

Poverty is not always apparent: In Newfoundland and Labrador, 14.8% of families live in poverty.<sup>1,11</sup>

## 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)<sup>2</sup>

## 2 Poverty is a Risk Factor

Consider:

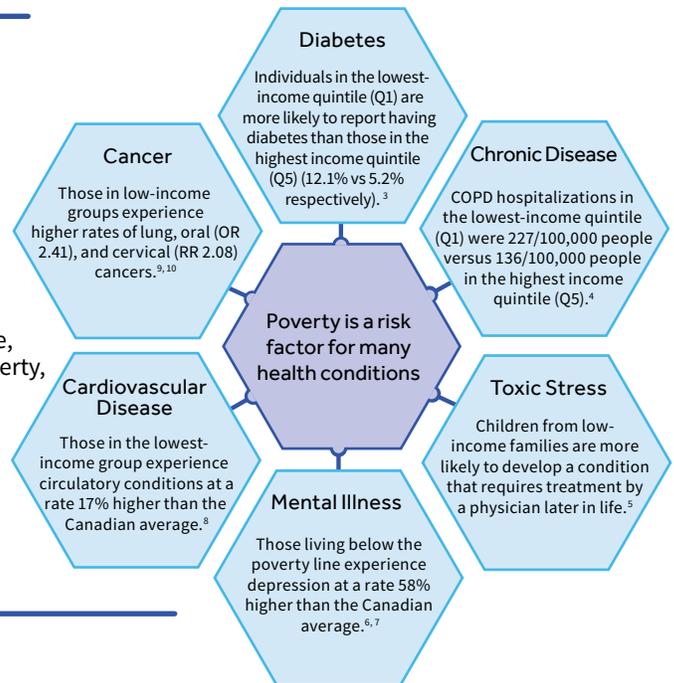
New immigrants, women, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQ+ are among the highest risk groups.

Example 1:

If an otherwise healthy 35-year-old comes to your office, without risk factors for diabetes other than living in poverty, you consider ordering a screening test for diabetes.

Example 2:

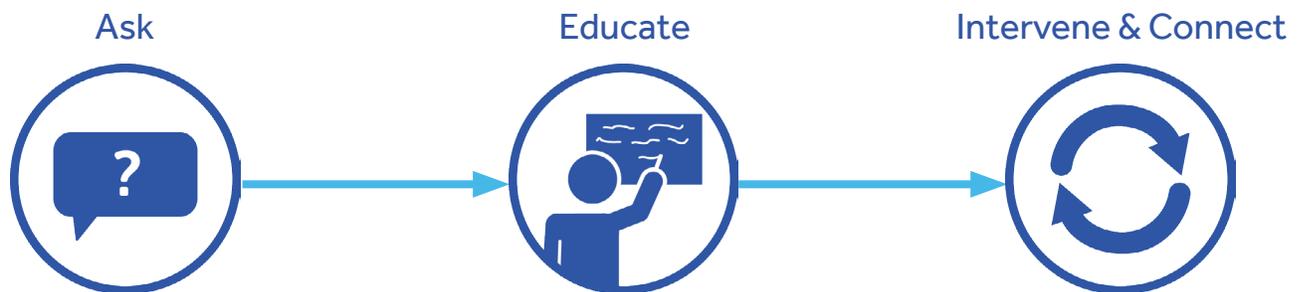
If an otherwise low-risk patient who lives in poverty presents with chest pain, this elevates the pre-test probability of a cardiac source and helps determine how aggressive you are in ordering investigations.



## 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: The patient must have up-to-date tax filings and have a Medical Care Plan (MCP) Card provided by the Department of Health and Community Services. Visit [drugcoverage.ca](#) for more options.



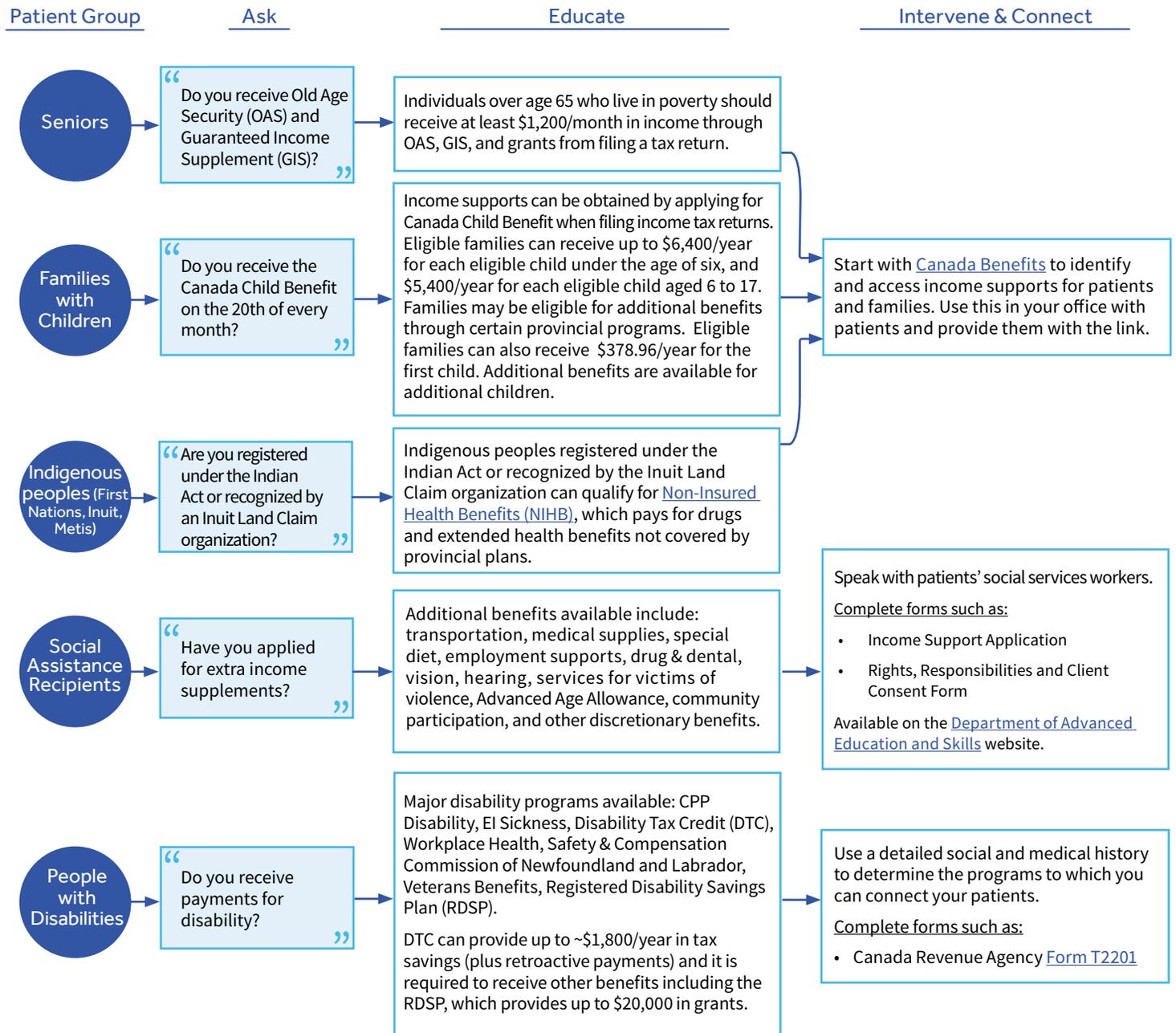
Ask questions to find out more about your patient—their living situation, and the benefits they currently receive.

Ensure you and your team are aware of resources available to patients and their families. Start with [Canada Benefits](#).

Intervene by connecting your patients and their families to benefits, resources, and services.

[more interventions on reverse](#)

# Intervening can have a profound impact on your patients' health



## Key Resources

<p><a href="#">Canada Benefits</a> (<a href="http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca">www.canadabenefits.gc.ca</a>)</p> <p>Provides a full listing of federal and provincial 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.</p>	<p><a href="#">Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (PLIAN)</a> (<a href="http://www.publiclegalinfo.com">www.publiclegalinfo.com</a>)</p> <p>Provides general information and education about the law to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, with the intent of increasing access to justice.</p>
--	---

**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\*

- [i] Free Community Tax Clinics: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/ndvdl/vlntr/clncs/nl-eng.html>
- [ii] DrugCoverage.ca: <http://www.drugcoverage.ca>
- [iii] Canada Benefits: <http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca/>
- [iv] Social Housing in Newfoundland: <http://www.nlhc.nf.ca/programs/programsRental.html>
- [v] Non-Insured Health Benefits for First Nations and Inuit: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/index-eng.php)
- [vi] PovNet: <http://www.povnet.org/regional/newfoundland>
- [vii] Form T2201: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pbg/tf/t2201/README.html>
- [viii] Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Health and Community Services: <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/index.html>
- [ix] Workplace Health, Safety & Compensation Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador: <http://www.whscc.nl.ca/home.whscc>
- [x] To see who is an eligible Non-Insured Health Benefits Client: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/benefit-prestatiion/index-eng.php>
- [xi] Fact Sheet on Systemic Racism on Indigenous Peoples in Canada: [http://www.cfpc.ca/uploadedFiles/Resources/PDFs/SystemicRacism\\_ENG.pdf](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](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/21/2015_02_16_FS_SDOH_Poverty_Updated_EN_Web.pdf)
- [xiii] Directory of Services for Youth (St. John's): <http://www.thrivecyn.ca/directory-of-services>
- [xiv] Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP): <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/prescription>
- [xv] Department of Health and Community Services: <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/prescription>
- [xvi] Department of Advanced Education and Skills: <http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/faq/incomesupportfaq.html>
- [xvii] Getting Help Finding a Job (St. John's): <http://www.stjohns.ca/living-st-johns/newcomers/working-st-johns/getting-help-finding-job>
- [xviii] About the Canada Child Benefit program: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4114/t4114-e.html>
- [xix] How to calculate your Canada Child Benefit: <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/ccb/clcltyrccb-eng.html>

\*These supporting materials are hosted by external organizations, and as such the accuracy and accessibility of their links are not guaranteed. CEP will make every effort to keep these links up to date.

---

## References

- [1] Statistics Canada. Table 111-0015, Family characteristics, Low Income Measures (LIM), by family type and family type composition, Annual (table). CANSIM [Internet]. 2015 Jun 25 [cited 2016 May 04]. Available from: <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&id=1110015>  
\*Please note that the measure used to calculate this statistic is the Low Income Measure after tax.
- [2] Brcic V, Eberdt C, Kaczorowski J. Corrigendum to Development of a tool to identify poverty in a family practice setting: a pilot study. *Int J Family Med* 2015.
- [3] Canadian Institute for Health Information. Health inequalities interactive tool: Diabetes [Internet]. 2015 Nov [cited 2016 May 2]; Available from: <https://www.cihi.ca/en/factors-influencing-health/socio-economic/health-inequalities-interactive-tool-diabetes-combined>
- [4] Canadian Institute for Health Information. Trends in income-related health inequalities in Canada [Internet]. 2015 Nov [cited 2016 May 2]; 1-293. Available from: <https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productFamily.htm?locale=en&pf=PFC3024&lang=en>
- [5] Chen E, Martin AD, Matthews KA. Trajectories of socioeconomic status across children's lifetime predict health. *Pediatrics*. 2007 Aug; 120(2): e297-303.
- [6] Fryers T, Melzer D, Jenkins R. Social inequalities and the common mental disorders: a systematic review of the evidence. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol*. 2003 May; 38(5): 229-237.
- [7] Smith KL, Matheson FI, Moineddin R, Glazier RH. Gender, income and immigration differences in depression in Canadian urban centres. *Can J Public Health*. 2007 Mar-Apr; 98(2): 149-153.
- [8] Lightman E, Mitchell A, Wilson B. Poverty is making us sick: a comprehensive survey of income and health in Canada [Internet]. Toronto: Wellesley Institute; 2008 Dec [cited 2015 Aug 29]; 1-38. Available from: <http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/povertyismakingussick.pdf>
- [9] Conway DI, Petticrew M, Marlborough H, Berthiller J, Hashibe M, Macpherson LMD. Socioeconomic inequalities and oral cancer risk: a systematic review and meta-analysis of case-control studies. *Int J Cancer*. 2008; 122: 2811-2819.
- [10] Shack L, Jordan C, Thomson CS, Mak V, Møller H. Variation in incidence of breast, lung and cervical cancer and malignant melanoma of skin by socioeconomic group in England. *BMC Cancer* [Internet]. 26 Sep 2008 [cited 2015 Aug 29]; 1-10. doi: 10.1186/1471-2407-8-271
- [11] Statistics Canada. Canada's total population estimates, 2013. Table 2 annual population estimates [Internet]. 2013 Sept. 26 [cited 2016 May 2]. Available from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/130926/dq130926a-eng.htm>

---

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 Practitioners' 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.

This Tool was developed for licensed health care professionals in Newfoundland and Labrador as a guide only and does not constitute medical or other professional advice. Primary care providers and other health care professionals are required to exercise their own clinical judgment in using this Tool. Neither the Centre for Effective Practice (“CEP”), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Family Physicians, nor any of their respective agents, appointees, directors, officers, employees, contractors, members or volunteers: (i) are providing medical, diagnostic or treatment services through this Tool; (ii) to the extent permitted by applicable law, accept any responsibility for the use or misuse of this Tool by any individual including, but not limited to, primary care providers or entity, including for any loss, damage or injury (including death) arising from or in connection with the use of this Tool, in whole or in part; or (iii) give or make any representation, warranty or endorsement of any external sources referenced in this Tool (whether specifically named or not) that are owned or operated by third parties, including any information or advice contained therein.



Poverty: A Clinical Tool For Primary Care Providers is a product of the Centre for Effective Practice. Permission to use, copy, and distribute this material for all non-commercial and research purposes is granted, provided the above disclaimer, this paragraph and the following paragraphs, and appropriate citations appear in all copies, modifications, and distributions. Use of the Poverty: A Clinical Tool For Primary Care Providers for commercial purposes or any modifications of the tool are subject to charge and use must be negotiated with Centre for Effective Practice (Email: [info@effectivepractice.org](mailto:info@effectivepractice.org)).

**For statistical and bibliographic purposes, please notify the Centre for Effective Practice ([info@effectivepractice.org](mailto:info@effectivepractice.org)) of any use or reprinting of the tool. Please use the below citation when referencing the tool:**

Reprinted with Permission from Centre for Effective Practice (October 2016). Poverty: A Clinical Tool For Primary Care Providers (NL). Toronto: Centre for Effective Practice.

Developed by:



With support from:

THE COLLEGE OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS  
OF CANADA



LE COLLÈGE DES  
MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE  
DU CANADA

NEWFOUNDLAND AND  
LABRADOR COLLEGE OF  
FAMILY PHYSICIANS



LE COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS  
DE FAMILLE DE TERRE-  
NEUVE-ET-LABRADOR

A CHAPTER OF THE COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS OF CANADA  
UNE SECTION DU COLLÈGE DES MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE DU CANADA