



Sudbury & District

Health Unit

Service de
santé publique

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dès
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November 7, 2014

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dear Community Partner:

Re: 2014 Nutritious Food Basket Survey

On behalf of the Sudbury & District Board of Health, I am pleased to share information from the 2014 Nutritious Food Basket survey for the Sudbury & District Health Unit area.

Each year all Ontario public health units are required to do a local costing of healthy eating, or the Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) survey. The Sudbury & District Health Unit follows a standardized protocol to measure the cost of healthy eating in our area. The NFB survey demonstrates year after year that households on social assistance or minimum wage cannot afford a nutritious diet after paying for housing costs and other basic necessities such as transportation, clothing, and personal care items.

The NFB highlights the nutritional vulnerability of social assistance recipients and those earning a minimum wage.

To help share this message more broadly, this year we created an infographic on the 2014 NFB. This communication tool is attached for your use – we would welcome any feedback you might have.

Further, please be advised that on October 16, 2014, the Board of Health carried the following motion:

WHEREAS the Sudbury & District Board of Health annually monitors the cost of healthy eating in the Sudbury & District Health Unit (SDHU) area in accordance with the Nutritious Food Basket Protocol and the Population Health Assessment and Surveillance Protocol per the Ontario Public Health Standards, 2008; and

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WHEREAS the 2014 costing results continue to show that individuals and families living on social assistance, or low incomes, cannot afford healthy food after paying for housing and other necessities and therefore may be at higher risk for food insecurity;

WHEREAS food insecurity has serious consequences for mental, physical and social health of both children and adults;

WHEREAS although Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy – Realizing Our Potential makes commitments to reducing poverty, its changes to the social assistance system are inadequate to ensure individuals and families will no longer live in poverty;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Sudbury & District Board of Health continue to urge the Province to further increase social assistance rates to reflect the actual cost of nutritious food and housing by considering the annual results of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Nutritious Food Basket and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rental Income (Ontario) reports;

FURTHER THAT the Sudbury & District Board of Health request that the Province index social assistance rates to inflation (i.e. the Ontario Consumer Price Index) to keep up with the rising cost of living;

FURTHER THAT the Sudbury & District Board of Health request the Province to include consideration of food insecurity as an indicator of deprivation to measure progress of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy;

FURTHER THAT the Sudbury & District Board of Health share this motion and supporting materials with appropriate community agencies, boards, and municipalities throughout the SDHU catchment area.

The Board of Health is calling on the provincial government to further its commitment to poverty reduction by strengthening its strategy, *Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy – Realizing Our Potential*. The Board is advocating for the inclusion of food insecurity as a key indicator measuring progress on poverty reduction. We anticipate the feasibility of this recommendation as food insecurity is routinely measured by the Canadian Community Health Survey. We also note that another Canadian jurisdiction has introduced extensive social assistance reform that appears to have contributed to a significant decrease in food insecurity rates.

Thank you for your interest and commitment to working on ensuring individual and household food security. The Sudbury & District Board of Health looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with you on these and other issues to support health for all in our communities.

Sincerely,



Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

Enclosure

cc: Fern Dominelli, Chief Administrative Officer, Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
Annette Reszczynski, Interim Executive Director, Social Planning Council of Sudbury
Catherine Matheson, General Manager, Community Development, City of Greater Sudbury
Laura Urso-Whalen, Children Services Program Coordinator, City of Greater Sudbury
Cheryl McCaw, Chair, LaCloche Foothills Food Network
Tamara Gagnon, Co-Chair, Greater Sudbury Food Policy Council
Bridget King, Chair, Advisory Committee, Sudbury & District Good Food Box Program
Sue Rumble, Child Poverty Task Force, Manitoulin Island
Denis Constantineau, Executive Director, Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury
Michel Mayer, Executive Director, Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury-Est
Blair Flynn, Administrative Coordinator, Myths and Mirrors Community Arts
Michael Cullen, Executive Director, United Way Sudbury and Nipissing Districts
Carol Dodge, Executive Director, Sudbury Better Beginnings Better Futures
Lianne Bergeron, Homelessness Network
Sudbury Community Legal Clinic
Directors of Education
Mayors/Reeves, Sudbury & District Health Unit Constituent Municipalities