

Poverty Reduction Action Plan

Preliminary Findings from Public Engagement Activities

June 2018

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

The Public Engagement Process

The Public Engagement Process consists of:

- 2 Surveys - public and service providers
- 11 Small Group Conversations – invite only
- 6 Community Conversations – open to public

Public Surveys

- **1075 Islanders completed the public survey**
- 40% have a yearly household income of less than \$50,000
- 47% one income families
- 40% have mental health issues
- 28% have a disability

Public Surveys

- 27% single parent families
- 13% on social assistance
- 9% from the LGBTQ2 community
- 5% Indigenous
- 3% new immigrants

Service Provider Surveys

- **50 in total**
- All work with one or more of these populations:
 - People on social assistance
 - Women
 - Families
 - People with mental health issues
 - Single parents
 - Seniors
 - People dealing with homelessness
 - People with addiction issues
 - People looking for employment
 - People with disabilities

Small Group Conversations

- 11 small group conversations were held with 170 service providers/people lived experience:

People on Social Assistance	Low income/seasonal workers
Seniors	Newcomers and immigrants
General service providers (2)	Women
People with disabilities	Indigenous people off reserve
Indigenous people on reserve	Youth

Public Community Conversations

- 6 community conversations open to the public
- Schedule:
 - Souris, Wednesday, June 6, Saint Mary's Hall
 - Montague – Thursday June 7, Wellness Centre
 - Wellington – Monday, June 11, Centre Scolaire-Communautaire
 - Charlottetown – Tuesday, June 12, Murphy Centre
 - O'Leary – Wednesday, June 13, Community Centre in the Fire Hall
 - Summerside – Thursday, June 14, Community Connections

Preliminary Findings

Barriers/Challenges/Issues that contribute to poverty:

- Housing costs/options
- Wage rates/minimum wage
- Social assistance, pension and EI rates
- Food and utility costs – e.g. heat, electricity, etc.
- Childcare costs and availability
- Difficulties navigating the system/accessing services

Preliminary Findings

- Cost of health services and supports – e.g. prescription drugs, eye glasses, dental care, etc.
- Government support and service criteria - e.g. need to make below a certain amount to qualify
- Cost of transportation/limited public transportation
- Limited job opportunities - seasonal jobs/limited work hours
- Cost of continuing education

Preliminary Findings

Top 5 areas that Islanders want the Action Plan to focus on:

- Housing
- Employment and wages
- Food security
- Social services and supports
- Health services

Preliminary Findings: Suggestions for action

Housing

- More low income housing that is safe and well maintained
- Rent rates based on income – 25% of total income

Preliminary Findings: Suggestions for action

Employment and Wages

- Higher minimum wage
- Basic Guaranteed Income
- Revise EI and social assistance systems to support attachment to the workforce
- Help with continuing education and career training
- Support for small businesses/enterprises
- Life skills training in schools and through employment programs – e.g. budgeting, healthy cooking, etc.
- Fair taxes

Preliminary Findings: Suggestions for action

Food Security/Social Services and Supports/Health Services

- Increase social assistance rates and ceilings for food, utilities, etc.
- Increase pension rates – e.g. seniors, disability, etc.
- Universal/subsidized drug care, eye care and dental care
- Transportation supports
- Better coordinated services – one-stop-shop so services are easier to access and navigate
- Long-term planning and government commitment to policy and system changes

Thank you

Your input will be included in the final report.

For more information on the Poverty Reduction Action Plan, including a discussion paper, fact sheets and regular updates, visit our website at:

www.princeedwardisland.ca/poverty-reduction

Or email:

povertyreduction@gov.pe.ca