stuff
- No real storage at Our Place
- Due to one thing now not housed for four years
- People who have “more priority” over you will take places
- Trying to get ID is so difficult
 - o If you’re born outside of Canada no one will give you a copy of ID
 - o You need \$35 to order it
- Stealing items in shelters
 - o Excuses for people and lists
 - o 8am – your things and yourself is out
 - o No charges to person stolen
- Hard to have a happy mood when living in poverty
- Mental health took a toll on my housing (racial and judging people)
- Mental health system is lacking (hospital thinks you just want a bed)
- Cops have done great in communities (very supportive for mental health)
 - o Not just police (guy from gas station)
- Nutrition (low fiber) hard to keep
- Not enough to go to school while on assistance
- No housing
- Low income as a child and low income as an adult
- Not enough money while on assistance
 - o Needed things that you need for a home
- Don’t need training to be a cook in a restaurant
- No parents or guidance for young people
- Nowhere to go during the day
- Storage is temporary
- No basic set of rules set up by the city for shelters (no guidelines or policies)
 - o Timeline to check in and out
 - o Expectations of person living in a shelter
 - o “You stay in shelter, you don’t live in the shelter” is made clear to you
 - o Equal across the board for all people
- Staff can access all of your records (e.g., criminal) when you’re in the shelter (e.g., privacy)
 - o Had to sign a release of info
 - o “Not a person” just a stat
- Constant referrals to other services
- We don’t have access to our own info but everyone else has access to it
 - o E.g., welfare office has ID

- Lack of foundation and reliability of services and support
- Access to information
 - o You won't know about housing until someone (staff) tell you how
 - o Put it in the paper and let people know; instead of creating favouritism (e.g., staff will tell certain people)
- No access to computer
- Low accessibility to storage
- One on one is part of problem
- Why do I have to go through third party to get info? Access to service/housing – more open access to information
- Housing hosts exist
 - o Referrals to other services
- Tearing down good houses for high end – lack of affordable housing
- Minimum wage level doesn't reflect cost of living (e.g., Victoria)
- Access to food (can't afford food) but have money
- Forced to accept housing way out in the community
 - o Need to be close to social networks
 - o Can't rely on transportation near some social housing
 - o Rural areas, transportation isn't as good, access to other services, a logistical nightmare
- Need literacy support
- Not being able to actually afford housing
- Level of minimum wage
 - o Should earn 100% of earned income (not deducted/"clawbacks")
 - o Disincentive to work
 - o Give a chance to get on your feet (e.g., a month to get ahead)
- Looking at cost after shelter etc.
- Look for work
 - o Absurd to make people look for work
- Food security
 - o To get quality and enough food
 - o Set amount of food (e.g., based on what a family needs)
 - o Stigma of going to food banks, humiliating and shameful, logistical problem
 - o Food banks are often tied to religious community
- Regulate and oversee second hand shops and the money they have, to make sure they help low income/poor
 - o People donate money
 - o They make too much money
- Mental health has a stigma, people are kicked out of places
- Access to real time treatment
 - o Not just 30 day treatment
 - o Or detox for just a week
 - o Costs a lot of money to attend

- You lose your place if you go to a treatment centre
 - Pre-planning before going to treatment centres (e.g., knowing where to live)
- Lack of caring or understanding
- Shelters – nowhere to go during the day
- Go to know a few good bus drivers to let you sleep
- Cycle of poverty – seeing the same faces a decade later
- Poverty is more than wages, there's emotional, etc.
- No single definition of poverty – what are the components of poverty? What does it look like to solve poverty in BC? What would life be like without poverty?
 - Safe and affordable housing
 - Income
 - Entertainment
 - To go for a cup of coffee with a friend
- It's a vicious cycle
- Poverty is forced segregation
- How do you keep your mental health when you're homeless?
- Takes two people to work full time for the very basic necessity – no entertainment, etc.
- Isolation – and mental health that comes with this
- Working poor does not have access to medical/dental benefits, eye care as well
- Long wait list for dental
- Limited place for washer/dryer
 - Clothing issues
 - Dumping clothing to homeless people – in turn dump in the trash
- Basically being human, where do you socialize, watch TV, having coffee, etc.?
- Not reality, watching a twisted idea of reality
- Rotating of child/grandchild returning home (because of cost of living)
- When you're poor, you get a kick in the ass every day – “you can't have that,” “you can't get that” – other kids don't have to do that or ask for that
- Poverty is becoming intergenerational
- A room at Fairfield hotel is \$560
- Pay full income on rent, therefore need to depend on food bank, finding food is difficult so you have to be mobile and may take a full day to walk from place to place for food
- Some people have pets and there's restriction on pets and pets is the person's only friend; there was a person who committed suicide because her pet was taken away
- Found housing but Ministry can't provide money for another two weeks, 2 weeks to get deposit (if lucky)
- Woman living in a car with her 14 year old, is afraid of losing her kid
- More conditions attached to being a parent in poverty
- Hydro disconnection led to mother losing her child to foster care
- Very difficult to resolve problems with Hydro because they don't want to talk to you
- Nowhere to go/to rent and the cost is huge
- Fragility, uncertainty, day-to-day existence, no way to get ahead

- People are victimized by others in poverty and not in poverty
- Service is moving away from the client
- It seems “it’s them vs. us”
- Feel like staff have a lot of power over clients
- “Kick you when you’re down”
- False expectation society have
 - o That we have lots of money to spend
 - o Consumers society
- Stigma of poverty and being judged
- Miserable wet winter to be outside
- Poverty can be hidden or sometimes visible
- Really hard to survive
- Just trying to make it day to day – working full time and raising grandchildren
- Living in poverty is a full time job
- Living with uncertainty
- About time we do something about poverty
- Uncertainty and juggling
- Don’t know about other class dealing with this
- Hard to save money
- Lack of supports for foster children (difference between AB and BC)
- Age out at 19 from foster care, should be 25
- No home – child taken away, ministry watching, living in fear, mother not able to be with baby
- Laundry, clothing needed
- Illegal to be homeless in Calgary
- Why have poor people downtown?
- Can’t share entertainment
- No resources in BC
- Min wage too low, needs to be higher
- Hard to be roommates on welfare – lose money on cheque, deduct money for rent
- Landlords won’t rent to people on disability
- Stuck in areas close to bathroom
- Stuck with drug addicts, bathroom being used for drugs
- Welfare, EI, disability gone down and housing gone up
- Can’t eat well or own a car – rotten food
- Anxiety – affects health
- Hard to move around – rules in each province are different for welfare
- Weather – too cold to live outdoors
- Hard to see people sleep on the street
- Need low cost training programs
- Need housing
- Need access to social work help
- Teach more than math – i.e. anger management

- Transportation – need bus tickets, find a job and doctor, timing of giving out (welfare) and run out – frustrating
- Longer in poverty, harder to get out
- Makes everyone look bad
- Capitalism – wealth and power at the top
- Stigma of low income, feeling of being looked down on, impacts spirit
- “own fault” – blaming of being in poverty, that’s the way it’s perceived
- Hard to help people in poverty
- Have to pay your own way
- Can’t have any stuff – lack of safe storage
- Drug addicts making it tough for everyone else
- Food/clothes – hard to get
- No privacy, have to watch your stuff
- Dental not affordable, hard to get
- No teeth, hard to get a job
- Cost of health care
 - o Hospitals don’t provide good treatment
 - o Long waits, not responsive
 - o History of drugs – no respect, look down on you
 - o Force you to stay, mental health act – 72 hours or arrest
 - o Homeless, won’t release you, give you antipsychotic medications
- No real lawyers
- Mental Health Act
 - o Medications
 - o Phone numbers lead you nowhere
- Health coverage
- Housing – across Canada is an issue
- Arrested for being homeless, no reading rights
 - o Illegal over 72 hours
 - o Release to nothing, no home
- No preventative strategies
- Need counsellors – great asset but the first to be cut
- Have to leave shelters at 7am or 6am with nowhere to go
 - o Between 8 or 9am would be better
 - o Need legislation to standardize
- Hard to get good hygiene products
- Social assistance – frustrating processes to get follow up
 - o Access to compassion
 - o Seems like policy to say No first
- Variety of housing – not warehousing
 - o Exhaustion, hopelessness, overwhelm
 - o Ghettoization

- Poverty affects mental, physical, spiritual and emotional health and wellbeing
- Security to keep housing for renters
- Not enough money – need coverage for the basics of life
 - o Equality for income support – everyone at the same level
- Lack of nutritious food – food costs are rising – leads to lack of energy
- Housing – home purchases for low income
- Variety not just social assistance – lack of family housing
- Cost of rent
- Childcare – access to extracurriculars for low income kids
- Cost of living – income doesn't keep up
- Access to services
 - o Restrictions by policy
 - o Undue bureaucracy, so many systems and levels – who does what?
 - o Service fragmentation
 - o Access to funding for support organizations
 - o Training of service providers!
- Advocacy – people can't always advocate for themselves
- Education costs and living expenses while in school
- Punitive processes (e.g., inheritance, clawbacks)
 - o Taking away income assistance when common law
- Minimum wage
- Medical costs – physio, dental, etc.
 - o Rx restrictions
 - o Living with pain
- “Most people on the street feel like broken toys nobody wants to play with”
- BCers need to get curious about the person on the street corner, vs. just handing over money to feel good about themselves
- There is enough food in Victoria. There isn't enough connection, support, and understanding.
- Housing costs – rent is going up, mortgages, etc.
- Housing security is an issue
- Childcare and services for kids – the cost of extracurricular activities
- People can't always advocate for themselves, people are living with pain and exhaustion, hopeless and overwhelmed
- Addictions
- The mental, spiritual, emotional, physical effects of poverty
- Cost of living and income don't match up
- Keeping up with inflation is hard, there isn't enough money (on assistance, wages, pensions, etc.) for the basics
- Debt – student loan forgiveness!
- Medical costs are high
- Lack of nutritious food
- Pensions and extended health coverage for all

- Access to services
 - o Need more training for service providers
 - o Too much bureaucracy to navigate
 - o Restrictive government policies, too many levels of government, systems aren't well coordinated
 - o Funding for support services is lacking
- Feels like the policy is to say no first at government services
- Frustrating process
- Prevention and treatment is needed
- Challenging earned income/gifts, controlling income
- EI childcare earnings clawback
- Clawbacks!
- Alternative medicine – treatment limits
- Housing/rental
- Education as a way out of poverty
- Being taken advantage of, vulnerable
- Friends/community are also in poverty
- Eviction
- No change since the change in government
- Set up a system that works for people!
- Suffering, waiting for too long for a system that doesn't work
 - o Wrong answers
- Poor housing
- Rent increases on fixed income leads to eviction and suffering
- Renovictions
- Rising property values → rising rent costs, no money to budget, no money for food or clothes
- Exhaustion
- Instability
- Months are too long between cheques
- Safety for children
- Church services help
- Library ID project
- ID barriers and not having ID
- Being given wrong information about help and service, incomplete information on basic services
- The inflation of food prices – the market
- Jumping through hoops
- Fraud and punishment from the ministry
- Not being taken seriously
- Stigmatize
- Socio-economic class divide has rich people keeping privilege and poor people oppressed
- Injuries and WCB claims denied
- Not being given the medical treatment needed

- Poverty industry
- Need to increase rent amount, \$375 is not enough
- Substance use
- Not being treated like an adult
- Con system, based on manipulation
- Family cycles on poverty
- Perpetrators who take advantage of vulnerable people
- Gender – women experiencing more trauma and the issues that follow from that
- Troubles with neighbours
- Double-standards
- Barriers
 - o Clothing
 - o Transportation
 - o Food
 - o Storage
 - o Cost of living
 - o Communications – access, Wi-Fi, telephones
 - o Medication
 - o Access to mental health services
 - o Health care and dental care
 - o Shelter rates
 - o Money for bills and rent
 - o Shelter rate is inadequate
 - o Living together to save money – can't do this, forced into common law relationship, no individuality
 - o Cost of living is our entire cheque
 - o Car expenses – gas, insurance
 - o Everything goes up, but not the cheque
- More grants – paying off loans takes years
- Can't afford the essentials – school supplies, pencils or paper, have to choose
- Resources are available but difficult to access
- Community centres, free stores
- Why are IA/DA cheques only once per month? 5 week months, poor people have to make do with no money, people don't eat for the last 1.5 weeks – should be every 2 weeks like a regular paycheque
- 10 visits to chiro/physio, can't pay the client portion
- Supplements don't cut it
- People don't fit into boxes, don't fit the criteria
- Cost of cigarettes – way of life, coping
- Feminine hygiene products
- Bras
- Hygiene products – razor, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, laundry soap, laundry facilities

- Have to choose between food, rent, laundry, etc.
- Laundry – expense, an ordeal to get there
- Laundry should be provided with suites
- Stigma of being poor – waiting period of IA – risk losing housing
 - o Ministry just sees you as a file
- So many hoops
- Need affordable housing
- Don't need shelters or food banks
- Food banks don't give enough for single people
- Supports for extended family care (grandparent, grandchild) – need better supports
- Reduce transit fees for low income
- People on IA need to look for jobs but don't have transportation supports to look for work
- All people should have access to schooling
- Affordable dental care – costs impact quality of life, deterrent to getting proper dental care
- More flexible education supports for youth
 - o Need to work to pay rent, need more time for school
- The government acts like the money is coming out of their own pockets
- Second hand thrift stores are even becoming expensive although they get everything donated
- Access to financial supports, scholarships (education) require you to meet criteria and prove you are poor
 - o Can't get loan – assumed you don't need it
- More celebrations (no money)
 - o Can't afford expected celebrations and milestones like birthdays, graduation, wedding
- Lack of house insurance – should be part of housing for low income people
- Stigma – people don't reach out for help when they need it, before the situation gets worse
 - o Need prevention planning
 - o Sliding into poverty and stigma prevents people from reaching out
- Most people one paycheque away from house of cards falling down
- Extended illness
- AEE is way too low
- Housing costs in Victoria
- Someone may lose a shelter bed because of attending this event tonight
- Dental help is inadequate
 - o Cheap fixes, not real treatment
 - o First come first serve, long waits
 - o Disability dental is inadequate
- Basic human needs – cost of living is the biggest problem
- Need early intervention, an overall approach, before IA becomes needed
- Discrimination
- Racism
 - o Housing discrimination, disability discrimination, landlords have too many options and there is a lack of affordable rentals

- People are forced to lie, then landlords evict us
- Overcrowding with multigenerational families
- Prenatal and postnatal care
 - o Interventions are possible
 - o Society is obligated to provide
 - o Supplements are not offered
 - o Income assistance workers do not offer information
- Services are not available until crisis
- Poverty affects health
- Child poverty affects health and behaviour
- Meals – affordable meal programs
- Justice system
 - o Poverty related crime
 - o Poverty related abuse – spousal and child
- So much stress with parent, gets taken out on children
- Dropout rate is high for IA families
- Lack of supports – never offered to poor families, things like tutoring – it’s unfair
- What about children in low income families? Should have same as foster children
- Post-secondary affordability – we are forced into low paying jobs
- Stigma, judgment
- Services are not accessible
- Lack of knowledge
- The impacts of poverty on health are big
- Justice system is unfair
- High school dropout rate is high
- Post-secondary affordability and student poverty
- Application process
- Child care
- Dental
- Shelter allowance – indexing
- Low income housing
 - o Has long wait lists
 - o Access
 - o Low income is not affordable
 - o Subsidies have expired
- Being forced to commit crimes to have a place to sleep
- Subsidies based on living arrangement
- When you work, subsidy changes
- Subsidies depend on age
- Income has gone down and rent has gone up
- Seniors housing
 - o There’s an affordability problem

- Health care costs
 - Utility costs
 - Assisted living waitlists
- Appropriate housing for seniors
 - Eligibility criteria exclude people
- Housing for people without addictions
 - Forcing people to give up their spot
- Impacts of gender, unpaid contributions from women
- Stable housing – not couch surfing
- Policy – using police for poverty
 - Wake you up, ticket you, arrest you
 - Police told to harass homeless people
 - Superiors have told cops to do that – it’s a policy
 - Police don’t believe you
- Throwing out everybody’s stuff
- Every person who is homeless has had issues with the police
- Guilty of sleeping
- Sex trade stories are worse
- Privacy – issues at youth clinic
 - Wont treat me until I’m 25, I have to go to the youth clinic, I’m terrified of going there
- Out of sight – policing poverty in Victoria BC – VIPIRG report (Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group)
- Relapsed after not getting good treatment from doctor
- Medications (Suboxone and Clonazepam)
- Pharmacist – doctors only do things their way
- School – all I needed was my records but they refused, didn’t get information and my future didn’t matter to them
- Addictions – refuse to help me, treat me like I’m not a human
- Not enough treatment beds
 - Would improve/lower chaos for everyone else
- Need psychological help every week, but referred to school psychologist who is not trained for addictions
- “They look down on me”
- Emergency assistance is your last hope
- Back home you can’t have welfare or disability while on student loans. Is it the same here?
- Wish they wouldn’t use police – hyper masculine culture
- Also being told you can’t sit here, be here, you can’t come in, get out
- Well since I’ve been in BC I am not on welfare, I’ve been couch surfing ever since I got here, people have been very generous and getting me food to eat and places to sleep, I’ve slept once outside and then I got a bad cold from that but I’m fine now

- Cons: being depressed, sickness, homeless, hungry, losing clothes by stashing them because I have no money for lockers, stress and getting my daughter taking from me makes me wanna use drugs
- Money – housing rent portion since '84
- No public hanging out – get kicked out
- Issues with police: they take belongings of homeless people, everything they have, they wait until you go across the street then come in and take all your stuff and even if you run back and tell them it's not garbage it's yours they refuse to give it back
- Inappropriate housing is a problem – too much surveillance and no privacy
- Inflation is faster than wages
- Subsidies not keeping up with inflation
- Earning exemptions are too limited
- Clawbacks destroy incentives
- Need help for people that cannot work
- Employment supports for people with addictions
 - o Addictions are not considered a barrier
 - o PPMB screening tool is flawed
- Earnings exemption cut-off is a problem – all or nothing is a problem
- Working poor – jobs to stay afloat
- Application process is problematic
 - o Too much automation
 - o Need a computer and a phone
 - o Not accessible
- Need accessible skills training
- Work BC programs have barriers
- Cost of daycare
 - o A struggle every day
 - o Daycare workers need an adequate income
- Having a stable home needs to be more accessible, not just from crisis
- Privacy in accessing things they need
- Systemic barriers to services and employment
- Time and energy
 - o It's hard work to meet basic needs
 - o Find food, etc. e.g., food banks – wait in line, jump through hoops “to get food you don't need”
 - o Having to eat with a bunch of people you don't know is very draining if you're not comfortable around people
 - o The demographics of people seeking food has changed – it's now both younger and older
 - o Also there are missing “regulars” – people who might have died?
 - o There's no cash flow, so your priorities change – it's especially hard for single moms

- “It just keeps piling up” – it’s a law of diminishing resources, less and less that takes more and more effort. It becomes an impossible task to get back to break even
- Shelter costs
 - Assistance rates don’t nearly meet the actual cost of housing
 - Shelter rates aren’t going up
 - Inflation eats up any of the increases
 - And landlords are likely to eat up any increases in assistance
- Housing is treated as a market commodity, not as places for people to live. There should be higher taxes for people who own more than one home
- RDSP is a good program
- People with low incomes will never be able to have a home
- Many Canadians are close to poverty, but taxes and fees keep going up. Government is driving people into poverty
- We have an unfair tax system. Those with higher incomes should pay more. The high cost of living (e.g., housing, childcare) disproportionately burdens the poor
- Minimum wage is too low
- Income assistance is too low
- Cost of living is too high
- Many people who are poor are dealing with other complicating factors, so they’ll never break out of poverty
- Our Place – there aren’t enough staff. If there were more, they could do what they’re trained to do – listen and support (it takes more than money!)
- “Norm” – if there are too many dysfunctional people in a community, dysfunction becomes the norm. People adapt to their environments. People in crisis need to be surrounded by functional, caring people
- Impact when you have a mental health issue – you’re trapped in a house, losing services and supports, so the impact lands on the family
- Often people in poverty are robbed of dignity. They can’t choose their clothes from a clothing bank, or food or type of housing. There is so little choice
- Needed – individual mentorship and opportunities to heal – to move forward, supports for healing are needed
- Systemic barriers to services and employment – macroeconomics, labour laws, we need to evaluate all government policies and spaces to ask if it contributes to poverty
- Privacy in accessing the things people need
- Victoria is a hub of services – not equal in other neighbourhoods or towns
- Shelters etc. can be very unsafe for vulnerable people – there’s not enough good people to tip the scales
- Cuts in healthcare supports
- Less union jobs = less worker protection
- Need more one-on-one support and the welfare system isn’t doing that
- Money
 - No transportation, no ID

- No house
- Clothes
- No food
- No health services – “half ass” services
 - E.g., physiotherapy
 - 6 weeks with a broken knee, not given services because I am in poverty
 - Not treated because malnourished
 - Given poor services
- Have to lie to get services
- Doctors, dentists don't treat people with respect, not like human beings
- Can't hang out or sit somewhere without being kicked out
- Treated badly – fell asleep, hadn't slept in a while, and was treated worse than a dog
- Cycle of abuse is vicious – vicious drug world – “spiritual warfare”
- Welfare change
 - ID – don't help you to get it
 - Have to walk all over town
 - “Get the runaround from everyone”
 - Too frustrated, too much red tape to get little things done
- Rent allowance from social assistance is ridiculous – should be at least \$900/month
- Hard to get a room in a house; people judge you
- \$1000/month for 450 square feet
 - Have to sleep in living room and still short on rent every month
- Welfare will not consider me a BC resident, been here 1.5 years
- “Change everything”
- Provincial jurisdiction on student loans/healthcare ends – you have to change things right away
- BC charges people for healthcare
- Can't get ID because I don't have ID, no address
- Have to appeal disability 3 times
- Looking at father's income from 2 years ago, when his income is now lower
- Welfare rates are too low
- “I don't know, I don't care, can't do anything, won't do anything, won't help, can't help, can't you see I'm busy?” – too many people say these things
- Nutrition, particularly for kids
- Housing
 - Landlords don't want PWD tenants
 - Landlords discriminate, no one can help
 - Costs \$50 to file with the landlord/tenant board
 - Need access to resources and info on rights
 - Fear of accessing these services
- Fixed income – rates are frozen – landlord is in a tough situation with rent increases – easier to raise rent on people with income

- Homeless people have trouble accessing very basic services (meals, showers) to be able to get ahead
- Shelter is a quasi-insane asylum. People with lots of issues who need care.
 - o “Furthest thing from home” – screaming, terrors, coughing, ENDLESS
- Why are people giving me shots to take my senses away? Not getting explanations
- Protocol forcing people to take meds. Cops involved, make people feel like criminals but no wrongdoing.
- “Everyone treats me like a criminal, but it is criminal what is done to me.”
- Right now PWD is enough, but not getting services (e.g., social worker)
- People prosecuted by those who are supposed to be helping
- “I’m a human being. Why should I be treated like a piece of shit?”
- Profiling and lack of training (police, etc.)
- RCMP has to deal with mental health issues that are not crimes
- Police not trained for PTSD, other mental health issues – train them – Vic PD is good (“fantastic”)
- PHS mental health workers are undertrained
- Recognize, diagnose, understand
- Only social workers have the training
- BC Housing list for 10 years
 - o Opaque process
 - o Need to phone regularly but no phone
 - o Off the list if you don’t call
- Militarization of security (Palladin)
- Private security given authority over people (shelters)
- Low income – dental issues, old car, shop flyers, rent 2x over 10 years, limited tech resources (old computer and phone), worried about pension, other friends in the same boat
- Relationship with government tainted over 16 years
- Poverty has got to be linked to mental health portfolio
- Mental health starts in childhood and can derail a life
- Once you’re in poverty it’s so hard to get out
- Have to exit shelter at 6am every day – up and out. Or you lose your spot. 6am-7:30pm, rain or snow, get outside
- We fall through cracks with availability of services in grey zone. A good job (e.g., cook) means not being able to keep shelter hours
- Cycle: can’t keep a job in shelter, can’t get a house without a job
- A room in a house is \$600 in Victoria
- Our Place has a transition shelter focus on job/housing but it’s rare. Only 3 months of funding
- People with disabilities are contributing members of society. Change the terminology – people discriminate or don’t want PWD
- We need to change attitudes – now SDPR
- Pharmacare – Rx too expensive
- Dental care as an indicator of health
- “I’m a third world person in my own country and I shouldn’t feel that way”

- Access to internet is now essential, as essential as power and water to be connected to jobs, benefits, etc.
- MSP premiums
- Monopoly rental market management
- Stop putting me on the street and give me somewhere I can sleep
- Need affordable childcare
- Lack of social housing, AirBnB, empty houses, for profit housing speculation
- Housing
- Income – inflation not being matched
- Minimum wage
- Access to health care
 - o No Family doctors
 - o Emergency= red flagged
- Deterrents
 - o Time, red tape, forms, judgement, frustration, communication barriers
- Labels=stigmatized
 - o Us and them mentality
- Respect+ equality
- No Buffer
 - o Sick days, emergencies if lost income
- Can't get back up and out
- Too many disconnected service providers for one needed outcome
- Systems+ supports designed one fits all but everyone individual
- People need passion- support to find it
- Discrimination
- Systems dehumanize, no continuity of relationships
- Agency/advocate burn-out
- Too many rules in supported housing
- Capitalist mentality doesn't support or value people that don't make economic contribution
- Crisis- Kids removed, loses assistance, loses home
 - o Can't get kids back
 - o Income assistance to foster family but not parents
- Abuse – not listened to or actioned in foster system
- Fixes all put in on top – band –aid
 - o What needs fixing is what's underneath
- Lack of addiction supports
- Poverty is divisive issue- Addictions, mental health
 - o If person has addictions, mental health then not treated same as if on the street
 - o Judged
- Too much hypocrisy around “ you made a choice”
- Lack of Nutrition
- No ability to socialize

- Food provided not nutritious – healthy eating
- No focus on initial trauma
 - o Rebuilding the person while rebuilding their lives
- Health
- Adequate housing
 - o Want own kitchen – can cook own food
- Being homeless
 - o Own job
 - o Get up get to our place
- Can't sleep in parked car
- Self-worth
 - o Building hat self esteem
- Addiction + no treatment available
 - o Looking @ person not addiction
- Price of food has increased – really high
- Ent is going up – Rent is being raised unfairly
- Having a pet- it is impossible to get housing
- Credit check- very hard to find housing
- Can take a year
- Huge line ups to find a place to live
- Minimum wage – too low
- Doesn't cover food + rent or medical needs like dental work
 - o #1 food #2 shelter if \$ left over
- Lack of support for inmates coming out of prison
 - o Get \$220w – not enough to get started
- No rehab for people in jail and no help when they get out
- Lack of love in society
- Criminal record checks for housing so can't find a place to live, paid debt to society – have to pay again when can't find a home
- Small breaches- one charge + then have conditions that are impossible to keep so the person is breached
- No treatment centre in city in Victoria
 - o Why no treatment in city of this size, people go to mainland
 - o Only private treatment + aftercare
 - o Need treatment
- Need support coming out of criminal justice system
- Someone on disability being discriminated against
- Raised minimum wage to \$11.35 \$ goes to rent, not much left over
- Line up of people trying to see same home. Landlord picks + chooses who they want
- Housing people on disability/ welfare BUT we need housing for the masses
- Need to build housing based on the minimum wage (% of income)
- Pacifica Housing + BC Housing has a huge waitlist + picks who they want

- Buying hotels + putting people in them are making community upset
 - o Talleyho Hotel + community is upset
- Rock Bay- Not enough support for people in that housing
 - o Instead straight to police- that makes people less likely to seek help
- Proper support for employees
 - o Rock Bay – certain people are better disposed to help people
 - o Comparison- Having people with lived experience
 - o Don't want condescending staff – looking down on people in housing
- Pardon – criminal record- 5 years is too long for a pardon that “no” pardon is a barrier to a job + is adding to poverty. Can't get a job because of criminal record
- Senior 65 on OAS
 - o Save 1 year to get teeth
 - o Medical/Dental
- Seniors need more protection than they are getting
- Seniors need contact- check in
- Waiting a long time for pension, work + then injured need time off due to injury
- Takes a year to get a pension
- Need to bribe our kids to stay in school – will get that money back because of lower health care costs
- Teach kids that their peer group will accept “no”
- Kids/adults in school – they need money – pay students to stay in school
- Didn't used to have to pay for school supplies
- There are thousands of kids sleeping in their cars + attending university
- Paid or more accessible education
- The gap is so huge that creates a lack of hope
 - o No need for that
 - o Again easier access to proper detox + treatment
- Frequencies, energies+ vibration
 - o People can be down – not only about having things it's about them
- Social stigmas + barriers –
 - o its demeaning to keep asking for things or having to ask to use a bathroom
- Need experienced staff to work in this area
 - o Better screening when people are hired
- Medical office-
 - o needed insulin – didn't offer any advice about where it is available free
 - o Seems first must get addicted to get help
 - o Services are for drug or alcohol people BUT what about people who aren't addicted. What is available
- Rather go to jail for 3 months
 - o Have a place to stay (warmth + food)
- Many people have gotten a room but not allowed to have a visitor (only 3 days) no kids or grandkids

- Johnson Building – building
- \$5 million on Ottawa Ice Rink
- How does a homeless person get a reference to get housing
- Lack of infrastructure/housing – more to Johnson Building
 - o All these people have to live together Mental health, Gang, criminal addictions, just homeless
 - o No Supports, staff don't know how to deal with people
 - o No input from residents. A company won the contract more interested in their own agenda, setting up own programming
- Need transparency in funding
 - o Why \$30K bike racks on main floor without asking residents
 - o Lack of community consultation/input
- Break down of traditional family unit
 - o Grandparents used to live with family, no children don't see extended family
 - o Especially indigenous families
- Social Stigmas and barriers. Them vs us mentality
- Lack of adequate infrastructure
- Absence of insight by those making major decisions
- Lack of inclusion/communication between programs/ opportunities and the people who could benefit from them
- Failure to work through post trauma or initial incidents
- The breakdown of traditional social/family structures
- Wasted funding on bureaucratic procedures
 - o Cut the shit and have more transparency
- Consumer society that has detoured so far from self- sustainability
- Loss of hope
- Lack of nutrition
- Lack of education opportunities
- Having skills to deal with stress/ conflict
 - o And addiction issues
- Building stronger foundations in order to move out of the cycle
- Restoring people
- Having to deal with basic chakra survival vs higher level
- Division between support + shelter
- People who don't have home don't get \$716
- If landlord looks at homeless as homeless
- Words without action is bullshit
- Renting of non-suitable housing
- Low income housing – reno-victions
- What is government going to do to stop reno-victions? Evictions?
- Transportation – don't \$100 for compass transit
- Lack of suitable housing

- Feel punished for no stable housing
- Lack of living space. Need room to move, location be able to access community, near parks, activities, stores etc.
- Want a place to call home
- Rec pass to access pools, exercise
- Need places to live that allow couples
 - o Why need to rent 2 units?
- Need to conform to rules (no guests, no pets/animals, treating lower than others)
- Rent caps that are affordable
- How would you feel if you had to separate your family to rent a place?
- Shared accommodation with family
 - o No rent paid on reserve – only paid utilities
- Nothing to rent for \$375
 - o If \$500 only \$200 left over for food and other things
 - o Cannot live in Victoria
- Homes/housing cannot be lived in
 - o Slums
- Government inspection of residential accommodation is safe
- Rent caps
- Only those that can afford the rents can live in housing
- Where is the relevancy of the homeless
- People can't find housing
- Need to have roommates to afford housing but difficult to rely on others to share rent. Can get black mark on rental history due to bad room mate
- Enforcement by government on what landlords can ask about. Employment history or SIN should not be required/asked for
- For PWDs; give full cheque. Don't withhold shelter if no housing. Having to fill forms to get shelter funds released may result in losing out on housing
- If you own home, You can't rent a room to someone – INAC rules (on Reserve) Treatment is not the same across province
- Dental Should be available to all
- Coverage is difficult without PWD MSP fees
- Rents have gone up from \$500 (15 years ago) to \$1100(Now) for 1 bedroom
- Can't get doctors' appointments to have them fill out PWD application. Part 1 of form needs DR.
- ID difficult to get replacement I.D. Loss of Birth Certificate ID/wallet gets stolen. Too Many different places/pieces needed.
- ID clinics only take limited number of people (community organizations)
 - o Accessible
 - o Need more clinics
 - o More people taken
- Ability to go through blue boxes to get items without being criminalized
- Why do shelters limit use?

- Rock Bay 30 days max then cannot access services for 7 days
- Service animals
 - Lack of pet friendly housing
- People on PWD can't pay bills-not enough \$
- Disability cheque is not enough
- Limited Jobs so can only work a few days- don't want to worsen health
- Can't pay rent in normal
- 12 years on a list to get housing
- Had to call for 10 years to get a spot
- Transportation an issue rurally- 3 buses to work
- Cheaper housing far away from jobs
- Handydart need to book weeks in advance
- Food is expensive- especially for people with special diets
- People are losing weight
- Health supplements are too expensive
- People relying on free meals- doesn't work for special diets
- Cap on dental services, people don't have teach- cant get dentures or other dental services
- Lack of Doctors
 - Relying on walk in clinics or skype
- Not enough money to enjoy life
 - Concerts, travel to see family
- Cost of insurance is high barrier to transportation
- Better \$ for transportation or free
- Very little talk about prevention
- Only services for people who are about to die
- Refugees come to Canada with 30-40 k in debt- that's why kids are dropping out of school
- Newcomers – credentials aren't recognized
- Students live in poverty, live in their car
- Syrians close to becoming homeless, stigma about accessing food + services
- Services in some areas, some people may not feel safe e.g. women
- Need to have services around provinces
- A lot of people in poverty get depression, anxiety, people look down on them and judge them
- Mental health services only for depression(90%) and only focused on medication not other therapies
- Not enough well-trained mental health supports for certain groups – fees, wait lists
- New comers and other families can't afford housing in Victoria
- People are isolated and cant access services
- More housing + services together
- Houses with children can't buy clothes, foods, school fees, things to feel included, medical costs, leisure activities
- Free supports come with stigma
- Housing so expensive that \$ for children going to housing

- Post-secondary education is so expensive
- 1 Million for each kid to raise them
- Personal care/ home supports is very expensive for seniors + persons with disabilities
 - o Only for people with most extreme needs
- Low cost supports are limited+ hard to access people on disability should have extra support
- People living alone with disabilities can't get support to make meals
- Lack of food, nutrition + mental health supports
- Lots of the shelter space is taken, not enough shelter space
- Not enough affordable housing
- People who are working and in poverty can't get services
 - o Choose between housing, or food or clothes
- Money- transportation
 - o No food
 - o No housing
 - o No clothing
- Housing
- No hanging out even when homeless
- Welfare rates
- Medical
 - o Poor treatment
 - o Not fully human
 - o 2nd class citizens
- Work: renovation for old buildings
- Low income housing
- We get put in places with others @ground zero with other who are just as messed up. We are surrounded by them
- Books on my Facebook
 - o Protecting the gift keeping children and teens safe and parents sane
 - o Why does he do that? Inside the minds of angry & controlling men
 - o The Gift of Fear & Other Survival Signals that protect us from violence
- Working poor
 - o Minimum wage \$11.45 x 8hours= \$458 X 4 weeks = \$1832
 - o PWD \$1130 + earn allowance \$1000 = \$2130
 - o \$298 disparagement
- Shane Simpson Said level of poverty is \$20,000 year
 - o \$1666 month way too small an amount
- Many people are not trained properly. They think they know & you always have to fight egos
- Diagnosing people properly. I was finally diagnosed with Autism @ age 33. I'm 36.
 - o Services need to fit needs. Stop mixing people especially addicts & mental physically disabled people
- Impact when you have a MH issue trapped in the house
 - o Losing services, losing supports

- Impact is it lands on the family
- Too many of my meds are not covered and I have to have a less effective med
- 1960's breadth of coverage of social programs
- Health
- Adequate housing
- Employment prospects
- Self-worth
- Food costs
- Rent costs, affordable housing
- Minimum wage to meet health care
- Unfair rent increase, pets not allowed
- How does a homeless person get a reference to rent housing?
- Poor communication from actual wealth creators
 - Requires liaisons
- Crypto Judaism?
 - Correct interpretation of the Torah would be best
- Stable housing/living situation
 - Government enforced cap on rents that can be charged (keeping rents in reach of welfare recipients)
 - Government inspections ensuring slumlord landlords can't continue renting places that should be condemned
 - Stable affordable living would allow one to focus on other issues (i.e. addiction, employment, health etc.)
 - Up min wage to at least \$15 - \$20 as now \$10+ = roughly \$70 /day after taxes & other deductions
 - Enforcement on Q's landlords can ask for eligibility- no SIN (not allowed to ask)
- Self-actualization
- Well I'm homeless and in the past few weeks I've become sick with a cold
- Government debt
- New tax bracket
- Inflation increase
- Rent control
- Increasing inflation
- Shelter cos
- Universal income
- Food banks do not give enough for single people
- Government acts like the money is coming out of their own pockets
- Second hand thrift stores are even becoming expensive although they get everything donated
- Poor housing quality
- Low paying work = can't afford
 - Temporary in nature
- Access to resources/ supports difficult

- High cost of school/university for children
- Lack of money management services
- Too many people accept poverty as a part of life
 - o Can't accept it anymore
- Too little data on need levels
- Lack of acceptable health care
- Aboriginal Peoples higher impacted
- Intergenerational experiences of Poverty
- Poor RTA enforcement leads to poor landlord tenant relationships + quality of housing
- Rents way too high for employed + those on fixed/ low income
- Things not getting better for aboriginal peoples
- Lack of affordable & quality childcare
- No food security for those in poverty
- Sometimes food banks not safe or comfortable
- Annual rent increases too high
- Quality of housing does not enable grandkids to visit
 - o Concern that family services would remove youth
 - o Poverty impacting family relationships
- Small interests influencing demand side of housing
 - o E.g. person gets rent support. Landlord increases rent
 - o Net impact than zero
- Can't afford public transportation
 - o Bus, ferries
- Living in vehicle- can't afford to fix
 - o Concern it might be towed
 - o Woken up in the middle of night
- Mats(shelters) not comfortable
- Commodification of housing/property excluding people
- Youth/teens being left out of good employment
- End of youth agreements @ 19 years causing problems
- Increasing temporary nature of work
 - o Lack of benefits, employment security
- 11 months waiting for housing – gone no where
- Can't find housing that's accessible for a scooter
- It's hard enough to find housing
- There is no affordable housing
 - o At least \$1200 now
- Can't afford to eat
- Can't afford/ difficult to pay for a landline (\$12)
- Leads to a lot of health problems
 - o Not affordable food

- Mental health issues (breakdowns, trauma, physical health from not having enough to eat)
- Going to bed hungry
 - Consider dietary restrictions (have diabetes)
- Can't even get a doctor- rely on drop in clinics in and emergency which could throw you out
- Cant access medical equipment on ministry disability assistance
 - Rules too strict & waits very long
 - Pay for pharmaceutical equipment out of own pocket
- Can't get mental health access – they'll throw you out
- Being invisible
- Culture being respected stay with you
- Even somebody showing that they care is meaningful
- Elders are very important
- Common themes
 - Affordable housing
 - Food security
 - Health- including self-medication because there is no support
- Nowhere to go in BC for mental health and addictions issues
 - Mental health issues hospital turns you away
 - Have to advocate for yourself- need to help yourself
- Need more than just crisis line- something more long term
- Long term human touch is needed
- Defenseless when losing your children to the ministry of children
- Because of poverty- hoops to jump through & they keep moving them
- No food- leads to mental distress- considering suicide
- Poverty and trauma intertwined to the point those in poverty don't even ask for help anymore- fall into cracks
- On the streets doing drugs just to survive/stay warm
- Worrying about being robbed on the streets
- Excruciating hunger pains relieved by drugs
- No place to sleep during the day in Victoria just chairs, sometimes just tables. Staff will force people not to lay down and sleep
- Nobody talks about trauma
- No place to go and just be heard and find cure
- Hospitals reject people who need help in emergency with serious mental and physical health issues and trauma
- Reading about poverty is not the same as living it
- No food security
- Band-Aid solutions right now
- How is the wealth for some and not for others?
- Want some help for all in need – less disparity in assistance

- Elder in residence provides support, emotionally very important to have somebody not judge you
- I'm living in a cool building and I'm clean and sober in a one bedroom place and they're wanting to move into a smaller unit also took money out of my support without asking me and trying to bribe me to move by saying they remember me if I move out which is bullshit

Question 2: What would address these issues and help you and people out of poverty?

Policy Related Comments

- The rate of assistance needs to move with the rate of living cost
- If the PWD money does not increase outside of who is in power then we will be right in crisis in a short amount of time
- There needs to be a spectrum of housing
 - o Low income housing can ghettoize a community
 - o PWD clients need to be able to access the “Rental Assistance Program.” If I have to pay more than 30% of my total income to rent that’s too much
- Healthcare right now only pays 70% of my dental bill. Whatever health a person needs should be covered.
- All medicine should be covered. Right now only some medicine and some procedures are covered.
- Massage therapy for “my broken back L4” should be covered. Can’t work due to the chronic pain
- There are no sports programs for children. There needs to be money to pay people to put kids in activities
 - o There needs to be money available to help people volunteer and attend sports activities
- BC government made a deal to not give the spouses of disabled clients with student loans pay for living expenses
- If we inherit money we should not be penalized for it. How are we supposed to buy a house if we can’t put money aside?
- Poverty Reduction Strategy: break it down and test it first in a small town
- Trauma informed training for all government workers – not patronizing or racist
- Earnings and minimum wage – 100% earned income not deducted (e.g., for a month to get ahead)
- Tax the rich (1 vote)
- Trauma induced practice (1 vote)
- Ministry staff should be educated about poverty
- Equity vs. equality approach
- Low income should have passes to facility (e.g., rec centre, etc.) paid by taxes
- Pools, rec centre, etc. is already subsidized so why not just make it free – lead to socialization/no segregation
- Define success and evaluate results – look at successes in other jurisdictions (e.g., Norway, Finland)
- BC housed 60,000 people during the wildfire crisis – why can’t we do this for the homeless? (1 vote)
- Support from BC Housing to build and house homeless for the long term (1 vote)

- Mobilize the response to housing like we did during the wildfire crisis
- Reduce hydro rates so people don't get evicted (2 votes)
- Remove justification to rec'd crisis supplement
- Change of government structure to communism
- Decision makers need to experience what people in poverty experience
- Increase minimum wage
- Need basic income
- Decriminalization of certain drugs
- More government spending for co-op housing
 - Include transition supports
- Government program for dental and glasses
- Government subsidized training programs
- Need housing for families, bias toward not renting to families
 - Need rules for them to have a place
- Concrete goals to reduce poverty that are clear – everyone will know
- Education to prevent poverty
 - Must improve education to be on welfare (finish high school)
 - Break intergenerational welfare
 - Part of basic income?
- Lower tuition, student debt forgiveness
- Livable wages (1 vote)
- Wage parity across all jobs level with Ministry jobs (1 vote)
- Restricting homebuyers to local people to help control rental prices for residents (2 votes)
- Combat the war on drugs – the current approach doesn't work but not sure how to change it (2 votes)
- Increasing social assistance and disability rates (2 votes)
- New system for workers' compensation claims being accepted, not denied
- Reviewing the services that fail people (2 votes)
- Review political appointments
- Increase wages, reduce wage inequality (1 vote)
- Welfare and disability rates have to go up (3 votes)
- Link salary increases to inflation because minimum wage is a short-term fix
- Use prime real estate for social spaces – not all condos, please!
- Mandate deliverables when working with developers
- Clearly define "affordable housing"
- Seek out a deep understanding of various people in poverty (addicts, single moms, families, single guys, etc.) (2 votes)
 - How did they get into poverty? For those who got out, how did it end?
- Everything needs to go up as much as inflation does – wages, pensions, income assistance (4 votes)
- Basic income should be timed to the cost of living for your area – clearly define adequate basic income (2 votes)

- Student debt forgiveness
- Free tuition for low income youth (1 vote)
- A formula to subsidize extended health care costs (dental, chiro, prescriptions, massage, counselling) (3 votes)
- Child and youth services
 - o Low cost childcare (1 vote)
 - o Free childcare for low income families, after a certain %, formula-based
 - o Enshrine child care as a RIGHT
- Housing (3 votes)
 - o Government subsidized building of a variety of types of housing (student, co-op, rental) (4 votes)
 - o Caps on price increases (set for a number of years, tied to inflation, etc.)
 - o Promoting/incentivizing secondary suites and rooms (e.g., a renovation subsidy)
 - Make it easier to offer
 - o Make rent subsidies easier to obtain
 - o Strategic planning for the placement of shelters and subsidized housing – distribute, integrate into neighbourhoods, and ensure a minimum number of units are in all geographies not just in urban cores
 - o Continue to focus on improving housing security (e.g., tackle reno-victions)
 - o HOUSING MUST HAVE SUPPORTS (4 votes)
- Cheques need to better align with cost of living
- Legal marijuana as a revenue source
- More funding for youth in care and support after they age out (2 votes)
- More money for families instead of foster care
- Using people with lived experience in all aspects of policy making (5 votes)
 - o People who are poor are not stupid!
 - o Don't treat people with disdain
 - o Get people with lived experience working in SDPR and training SPDR staff in respectful ways to interact with clients
- Allow people to live together without issues of whether they are in a relationship. Each person should get a full cheque (4 votes)
- Get rid of multiple barrier designations – just make everyone PWD
- Train SDPR staff in “trauma” so they have empathy with upset people calling SDPR
- Landlords should have caps on rent
- Rent supplements should be attached to the person, not the building (2 votes)
- Raise the minimum wage (1 vote)
 - o People's wages should go up every time minimum wage goes up
- Housing allowance – should index based on location
- Guaranteed annual income
- Basic income
- Answer is more money – less need for healthcare, less crime, people work more, there is more incentive to work, and better outcomes for children, employment and families

- Guaranteed annual income stimulates affordable housing, less need for social services
- Guaranteed income pilot projects
 - o Vancouver
 - o Vancouver island (ex. Port Alberni)
 - o Interior
 - o Control sample for a 3 year project
 - o Ontario has 3 pilots
 - o Pilot as part of the poverty strategy
 - o Concerns with guaranteed annual income is that important services might get cut; still need for other supports – child care, health supplements, social work
- More education to government, front line workers
- Less stigma and need less judgment – lot of shaming
 - o People treated the same, better
- Require developers to create social housing
- More lived experience in decision making (4 votes)
- Upstream interventions (2 votes)
- Guaranteed annual income (4 votes)
- Welfare should be \$1300/month (1 vote)
 - o \$900 rent
 - o \$200 food
 - o \$200 other stuff (haircuts, bus pass, clothing)
- Let people keep the money they earn, up to \$600/month without deductions (1 vote)
- Welfare tied to the cost of living (4 votes)
 - o Go up automatically
 - o Average cost of an apartment is the rental portion
- Stop policing poverty (1 vote)
 - o Eliminate 6 hour rule
 - o Being in a park
 - o Sitting on steps
 - o “Musical chairs for poverty”
- Realistic definition of affordable housing
- Affordable education (e.g., during practicum)
- More lived experience at decision-making table
- Government needs to create stable housing for families
- Upstream interventions
- Pilot projects to measure effectiveness and outcomes pre-province-wide rollout
- Use plain language when communicating about poverty reduction strategy and services
- RENT CONTROL
- BASIC INCOME
 - o Sounds great but concerned
 - o The private sector can now pay workers less – which could have tax implications like tax evasion

- It might replace assistance or benefits
- Increased resources for individual, flexible wraparound services
- Rent control, social housing – good step = end of fixed term loophole
- Prevent predatory landlords
- AirBnB regulation/ensure rental stock, but protect landlords from problem tenants
- Treat houses as homes, not just assets to leverage
- Address speculation/vacancies
- Incentivize and support landlords to rent to fixed income tenants
- Rebate/incentivize accessible rentals
- Make it free to file a claim with the Landlord Tenant branch
- Give teeth to the legislative oversight of private security
- Cover more preventative and alternative medicine and care
- Require pro bono dental (e.g., one day a year)
- Increase accessibility of affordable housing and transparency in BC Housing
- Better tenant protection and access to legal recourse
- Oversight for private security
- Centralizing Services (Vote)
 - Integration
- Need to do away w/ deserving + undeserving poor dichotomy
- Increase Minimum Wage (2 Votes)
- Increase support +assistance to inflation (6 votes)
 - Automatic increases
- Rent Controls : review use of fixed term rental contracts (2 votes)
- Lifting of Stigmas and judgement
 - Training and education - social workers, doctors
- Address cost of housing – purchasing etc.
 - People can't afford to buy a home
- Don't remove children from parents house because they're poor
- Creating laws to punish people who are trying to survive
 - Panhandling charge, stopped fight = people get charged
- More roles for landlords so they have to take people
 - Diversity
- Build more housing and not bike lanes
- Tax multimillionaires with vacant units
 - Empty buildings + people sitting in gutters,
 - how many empty schools, busses, motor homes
- Rent caps
- Don't need to disclose where income comes from
- Affordable housing rules for landlords to rent to homeless with barriers (1 vote)
- Minimum wage to meet food costs and housing (1 vote)
- Pets allowed in Housing(1 vote)
- Give full cheque even without shelter costs (to help those looking for housing) (1 vote)

- No division between support/shelter (flat rate)
- Rent caps – affordable rent
- Need more money that would allow savings for emergency
- Higher minimum wage
- Eliminate need for ID/credit card to rent room (hotel motel, backpacker inn, hostel etc.) allow cash
- Government system enforced rent caps and inspections to make sure places are suitable/safe/affordable (1 vote)
- Stop reno-victions
- Higher fees on landlords who do not maintain housing
- Guaranteed living wage program (5 votes)
 - o Guaranteed income
 - o Enough to liv on
- Real rent control
- Better regulation of vacation homes
- Change rules to park trailers or tiny homes on plots of land
- More attention on racialized poverty
- Accreditation, get rid of transportation loans, focus on racialized poverty (5 votes)
- For youth in care by removing the age limitation would allow former youth in care to educate to find more productive jobs.
 - o Not all youth are ready to return or proceed with post-secondary education due to personal experience or trauma
- No age limit on access to post sec education for kids/youth aging out of care
- Rules for landlords to be bound to
 - o Accept people with boundaries
- Guaranteed Basic income
- Use evidence base policy design and program development
 - o Look @ past experiences/examples of effective government intervention
 - o Look @ best practices from other regions/communities/ countries
- Universal Dental care/ pharma care (5 votes)
- Use all housing units or tax unused housing stick
 - o And limit/ regulate short term vacation rental (1 vote)
- Guaranteed basic income (4 votes)
 - o Must reflect the cost of living in community
- Cancel all student loans
 - o Reimburse student loans that have been paid (1 vote)
- Special focus on Aboriginal voice & aboriginal solutions in addressing aboriginal experiences of poverty (role of culture) (2 votes)
- Stop restricting prescription for adequate treatment. Have the right to appropriate prescriptions for their needs

Program and Service Related Comments

- Should have therapists for counselling
- Operators on the 1-866 number are horrendously rude. They are dealing with a spectrum of issues (mental health) and should be well trained, well paid so they treat their job professionally!
- Takes 45+ minutes to get through to an operator
 - o Often I need to speak with a supervisor and that takes days, and I can miss their call
 - o The music we listen to drives people crazy while on hold
- Start change for poverty on a smaller scale
- Housing on reserve
 - o Building inspectors
 - o Supports on reserve
 - o Quality
 - o Jobs
 - o Healing homes
- First Nations
 - o More training/is there training? (Police/welfare) for First Nations and different races
- Access to mental health
 - o People don't know how to access it
 - o Carries a stigma
 - o Quality service, not just a pill
 - o Healing centres
 - o Police shouldn't be a mental health worker
 - o In real time and no referral
- Shelters
 - o 30 days, they think it's good enough, shouldn't be time restrictions
- Access to information
 - o Not having access to criminal record to get housing
 - o Access to info to get housing or services
- Better quality shelters
 - o Bathrooms/well used
 - o Want to feel like coming into a safe place
- Transportation
 - o Create on-assistance bus passes at a discount
 - o Tied to housing
- Transport
 - o Have a bus pass to all under a certain amount of money
 - o Can't afford to get on a bus and travel
 - o Could tie to your income tax (like physical fitness credit)
 - o Bus pass for children, low income
- Personal storage/privacy

- Somewhere safe
- Shower curtain
- Feeling safe
- Drug use in the bathrooms – drug habits are more important than someone using the bathroom (currently)
- People not using shooting gallery
- No regulation of shelters and a lot of work to get organized with all your supports and services
 - Should be regulated rules and connecting to all services
 - Better staffing expect them to provide X amount of people into jobs and housing before they get funding (accountable for services)
- Having some (or any) storage in shelters
- Never service providers resp. (always the person)
- Ending time limits in shelter; (30 days) and reflect state of housing situations
- Shelters
 - Safe from theft
 - Shelters should be regulated – standards/expectations for shelters
 - Better/any storage in shelters
 - Stop the “shelter shuffle”
- Access to information
 - Getting ID access
 - Not having shelters have access to all my information
 - Transparency of services
- Mental health
 - Quality services
 - Access to treatment in real time
 - Healing centres
 - No referral needed for mental health services
- Better and easier to get affordable housing linked to transportation
- Money
- Financial literacy (1 vote)
 - Education (young)
 - In school
 - Understand what money is and what it means
 - Money is power and influence
- Make civil live a whole day or whole week in poverty to teach compassion (1 vote)
 - Everyone should experience poverty
- Disability office is not accommodating
- Skills training is needed
- Free access to public facilities (1 vote)
 - Gym, rec centre
 - Buses
 - Museum

- Not income tested
- Wraparound services – not transactional but relationship based (1 vote)
- Create a community that has the capacity to deal with events (i.e., the opioid crisis)
- Build a home for the worst-off first
- Prosecute landlord
- Need to help at risk kids early on (5 votes)
 - In elementary school, teach life skills, how not to feel bad about themselves, not taboo to have feelings
- Need better food, more choice, less carbs (1 vote)
 - Modern food
- More housing – buy, not rent
 - Get loans, Installoan/cash money loan taking too much
- Most subsidized housing has baseboard heat – too expensive, need more efficient heat
- Inclusion of heat in rent – hot water heating is better
- Separate drug addicts and other people
 - Not fair, get stuff stolen, there's needles
- Safe storage for stuff, helps with transition to work (shelters throw away stuff)
- Need education on life skills
- More collaboration in family structures – co-op housing is a good example
- Community gardens (Yates Street), get more out of it than food
- Safety – very important
- Well packaged education program on poverty
 - Megaphone example
 - More connected to the community
- More detox centres
- Separate people in recovery from drug addicts
- Monthly drug tests for dry buildings
 - Less criminals
- Sweat equity volunteer programs like City of Victoria (\$20/hour value for volunteer work)
- More safe affordable housing (5 votes)
- Combat boredom through
 - Community events and outings (1 vote)
 - Programs for people, including seniors, to socialize
 - Opportunities to do productive things
- Childcare
- Work programs
- Shelters for couples (2 votes)
- Incentivize assistance – for those who manage their money well, their rates increase
- House the homeless (2 votes)
- General housing costs need to go down (1 vote)
- Build up, increase density

- Get more BCers involved – not just people in poverty. Grow opportunities for friendship and neighbourly relationships. How can we mix up and blend social groups? People on the street don't have family friends who are doctors, for example (5 votes)
- Continue to care for kids in care who “age out” – don't let “aging out” be so abrupt (2 votes)
 - o E.g., no age limit for accessing post-secondary schooling
- Prevent young people from ending up on the streets. E.g., if someone loses X number of jobs, they need an intervention – some support to find a role/place
- Silver Threads Centre type of places – but it has closed, was an important place for people on fixed incomes/seniors to go
 - o Fund these places stably so they stay open, aren't membership-driven
- We have an increasing seniors population – meet their demands and needs with community places and programs (1 vote)
 - o CPP doesn't cover expenses because of the increasing costs of necessities
 - o Increase monetary support because it's preventative – it supports people aging well, staying health and independent for longer, which costs us less in the long run
- Need to have different types of housing available (student housing, families, co-ops, etc.)
- Every neighbourhood should have access to a community garden
- Have an incentives/system to collect excess food and fund organizations that collect and distribute extra food
- Pool of funding through school boards for extracurricular activities for children
- Registry of equipment
 - o Some parents can give, some parents can take as needed
 - o Central or regional
- Incentivize sports clubs to offer subsidies
- Access to services
 - o Streamline bureaucracy, e.g., social assistance
 - o Give workers more flexibility for what they can do
 - o Need more workers (1 vote)
 - o Train staff to understand the effects of poverty
 - o Help for non-profit advocates to navigate the system
 - o Better internal coordination between services so any point of contact can help you get what you need (1 vote)
- Increase funding to non-profits (3 votes)
 - o Do not download costs to non-profits (e.g. sending people to non-profits for bus tickets) (1 vote)
- Improve access to mental health and addiction resources
- Increase prevention education (1 vote)
- Good people running things
- More funding
- Streamline paperwork
- Respite for single parents
- Mini houses

- Micro communities
- Income assistance cheques need to come twice a month (2 votes)
 - o Get rid of 5 week months, too long to wait! (1 vote)
- Cool Aid housing for 20-30 year olds (affordable housing) (1 vote)
- Provincial campgrounds for use in the off-season. 1-2 people to staff it, have Narcan, 1 security guard per 25 people
- Grief counselling and support counselling available RIGHT AWAY! (3 votes)
- Don't encourage people to do illegal activities to make ends meet – crimes of desperation
- Affordable childcare so people on IA can work
- Access to credit – to avoid loan sharks and payday loans
- Everyone on IA should get bus pass and all supplements
- 1-866 line needs to be fixed. It's a joke. People with cell phones can't wait on the line for an hour or more
 - o More people on the phone line
 - o Hire people with lived poverty experience
 - o Understanding and compassion for people calling the phone
- Expand "SAFER" to cover everyone who needs shelter
- Pet friendly housing
- Low cost/free vet care
- Social housing
 - o Not designate certain areas – mixed housing
 - o Not defined areas, no segregation
- Tiny homes, temporary homes (1 vote)
- Dietary help
- Less discrimination (1 vote)
- Affordable housing (1 vote)
- Prenatal and postnatal care (1 vote)
- Stop verifying shelter costs
- Let people pay for what they need (e.g., van)
- Give everyone a family doctor (2 votes)
- Special clinic with standing appointments for people to be assessed for PWD
- Let youth who are on disability or welfare go to college/university for free – no tuition or book costs
- Medical – give youth choice, don't restrict where youth can go, or provide more options for youth medical (for suboxone for 25 years old)
- All addictions services need to be open on the weekend (24/7) (3 votes)
- More compassion (police)
- Give people someplace to go
- Free counselling
- Mental health workers not mental health cops (1 vote)
- A place to live for everybody
- More social housing mixed with regular people (3 votes)

- More detox places with more beds
- More access to welfare, cause they deny people who don't have ID. Get more help around getting people their ID back when they don't have it
- 24/7 counselling especially suicide counselling
- Need truly affordable housing
- Education supports
- More housing
- Tiny homes
- Temporary, movable homes
- Supported housing with check-ins
- Help to maintain and fix problems
- Proven programs should not have to reapply for funding
- More open gardens
 - o Healthier food
 - o Community gardens
 - o Food donations and hampers
- Less waste, food sharing networks
- Students
 - o How can single parents afford?
 - o Need supports for parents with children
- Need individual mentorship and opportunities to heal
- Need meaningful choices in access to services
- Individual opportunities for empowerment – solutions can't be prescriptive or paternalistic
- Regulate housing shelters so they are all treating people with dignity
- Extend supports past age 25 for kids in care
- Housing – fix up buildings and house people
 - o Need to stop tearing down buildings (empty) and put them to use
 - o Renovating old office buildings, big houses, can provide lots of housing as well as jobs
 - o If it is allowed to be done by and for homeless people who have skills but have mental illness, addictions, and also people who are just homeless – no way of holding down jobs – such as the Sandy Merriman houses – a sense of pride will make a big difference in making a place livable and maintaining it
- Help people ready to transition
- As tenancy board to be more accessible
 - o Also (Victoria) office is no longer downtown
- Increase Legal Aid and service standards for getting a reply
- Reward landlords for being nice
- Housing
 - o Mixed market/social housing developments
- Low cost telecommunications (phone, internet)
- Transparency in BC Housing
 - o Where am I on the list?

- Need to apply in person but hard without a car. Can waste all day on the bus trying to win the lottery for a spot
- Decentralize registries to make them local
- Have compassion and support
- Group pension funds for people to save
- Give law enforcement and first responders proper training
 - Pairing of mental health and law enforcement (“Car 87” in Vancouver – does Vic have one? Yes, ACT teams)
- Municipal oversight committee for mandatory investigation of use of force with citizens in crisis, and apply to private security firms too
- Mental health, ECE, daycare – mental health in schools for early identification of problems
- Micro-lending for entrepreneurs
 - We have talents we just need a little help
 - Look at Europe, Africa
- Allow people to flourish with independence
- Working farm and other skill development to break dependency on government – “better for the government and better for people”
- More and better mental health training and frontline mental health workers
- Better healthcare
 - Preventative
 - Alternative
 - Dental
 - Pharmacare
 - Clean drug supply
- Low cost telecommunication
- Early intervention for mental health
- Micro-lending to help entrepreneurs
- More housing options
 - Diversify – micro, supportive, communal etc.
- Individual Case workers/teams working collaboratively
 - Develop relationships
- Mentorship program with social workers
- More variety of employment programs
- Provide more incentive to participate in other service programs
- Casual Labour run by gov’t not for profits
- Increase focus on supporting social enterprises i.e. binner project
 - Empowers marginalized population
- Adequate treatment
 - None on Vancouver Island
- More Support programs + compassion
 - facilitators who know what they are doing
- Access to proper rehab/ treatment

- 6 week treatment
 - AA 12 steps + aboriginal Trauma - everyday 8-4:30
- Solve Waitlist to get into treatment
 - Have to lie to get treatment
 - Should be easy access
- Many people happy to take 4hour job, 15 hour, 10-20 hour
 - Job Sharing
 - Access to employment builds self esteem
 - Rather have ¼ job than no job
- Help People who have debts looming over their head – debt support
- If someone trying to change life maybe some incentive to match debt
 - Help pay off debt
- People are resilient + Survivors – hard to open themselves to encouragement
- Culverts as housing in Mexico
 - As microhousing
 - Laundry
- Have space to “chat”
- Micro-housing – could build for \$20,000 + people could have them paid off
 - People just want their own little place in the world
 - Make zones people will self-govern, every 20 minutes police walk through
- People in poverty can’t display their talents
- Co-housing/Co-op housing
 - Share expenses, better lifestyle
 - Share a vehicle
- Housing is staffed
 - Take those people off
 - Just use that money to build more housing
- Easier access to “proper” detox + treatment
- A more personable approach from staff + facilitators in outreach positions
 - + running drop in programs
- Travellers inn built 7 buildings in 2 years
- Inmates work on building own homes
- Massive Affordable social housing (1 vote)
 - Based on percentage of income
- More full time jobs and incentives for small businesses to hire more people (1 vote)
- Treatment centres for people with drug/psychological problems
- Fast track CPP(1 vote)
- Lower window on pardon for criminal record check (1 vote)
 - E.g. 2 years
- Easier access to proper detox and treatment (1 vote)
- A more personable approach from staff and facilitators in outreach positions and running drop in programs (1 vote)

- Build more housing and buildings (1 vote)
- Treatment in Victoria(1 vote)
 - o A licensed treatment centre in greater Victoria, detox prior and aftercare post treatment
- Support to get on their feet after release (1 vote)
- Smile (1 vote)
- Safe in town camping (1 vote)
- Job Share (1 vote)
- Senior Healthcare (1 vote)
- Job Share (1 vote)
- Need transitional houses for couples
- Need a home first to address addictions issues & health issues, employment needs (1 vote)
- Need home base with set rents at \$300 per room plus \$150-\$200 for shared spaces (1 vote)
- Increased funds and/or access to courses, training
 - o If loss of job need better access to certificate, re- training opportunities
- More housing / affordable housing (not 60% of income for housing) (1 vote)
- Provide transportation costs/above rate
- More affordable housing
- Incentives or help from government banks or employers to encourage saving so people can create their own safety net
- More housing with services / supports (5 votes)
 - o Don't need to leave to get mental health services
- More services to help people keep housing
- Skills to stay in housing for long term homeless
 - o Cooking
- More places that are self-contained, have privacy
 - o Only 10-12 year waits
- Discrimination + no services for people who are considered able-bodied or whose challenges are hidden and don't have children
- Assumption that men can take care of themselves
 - o No services for men without children
- More services for violence against women and men
- Focus money on both men and women
- Older single men are living on the street
- For refugees, BC should work with Federal Government to get rid of transportation loans
- Help newcomers get skills recognized + accreditation
- Housing easier to access
- Co-housing model- people supporting one another
 - o More of this
 - o Building mutually supportive communities
 - o Real estate developer allows to build equity – pay \$700 for 20 years
- To learn English mothers need daycare spaces
- More cultural informed supports for Indigenous people with housing, elders, care

- More help to get people market housing like rent to own (2 votes)
- More supports for working poor (4 votes)
- Protection from predatory criminals and exploiters for vulnerable people
- Work together
- Affordable housing
- Homelessness storage safe
- Community garden for food for homeless
- Outdoor community kitchens where camping allowed
- Reinststitute Casual labour at offices
- More grants for small local business
- Outdoor community kitchens
- Community gardens for food percentage of new housing
- Animal Pet care
- Institute leadership classes from schools to educate youth and break stigma
 - o Have hope that things can change
- Support for inmates upon release from prison, breaking the cycle
- unfair
- Addiction treatment centre in Victoria, aftercare
- Also it would be better if you made bus rides to somewhere with greens to forage
- Affordable housing
 - o Space – big enough to contain you and furniture, clothes, comfortably(room to move) without feeling cramped or giving the appearance of being a hoarder
 - o Location – able to access stores and public arenas (movie theatres, night clubs, recreation facilities) helping to give a sense of community to self, close to parks with benches in the summer times
- I'm homeless sure but that's not what I'm all about...NO! I need a hand up...not a hand out!!
- Healthy food in schools
- Income based hydro subsidy (1 vote)
- Means test for all community services
- Free access to internet in home
- Support families (2 votes)
- Affordable quality child care (3 votes)
- Free post-secondary education (3 votes)
- Affordable appropriate housing for all (4 votes)
 - o Better RTA + RTA enforcement
- Fir Square in Vancouver – Support for pregnancy – after birth to make sure parents & kids stay together
 - o Stopping the cycle of violence of taking kids away
- No more doctors/nurses/social workers etc. looking to take away babies
- Storage/carts and undercover areas that are heated for homeless people (3 votes)
- Humane camping areas (tents, washroom, etc.) for people who choose to camp
 - o Some people don't want to go inside – need support to Transition into housing

- Transitional housing supports needed
 - o Some people get triggered in moving into apartments/ space, where traumatic home life is associated with it
- More than a shoe box
- Adequate proper treatment for chronic pain (2 votes)
 - o Untreated pain leads to addiction
- Information on free food
 - o More than just handouts – adequate
- Affordable nutritious food (2 votes)
- Like meals on wheels (1 vote)
 - o Food delivery or take home meals (not just public halls/spaces)
- Farm/ agriculture involvement programs.
 - o The royal oaks/ St. Vincent program had a communal garden for food banks
- Access to recreation and sports for health on a regular basis (1 vote)
 - o Not tons of paperwork
- Cultural Access
 - o E.g. Smokehouse
- Paperwork needs to be easier/ cut for accessing support
 - o E.g. rent subsidy requires too much paperwork
- Someplace to rest and take a nap during the day (2 votes)
- Someplace to wash your clothes
- Proper detox and treatment centres – ongoing not just 30 days
- Long term intergeneration trauma treatment (3 votes)