

Poverty: A Clinical Tool for Primary Care Providers (NU)

Poverty is not always apparent: In Nunavut, 41.1% of the population receive welfare support. 1

higher than the Canadian average.^{6,7}

1) Screen Everyone

"Do you ever have difficulty making ends meet at the end of the month?"

(Sensitivity 98%, specificity 40% for living below the poverty line)²

Diabetes **Poverty is a Risk Factor** Lower-income individuals are more likely to report having diabetes than higher-earning Consider: individuals (11% vs 6% in Chronic Disease Cancer men, 9% vs 4% in New immigrants, women, Indigenous women).3 Those in low-income Individuals living in groups experience higher rates of lung, oral (OR poverty experience an peoples, and LGBTQ+ are among the elevated risk of hypertension 2.41), and cervical (RR 2.08) highest risk groups. arthritis, COPD, cancers.9,10 asthma, and having Example 1: multiple chronic Poverty is a risk conditions.3,4 If an otherwise healthy 35-year-old comes to your office, factor for many without risk factors for diabetes other than living in poverty, health conditions Cardiovascular **Toxic Stress** you consider ordering a screening test for diabetes. Disease Children from low-Example 2: Those in the lowestincome families are more income group experience likely to develop a condition If an otherwise low-risk patient who lives in poverty circulatory conditions at a that requires treatment by Mental Illness presents with chest pain, this elevates the pre-test rate 17% higher than the a physician later in life. Canadian average.8 probability of a cardiac source and helps determine Those living below the how aggressive you are in ordering investigations. poverty line experience depression at a rate 58%

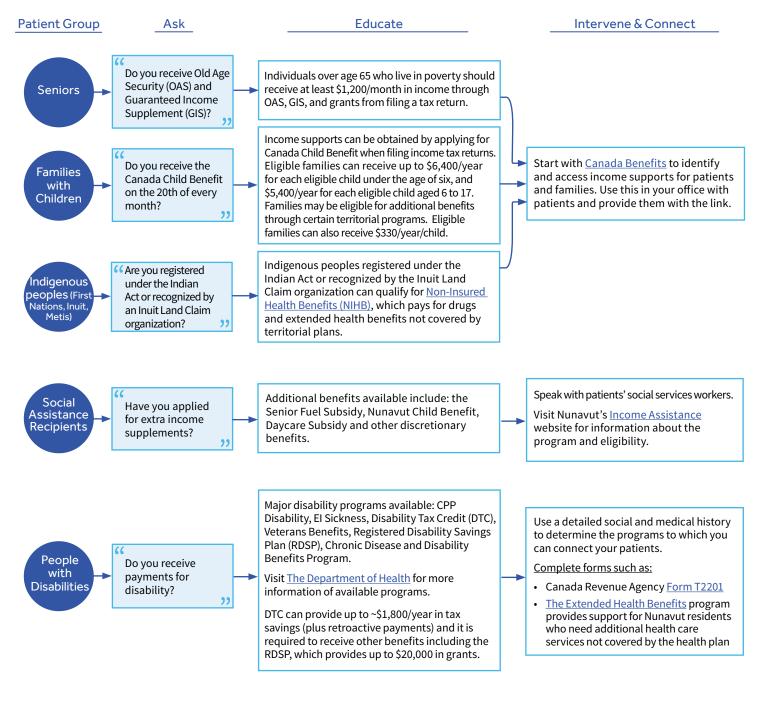
3 Intervene

Ask Everyone: "Have you filled out and sent in your tax forms?"

- Ask questions to find out more about your patient—their employment, living situation, social supports, and the benefits they
 receive. Tax returns are required to access many income security benefits: e.g., GST / HST credits, child benefits, working
 income tax benefits, and property tax credits. Connect your patients to Free Community Tax Clinics.
- Even people without official residency status can file returns.
- Drug Coverage: Coverage for medications not available through the Nunavut Health Benefits Program may be covered under exceptional circumstances. Visit <u>drugcoverage.ca</u> for more information.



Intervening can have a profound impact on your patients' health



Key Resources

Canada Benefits

(www.canadabenefits.gc.ca)

Provides a full listing of federal and territorial income and other supports, organized by personal status (e.g., "parent," "Indigenous peoples") or life situation (e.g., "unemployment," "health concerns"), with links to the relevant program websites and to application forms.

Nunavut Family Services (www.gov.nu.ca/familyservices)

Call or browse the website to find community support, career development services, and social support.

<u>Legal Services Board of Nunavut</u> (www.nulas.ca)

As the territory's legal aid plan, LSB is responsible for providing legal services to financially eligible Nunavummiut in the areas of criminal, family, and civil law.

Remember: As health care providers, it is our responsibility to provide complete and detailed information that accurately portrays our patients' health status and disabilities.

It is **NOT** our role to serve as the gatekeepers for income security.

Supporting Material*

- Free Community Tax Clinics: http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdls/vlntr/clncs/nu-eng.html
- DrugCoverage.ca: http://www.drugcoverage.ca/en-ca/
- Canada Benefits: http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca/
- Nunavut Department of Family Services: http://gov.nu.ca/familyservices
- Non-Insured Health Benefits for First Nations and Inuit: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/index-eng.php [v]
- [vi] PovNet: http://www.povnet.org/find-an-advocate/nu
- [vii] Form T2201: http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pbg/tf/t2201/README.html
- [viii] Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction: http://www.makiliqta.ca/en
- [ix] Workers' Safety & Compensation Commission: http://www.wscc.nt.ca/
- $To see who is an eligible \ Non-Insured \ Health \ Benefits \ Client: \underline{http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/benefit-prestation/index-eng.php}$
- [xi] Fact Sheet on Systemic Racism on Indigenous Peoples in Canada: http://www.cfpc.ca/uploadedFiles/Resources/PDFs/SystemicRacism_ENG.pdf
- [xii] National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health's "Poverty as a Social Determinant of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Health": http://www.nccah-ccnsa. ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/21/2015 02 16 FS SDOH Poverty Updated EN Web.pdf
- [xiii] About the Canada Child Benefit program: http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4114/t4114-e.html
- [xiv] How to calculate your Canada Child Benefit: http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/ccb/clcltyrccb-eng.html

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 - *Please note Statistics Canada does not collect or compile data directly measuring poverty in Nunavut, such as the Low Income Cut-off (LICO), Low-Income Measurement (LIM), or Market Basket Measure (MBM).
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This Tool has been modified from the Ontario version that was originally developed as part of the Knowledge Translation in Primary Care Initiative which is led by CEP with collaboration from the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) and the Nurse Practioners' Association of Ontario (NPAO). Clinical leadership for the development of this tool was provided by Dr. Gary Bloch MD CCFP and was subject to external review by primary care providers and other relevant stakeholders. This modified Tool was funded by the College of Family Physicians of Canada. The Ontario version of this tool was adapted from the version created in 2013 by Dr. Gary Bloch MD CCFP, Ontario College of Family Physicians and its Poverty and Health Providers Committee. This tool is an adaptation of the Ontario tool.

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