

Good morning everybody.

Thank you for being here to discuss the role of FCN/ parish nurses in supporting housing and food security.

I developed a fixation on this matter during COVID. actually retired when the pandemic arrived, but as it was only 18 months since my retirement, I applied for license reinstatement to volunteer as a nurse wherever needed. Vaccine outreach and admin was still a year away, and the most immediate need was infection control which led to people being isolated in their homes with limited access to resources, especially food. So I delivered meals on behalf of non profit organizations that had to pivot away from their usual food banks and meal programs.

Also Zoom tutored high school students living in tower communities of high priority neighborhoods. Zoom format allowed insight to home lives where large families live together in cramped quarters along with insufficient food supplies.

What I realized was that home and food insecurity has become reality for so many, many people. Once the pandemic receded, the images didn't leave me and I realized I took for granted the value of home and food security. I decided to find ways to support home and food security in my community.

Housing and Food Security is a very complex concern.

It can be political, controversial, open to interpretation, and dependent on perspectives and perception.

For our purposes, I've attempted to distill it down to a basic level of what we, in our "role" as FCNs/ spiritual care providers should be aware of (knowledge) around the "housing and food security realities" of our times, and how we might respond.(action, interventions, skills required).

Psalm 27:13 NIV says, "I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" or "I would despair if I didn't believe in Gods goodness in the land of the living" (the world).

1. Housing settings of all type, including their Boards of Directors, need volunteers - Charity Village

https://www.charityvillage.com/jobs?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=1716458324&gbraid=0AAAAAD_gwm995cy3aOvB0_ftb6CMrFHxe&gclid=Cj0KCQiAg63LBhDtARIsAJyGHZ6AYf17ljZBw3nnyiW4zZmlLTxspTCTIMWvPpZqD8n2DyYZtDxaGEAaArrdEALw_wcB#init?loc=toronto&kw=volunteer

2. Ending Food insecurity requires more than donating to Food Banks and innovative solutions are underway e.g. promotion of urban agriculture - Toronto Urban Growers

<https://torontourbangrowers.org>

Housing Safety and Food Security are the Physical Environment Determinant of Health (DoH)

How might an FCN support this particular DoH?

Two main ways

1. As RNAO members we're called to action and advocacy for health equity in general.

RNAO Mission Statement; ...“Advocate for healthy public policy, promote excellence in nursing practice, and power nurses to actively influence and shape decisions that affect the profession and the public they serve. <https://rnao.ca/about/mission>”

2. As Faith Community Nurses/ Spiritual Care providers, we're called by faith and affirmed by a community to promote the integration of faith, health, healing and wholeness in a variety of ways that reflect the context of the faith community.

CNO Quality Assurance

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<https://www.cno.org/quality-assurance/quality-assurance>

Learning Plan

1. Reflect on practice and
2. Identify learning needs
 - areas that need professional development
 - a) what are the key issues r/t food security
 - reasons for increasing food bank need?
 - are there alternatives to food banks that would decrease food insecurity?
 - b) what are the key issues r/t housing system in general and how affect clients
 - types of housing
 - roles of levels of government, business
3. Develop two learning goals e.g.
 - a) learn the resources available to clients r/t food security

or learn alternatives to food banks in order to end food insecurity

b) learn where advocacy and political pressure is needed to increase affordable housing supply

or learn governance of housing projects

or learn supportive housing skills

4. Link learning goals to CNO Code of Conduct 6 principles

- respect client dignity
- provide inclusive, culturally safe care by practicing cultural/religious humility
- provide safe competent care
- interact respectfully with health care system
- act with integrity in clients best interest
- maintain public confidence in nursing

3. Describe learning activities - see List of Resources

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or

learn alternatives to food banks in order to end food insecurity

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4. Reflect

How apply new knowledge in practise

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Unemployment = 8% considered high

Hidden Homelessness over 1 million in Canada in

1. precarious/ unstable/temporary situations awaiting permanent arrangements.
2. permanent, but unsuitable, uncomfortable conditions such as unsafe indoor temperatures for example, during the summers of the pandemic “stay home advisory” folks were stuck inside in horrible heatwaves.

Note: legal indoor temperature requirement for rental units and cooling rooms in a building cannot be more than 26 degrees C during the summer. Still too hot??

Note: Tower communities often have no pleasant safe outdoor space to be in

3. permanent, possibly supported in some ways, but isolated with no extras e.g. Seniors, Disabled physically / neurocognitively, such as group / care home settings where there may be staff, but no family / parents die, *no spending money, no personal supplies, Christmas or birthday presents (CLT)*

Subsidized Housing Wait Time

= 11-15 years for studio to 3 bedroom units

Av market rent (AMR) in T.O.

1 bdrm \$1500

2 bdrm = \$2700.00

80% of Affordable program

What Toronto is doing - see Resource List

HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan

Toronto Builds = retain public land for community purposes

Housing Now = hybrid model of selection to get a home in a new builds 50/50 random lottery or take from chronological wait list who's waited longest

FOOD

Five As of Food Security

<https://continuing.torontomu.ca/public/category/courseCategoryCertificateProfile.do?method=load&certificateId=194754>

Availability: Sufficient food for all people at all times.

Accessibility: Physical and economic access to food for all at all times.

Adequacy: Access to food that is nutritious and safe, and produced in environmentally sustainable ways.

Acceptability: Access to culturally acceptable food, which is produced and obtained in ways that do not compromise people's dignity, self-respect or human rights.

Agency: The policies and processes that enable the achievement of food security.⁹

<https://211central.ca/results/?searchLocation=Toronto&topicPath=473&latitude=43.69006&longitude=-79.57165>

Food bank use up to 4.1 million visits acc to Daily Bread Food network

1/10 T.O. residents use food banks

¼ are children

Grocery prices too high for almost everyone

Communities often too far from affordable food/grocery sources/ aka "Food Deserts"

Over crowding ...too many mouths to feed

Choosing rent vs healthy food such as fresh fruit and vegetables

Under discussion

Food banks may not be the answer to food insecurity?

Promotion of urban agriculture Toronto Urban Growers

<https://torontourbangrowers.org>

FCNIG AGM 2026 Housing and Food Security Learning Resources

Tools For Churches

<https://www.evangelhall.ca/category/tools-for-churches/>

General Help Resources

https://211central.ca/#subtopic_anchor

Housing / Municipal

Housing Help

<https://211central.ca/results/?sa=in&searchLocation=Toronto&latitude=43.69006&longitude=-79.57165&l=&sd=25&ss=Distance&searchTerms=&exct=0&topicPath=489>

Toronto Housing Charter

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/948f-Toronto-Housing-Charter-2020.pdf>

Housing T.O Action Plan

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/94f0-housing-to-2020-2030-action-plan-housing-secretariat.pdf>

Poverty Reduction Strategy

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/poverty-reduction-strategy/>

Rental Housing Rights/Information

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/housing-shelter/rental-housing-rights-information/>

Indoor Temperatures

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/housing-shelter/rental-housing-rights-information/rental-housing-standards/indoor-temperatures-in-apartment-units/#:~:text=Property%20Standards%20Bylaw%20.-.Heating%20Bylaw.requirements%20in%20the%20Heating%20Bylaw%20.>

Housing / Provincial

Residential Tenancies Act (RTA),

Ontario law governing landlord-tenant relationships is meant to protect tenants from unfair rent hikes and evictions, provides rules for rent regulation, and balances

landlord/tenant rights. Applies to apartments, houses, care homes, mobile homes, and land lease communities, but excludes some specific housing types.

Note: Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) handles disputes.

<https://tribunalsontario.ca>

Recent Changes (Bill 60)

Faster Eviction for Non-Payment: 7 days' notice (down from 15) for unpaid rent.

Personal Use Evictions: Landlords giving 120 days' notice for personal use no longer need to compensate tenants or find alternative housing.

Shorter Appeal Period: The time to appeal an eviction reduced from 30 days to 15 days.

December 2025 saw record housing starts for that month, driven by Ontario, but overall supply still lags demand - Ontario has [fallen behind its goal](#) of building 1.5 million new homes across the province over 10 years, prompting Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Rob Flack to say last year it was now a "soft" target. *Ontario has now proposed pausing affordable housing requirements (inclusionary zoning) near transit hubs until 2027, arguing it hinders construction.*

Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA)

<https://www.rhra.ca>

Ontario Non Profit Housing Association

Ontario Non Profit Housing Association / Action

<https://onpha.informz.net/informzdataservice/onlineversion/ind/bWFpbGluZ2luc3RhbmNlaWQ9NDU5OTQ4MiZzdWJzY3JpYmVyaWQ9NDM0OTM4MTAw>

Housing / Federal

Canadian Mortgage and Housing (CMHC) estimates Canada needs to nearly double housing starts to 430,000-480,000 units annually to meet demand by 2035. Canada's

response to housing needs involves the [National Housing Strategy](#) (NHS) with programs like [Build Canada Homes](#) to boost supply, federal/provincial initiatives for affordable construction, and policy debates on zoning/permits, while grappling with high demand, rising costs, and the challenge of creating the 430,000-480,000 needed annual housing starts by 2035, as highlighted by CMHC and public concern. **National Housing Strategy (NHS) is a 10+ year plan with significant funding commitments (over \$74 billion by late 2025) to build, repair, and protect affordable housing, focusing on vulnerable groups like women and children. Build Canada Homes:** designed to speed up affordable homebuilding, with funding for specific projects and infrastructure support.

Food Security Municipal/Provincial

Daily Bread Food Bank

https://www.dailybread.ca/get-involved/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=sep_google_search_dbfb_branded&utm_content=daily_bread_branded&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=21013104131&gbraid=0AAAAA9TIPZNH7fFiZzWKRIPeYzib5eOC&gclid=CjwKCAiA4KfLBhB0EiwAUy7GASytjEbKJZLFUvO7Ihm0AcaCD40bVLpslCtNyrapatPZjQf7VQeqkBoCtqAQAvD_BwE

Toronto Food Charter

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2018/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-118057.pdf><https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2018/hl/bgrd/backgroundfile-118057.pdf>

Grow Ontario (environmental impact? / Greenbelt)

The Grow Ontario Strategy is the Ontario government's plan to strengthen its agri-food sector by boosting innovation, enhancing the food supply chain's resilience and efficiency, and expanding market opportunities for farmers and processors, ultimately ensuring a stable, high-quality food supply and driving economic growth. It focuses on increasing adoption of technology, research, and sustainable practices to make Ontario's food system more competitive and less vulnerable to disruptions. It funds initiatives like the Grow Ontario Accelerator Hub (delivered by Bioenterprise Canada) and the Grow Ontario Market Initiative, which support innovation and market access. In essence, Grow Ontario is a comprehensive plan to modernize and fortify Ontario's food system for future challenges and opportunities, making it a leader in innovation and sustainability.

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://bioenterprise.ca/innovators/grow-ontario-accelerator-hub-goah/&ved=2ahUKEwj5lMeUyZCSAxVMxuYEHRGHKloQFnoECA4QAQ&usq=AOvVaw2zwqiTqKKLS006QEErjh94>

Food/Meals Resources

<https://211central.ca/results/?searchLocation=Toronto&topicPath=473&latitude=43.69006&longitude=-79.57165>

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