

Callout for involvement: Health Providers Against Poverty

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It's inevitable through our clinical and public health practice to see the impact of poverty, and to see why the WHO and PHAC state that it's the single largest social determinant.

In Canada, 1 in 7 people live below the low-income cut-off. I'm based in Toronto, where the number is closer to 1 in 4.

From a public health perspective, reducing poverty and income inequality makes financial and ethical sense. There's exciting talk about living wages, guaranteed annual income, and ending homelessness - but this will only be achieved by applying pressure. This is why Health Providers Against Poverty (HPAP) was formed 10 years ago - as a way for us to use our social capital to advocate for change to lift people out of poverty and reduce the health effects of those facing it.

HPAP is a grassroots coalition of healthcare workers advocating and acting to reduce the impact of low income. This involves educating the public and change-makers on the link (and cycle) of poverty and health, lobbying government on specific asks, and developing clinical tools to aid practitioners to assist patients with income security.

Our recent campaigns have included [a call for paid and protected sick days](#) (as 1.6 million Ontarians risk losing their job if taking a single day off), [increased minimum wages](#), [keeping Toronto warming shelters open throughout winter](#), and [opposing the closure of shelter beds](#).

We're Toronto-based, but slowly spreading - a branch has been founded in Nova Scotia by the inimitable Dr. Monika Dutt, and there's strong interest in Newfoundland.

This is where I reach out to you, fellow residents. We're looking to go national, with either independent branches throughout Canada or strong voices we can call on to be a provincial lead.

If you'd like to get involved, contact us at healthprovidersagainstpoverty@gmail.com. To check us more out, head to www.healthprovidersagainstpoverty.ca, www.facebook.com/HealthProvidersAgainstPoverty/, or https://twitter.com/HPAP_Ontario