Development of a Poverty Intervention Tool for Edmonton's Inner City Community

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Introduction

Poverty is:

- Increasingly recognized as a chronic debilitating condition
- Associated with increased risks of hypertension, diabetes, COPD, cardiovascular disease and depression
- A predictor of premature mortality

Poverty intervention tools are emerging to support primary care teams. However:

- There are currently no community-driven resources around navigating poverty in Edmonton
- Edmonton's inner city community confirmed the need for patient-centered, co-designed resources

The primary objective of this project was to create a poverty resource guide written by and for Edmonton inner city community members.

- The resource guide is focused on poverty-related advocacy such as applying for governmental assistance programs and how to stretch one's dollar.

Design

Participatory action research:

- Semi-structured focus group interviews to determine key priorities for poverty-related advocacy and navigation
- Interview topics included applying for governmental assistance programs and survival skills relevant to low income contexts
- Iterative content development from February 2016-February 2017
- Context expert review (medicine, nursing, social work, housing, policy)
- Iterative formatting with graphic designer January-March 2017

Participants

Eight community members:

- Have lived or worked in Edmonton's inner city and have lived experience with poverty
- >50% indigenous to reflect actual population demographics

Invited to identify as co-authors:

- Active contributors to co-dissemination

Resource Guide

Navigating Organizational Resources

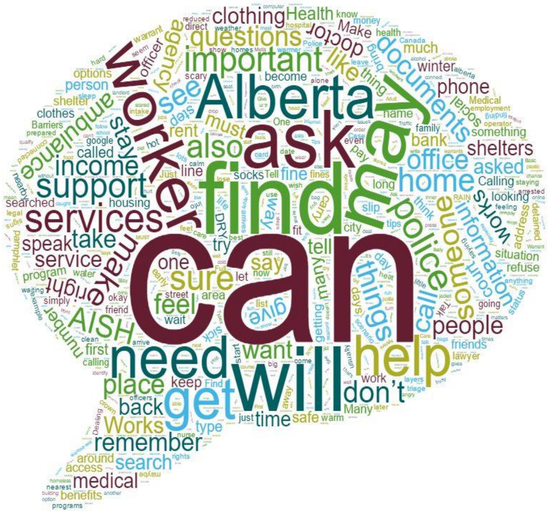
- Emergency Services
- I Need Money $$$
- Identification
- Status

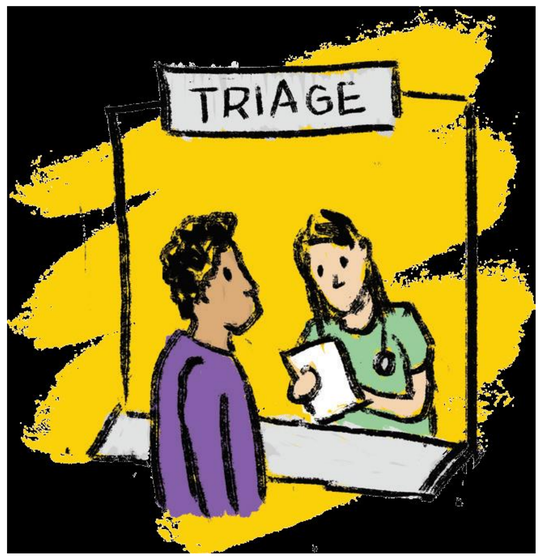
Essential Skills

- Medicine Wheel
- Basic Needs
- Surviving the Seasons
- Shelter

Results

- The resource is written and formatted in a street-accessible way that covers topics that are specific and important to the Edmonton inner city community.
- The resource is divided into two sections:
- 1) Accessing governmental/organizational resources, and 2) Stretching the value of existing income and essential skills for living within the inner city community
- An additional insert was compiled to list Edmonton-specific resources.





Outcome Measures

- The primary outcome is a community-authored written poverty intervention resource booklet.
- Resource uptake and evaluation will be assessed informally through communication with community members.
- Feedback obtained from the community will dictate revisions to future editions of this guide and potential adaptation of the guide for use in other municipalities.

Keeping ID safe

There are ways to keep your ID safe. When sleeping at a shelter, you can ask staff to store ID in a safe place, you can also tuck your ID into your socks or undergarments while you sleep (this will not be the most comfortable but it will keep your ID safe!). You can also store your ID with your other belongings when you check them in at the shelter!

Remember, you don't always need to carry your ID and important documents (birth certificates, citizenship certificates), most times, all you need is a photocopy. Store your ID some place safe so you don't have to carry it with you. There are programs around your city that can store your ID safely and securely for you!

Check out the "ID storage services" section in the attached pamphlet for a list of resources.

Conclusion

A community-driven poverty intervention tool will help to increase the accessibility of governmental and other organizational resources for individuals living in poverty and to equip individuals with more applicable and accessible information on available supports.

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