



Vancouver
Primary Care Network



Vancouver
Division of Family Practice
A GPSC initiative

Let's Talk Food: Vancouver Food Security Forum

Tuesday, May 26th, 2026

VANCOUVER PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS



Provide a solid overview of:

- Food insecurity
- Current food security situation in Vancouver
- Available food security resources, organizations, tools, and materials
- How to communicate with and support your patients

Post-Event:

- Participant survey
- Provide practical information
 - Links to resources covered this evening – Division webpage
 - Guide: talking to and supporting patients



Last year:

- PCN 3 Steering Committee - identified food security as an important & timely issue
- PCN 3 provider survey
- In-person event for PCN 3 providers

This year:

- Several PCN Steering Committees ranked food security as a priority issue for their PCNs
- Expanded scope of event to include all PCNs in Vancouver

Thank you to the PCN Steering Committees for their interest in this important topic.



Organization

Little Mountain Neighbourhood House

Collingwood Neighbourhood House

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House

DuMonde Helping Hands Foundation

Food Stash Foundation

Guru Nanak's Free Kitchen Society

TRRUST Collective Impact



Food Security & Resources Overview

Ian Marcuse

Vancouver Food Justice Coalition
Vancouver Neighbourhood Food
Networks

Lived/Living Experience Story

Dawn Royle

Student, Social Work Program
Langara College

Clinical Perspective

Alena Spears

Clinical Dietitian
Hope to Health Clinic
Hope to Health Research
and Innovation Centre

Welcome!





At the heart of our work is community development and the principle that everyone has the right to dignified access to nutritious food and meaningful community connections. VNFNs work within geographical neighbourhoods and support community-based equitable food access, education, skill building, and advocacy.

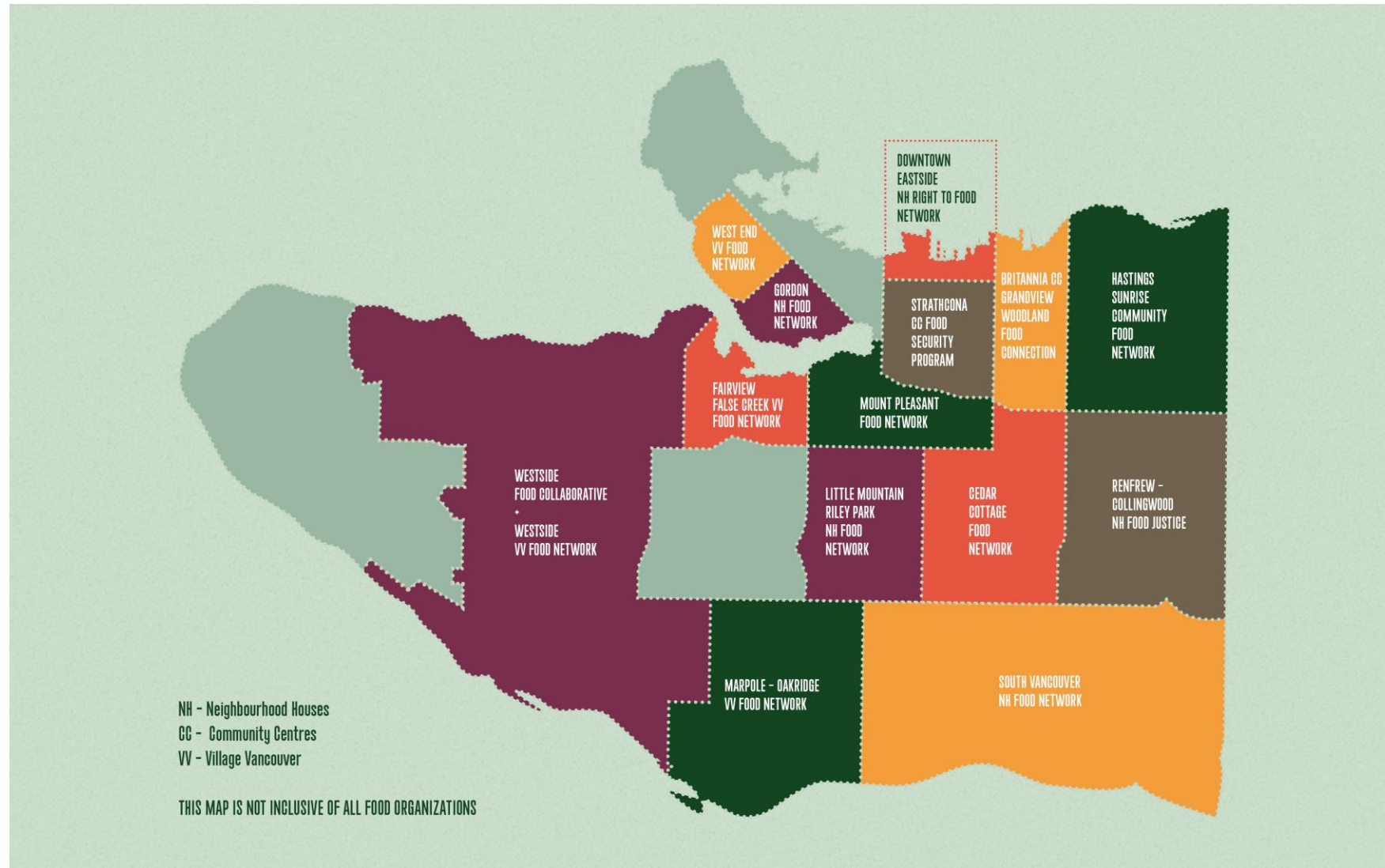




VNFNs are a uniquely Vancouver network model

- Rooted in local Community – responsive to the unique food needs and cultures of each neighbourhood
 - Decentralized structure
 - Highly complex web of project collaboration
 - Embedded in Community Centres and Neighbourhood Houses providing wrap-around services
 - Diverse programming offering a range of participation
 - Grounded in relational development
-

Food Security Needs in Vancouver – Ian Marcuse





Vancouver Healthy City Strategy

1. Food Systems
2. Care and Support Networks
3. Income and Economy
4. Belonging and Connection
5. Active Living
6. Arts, Culture and Learning
7. Climate change and disaster resilience
8. Good health throughout life





Food security is achieved when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Food justice treats access to healthy, culturally appropriate, and sustainable food as a human right and seeks to dismantle systemic racism, economic inequality, and exploitation within the food system.



Area Plans & Priority Zones

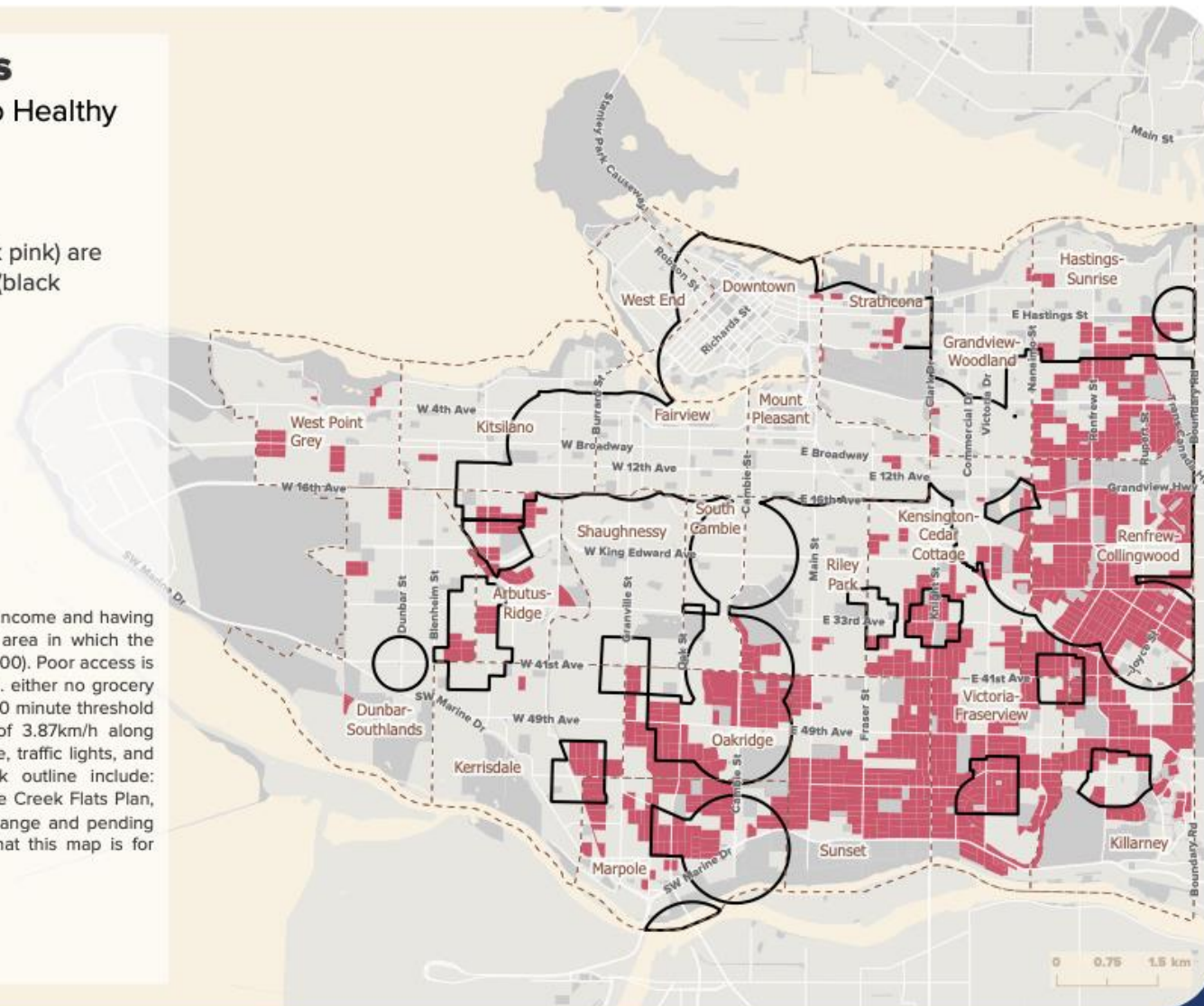
City of Vancouver - Equitable Access to Healthy Food Retail Study



Depiction of where Priority Retail Zones (dark pink) are located in relation to area plans and policies (black polygon outlines)

- Food Retail Priority Zones: low income + access score of 0 or 1
- Area Plans and Policies
- Parks & Other Non-Residential
- Neighbourhood Boundary

Food Retail Priority Zones are areas considered to be both low income and having poor access to grocery stores. Low income is defined as an area in which the median market income was below the living wage in 2019 (\$35,000). Poor access is defined as an area where the grocery access score is 0 or 1 (i.e. either no grocery stores or only one small grocer is within a 10-minute walk). This 10 minute threshold is based on a typical able-bodied pedestrian walking pace of 3.87km/h along sanctioned walking routes, and accounts for delays due to slope, traffic lights, and crosswalks. Area plans and policies symbolised with a black outline include: Broadway Area Plan, Rupert & Renfrew Station Area Plan, False Creek Flats Plan, Downtown Eastside Plan, draft areas for Villages (subject to change and pending Council approval), and Transit Oriented Areas (TOAs). Note that this map is for illustrative purposes only.





Vancouver Food Asset Map



Vancouver Food Asset Map

To add assets or provide feedback, email vchfam@gmail.com
The Bosa Family Foundation provides funding
503,664 views
Published on February 13
[SHARE](#)

- No Cost or Low Cost Meals - Adults
- Kitchen and Cooking
- No Cost or Low Cost Grocery Items**
 - Free Grocery Items
 - Free Food Pantries / Community Fridges
 - Low Cost Grocery and Food Markets
 - Food Shopping and Delivery
 - Farmer's Market Coupon Programs
 - Free Grocery Items
 - Other / No data
- Gardening and Growing Food
- Youth & Young Adult Food Programs
- Indigenous Food Programs**
 - Indigenous Food Program
 - Indigenous Gardens

[Screenshot](#)



One Pager Neighbourhood Resources

 WESTSIDE FOOD COLLABORATIVE

FREE AND LOW-COST COMMUNITY FOOD RESOURCES WESTSIDE

Kits Cares Community Market
LOW COST AND FREE
Every Thursday, 12.30pm-2.30 pm
Redemption Church
3512 W 7th Ave W, Vancouver.
Kits Cares Community Market sells low cost and subsidized produce and canned goods. Cash, debit and credit accepted. There is also a cafe area where guests can enjoy a hot drink and a sweet treat at no cost. Free items of food available

Jewish Family Services - Cooked with Chesed Meal Delivery - LOW COST
Subsidized meal delivery service for seniors and those who need additional support. (\$10 for 5 prepared meals). Meals are Kosher Pareve (BCK certified): contains no dairy, meat, or shellfish. For more information or to register contact the JFS care line at 604-558-5719 or <https://www.jfsvancouver.ca/services/food-services/cooked-with-chesed/>

Seniors Lunch at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House **LOW COST**
Tuesdays 11:00am – 1:00pm.
2305 W 7th Ave, Vancouver
Cost: \$7
Light exercise, engaging conversation, entertainment and a delicious meal.
To register: contact Sara at 604.736.3588 ext 129 or sarad@kitshouse.org

Farm-to-Plate Marketplace **SUBSIDIZED**
Pickup on Thursday evenings in Kitsilano.
Order fresh food directly from local farmers at farmtoplatemarketplace.com or by calling 778-896-6754. Weekly \$10.00 subsidy available.

Heart to Home Meals **LOW COST**

Kits House Living Room Food Distribution
FREE
Fridays, 11am-1pm
Kitsilano Neighbourhood House, 2305 West 7th Ave
Community space open to all Monday-Friday 9am-4:30pm - no membership or registration required! Features amenities, free WiFi, tea and coffee, and community connections. On Fridays, limited number of fresh and non-perishable food items available to take home - no registration required, no questions asked, while supplies last.

Community Fridge and Food Pantry - Kits House - FREE
Vine Street & 7th Ave – outside Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
Fresh and non-perishable items. Take what you need – leave what you can.

Community Fridge - Kitsilano 13th Ave - FREE
Take what you need – leave what you can.
Located in the alley behind 3066 W 13th

Community Fridge - UBC - FREE
Take what you need – leave what you can.
Everyone is welcome: students, staff, community members.
Located outside Sprouts Cafe in the basement of Life Building, 6133 University Blvd

Community Food Pantry- West Point Grey
FREE
Non-perishable items, dry, canned goods. Take what you need – leave what you can.
Trimble St. & 8th Ave



**Britannia Bulk Buy Food Program,
Britannia Community Centre,
Grandview Woodland Food
Connection**





Little Mountain Neighbourhood House Food Hub, Yard Garden Harvest Project





QUEST
non-profit grocery markets

Quest Food Exchange





Farm to Plate Marketplace





South Vancouver Neighbourhood House Food Hub, Community Food Navigator





F O O D
S T A S H
F O U N D A T I O N

Food Stash Rescued Food Box Program





VANCOUVER
NEIGHBOURHOOD
FOOD NETWORKS

www.vancouverfoodnetworks.com

info@vancouverfoodnetworks.com

Donations





My Journey With Food Insecurity





Where I found food resources





Recognizing the Signs

Invisible signs



- The fear
- The guilt
- The hunger
- The trauma
- The exhaustion

Recognizable signs



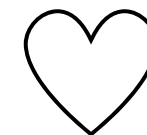
- Fatigue
- Deteriorating mental health
- Worsening chronic illness
- Low iron
- Medication noncompliance
- Sleep problems
- Poor school performance



Practical supports

- Resource lists
- Food program referrals
- School meal information
- Indigenous food supports
- Social worker referrals
- Dietitian referrals
- Grocery gift cards
- Visible information in clinics about food insecurity supports

Kindness and compassion goes further than you think





YOU ARE NOT ALONE

IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM FOOD INSECURITY, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO LET US KNOW. WE'RE HERE TO HELP. LET US HELP YOU.

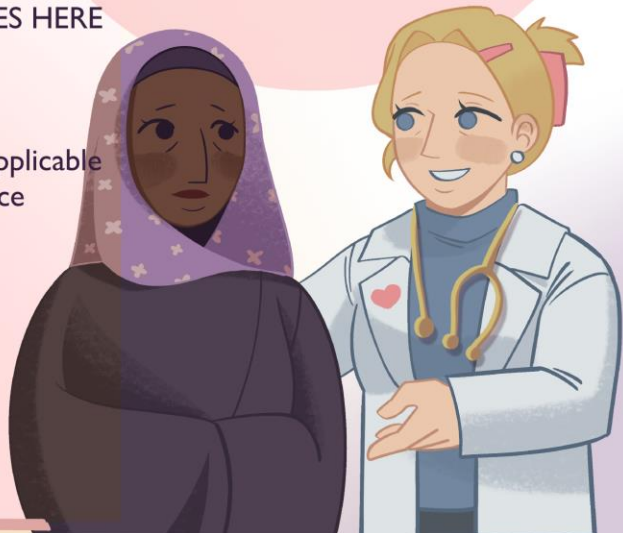
Food insecurity can be difficult and isolating. You do not have to face it alone. Our goal is to connect people with support and resources without judgment.

If you, or someone you know is suffering from food insecurity, we encourage you to ask us about resources and support that will best help you. Ask your physician today, if you, are in need of help.

It's what we're here for.

INSERT RESOURCES HERE

- Emergency help
- Food access
- Housing/shelter if applicable
- Application assistance



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Dietitian at Hope to Health (H2H) Clinic

- Chronic disease management (e.g. HIV, diabetes, kidney disease, osteoporosis, wounds)
- Gut disorders (e.g. IBS, constipation, diarrhea, heartburn, dysphagia)
- Disordered eating/Eating disorder recovery
- Malnutrition/Nutrient deficiencies
- Food Insecurity



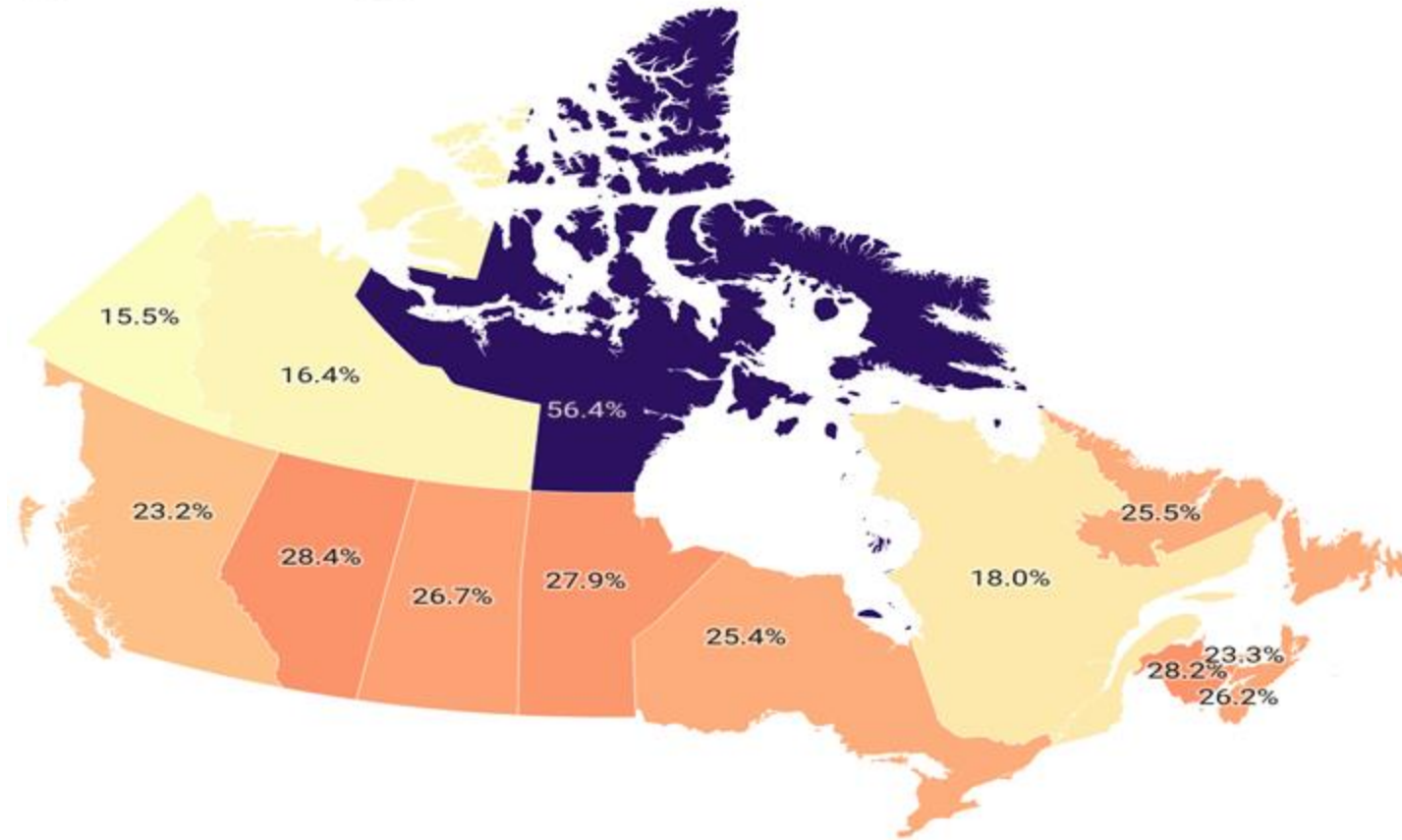
H2H Food Insecurity:

- N=348
- Food Insecure= 65%
- Severe Food Insecurity= 26%

People living in food-insecure households in Canada, 2025

Hover for more information.

Percentage of people living in food-insecure households



Canadian Income Survey (CIS) 2024. Data on food insecurity for CIS are collected in the year following the survey reference year. We've chosen to label the data using the year of data collection to better reflect the timing of experiences captured.

Please note data quality varies across jurisdictions. Refer to Statistics Canada data table for data quality indicators.

Map: PROOF • Source: Statistics Canada Table 13-10-0834-01 • Created with Datawrapper



Case Presentation- Ms. A

Type 2 Diabetes - A1C 14.9%

Medical Hx: Fatty Liver, mental illness
(depression, PTSD, ADHD)

Past hx AUD x 14 years (remission 1 year)

Social Hx: Basic IA, low-income housing,
supportive partner

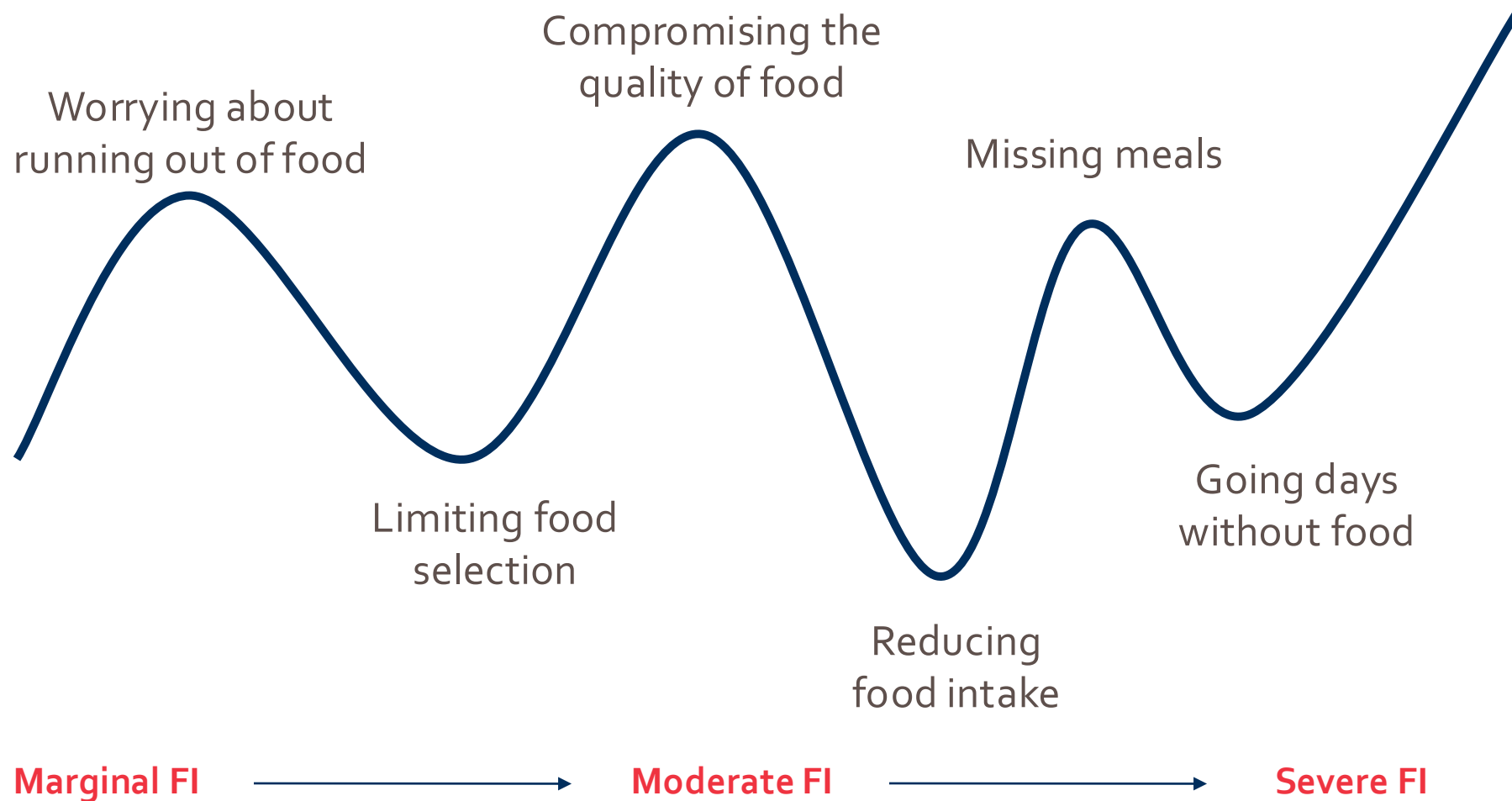
Started on metformin BID.

How do we navigate care?





Severity of Food Insecurity





Screening for FI: Poverty Screening Tool



1

Do you have difficulty making ends meet at the end of the month? (Yes or no)

2

In the past month, was there any day when you or anyone in your family went hungry because you did not have enough money for food? (yes or no)

CMTF:

https://nutritioncareincanada.ca/sites/default/uploads/files/Malnutrition%20Toolkit/Poverty_Screening.pdf



Solutions for FI?

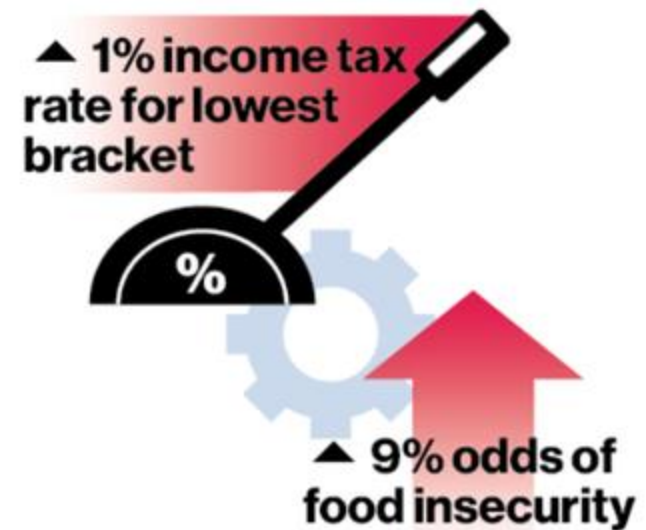
Increased minimum wage



Increased welfare income



Lower income tax for lowest bracket



Adapted from: Men, F., Urquia, M. L., & Tarasuk, V. (2021). The role of provincial social policies and economic environments in shaping food insecurity among Canadian families with children. *Preventive Medicine*, 148, 106558.



What we can offer as clinicians: Ministry Funding

Diet Allowance- Assists to meet costs of a therapeutic diet (E.g. diabetic diet \$60/mo, High Protein \$65/mo, Restricted Sodium \$15/mo, Dysphagia \$65/month). Can only receive one at a time.

Short Term Nutrition Supplement (STNS)- 3 month oral nutrition supplement for people who have an acute medical condition that temporarily increases energy requirements and has resulted in weight loss.

Monthly Nutrition Supplement (MNS)- Long-term supplement of \$225/month for those on PWD who have severe, chronic medical conditions and meet at least 2/7 deteriorations of health (e.g. malnutrition, wasting, vital organ deterioration).

Food Crisis Grants- \$50 grant available once per month.

Furniture Crisis Grants (E.g. for cooking equipment if required for a health condition)- Must include quote



What we can offer as clinicians: Free/Low Cost Meals and Food Resources

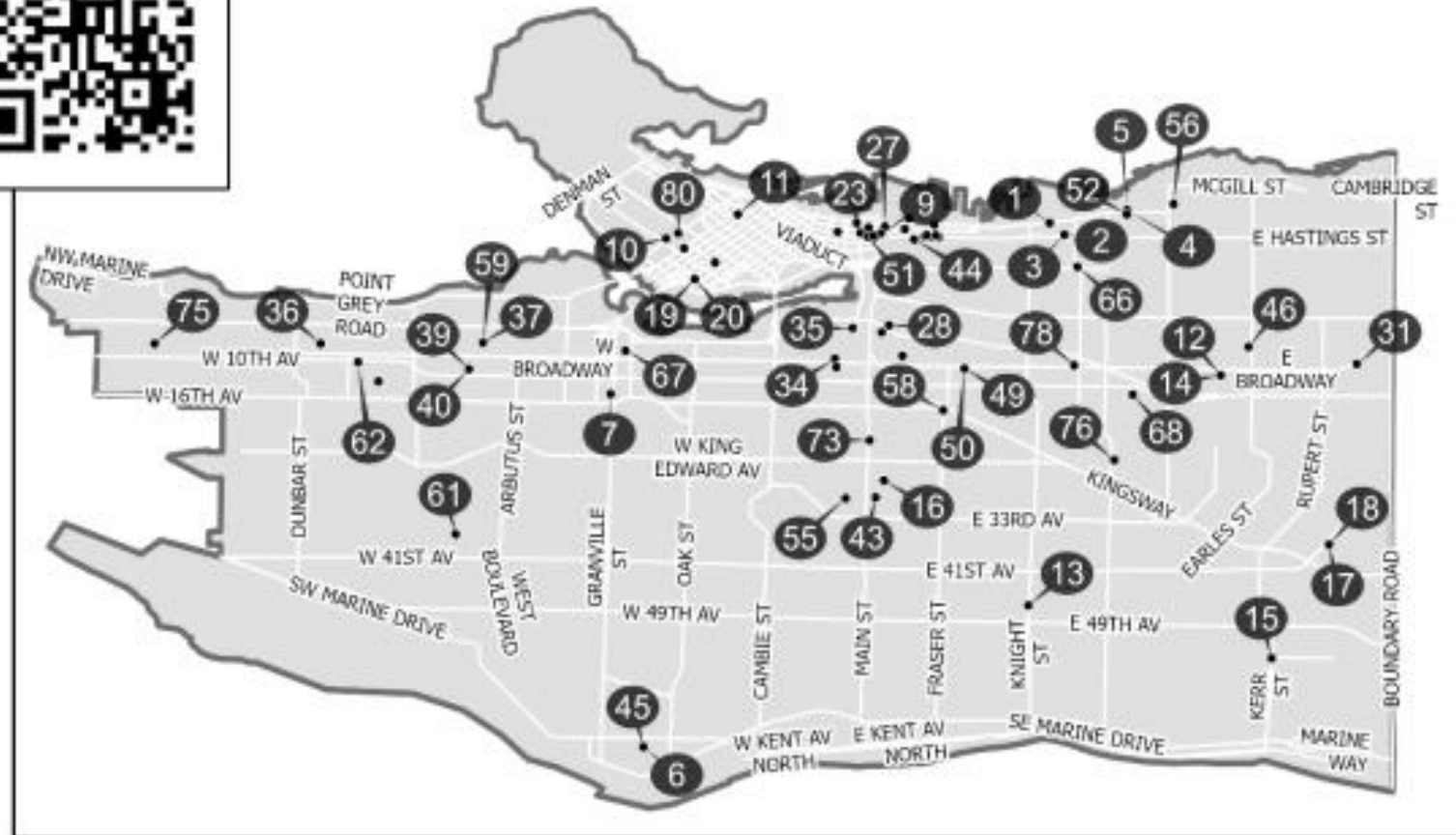
Vancouver Food Asset Map

VCH Food Access Maps:

<https://www.vch.ca/en/service/food-asset-maps#resources>

Fraser Health Food Access Maps:

<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/free-and-low-cost-food-directory>





What we can offer as clinicians: Realistic dietary Recommendations

Unhoused or no cooking facilities:

- Beverage choices
- Limiting desserts
- Meal consistency
- Acknowledge that choices are limited



At the grocery store:

- Label reading
- Local low cost grocery stores
- Where to find lower cost ingredients
- Sources of more affordable high fibre foods and proteins



Limited cooking facilities:

- Shelf-stable protein and veggie options
- Longer-lasting produce
- Microwave cooking tips



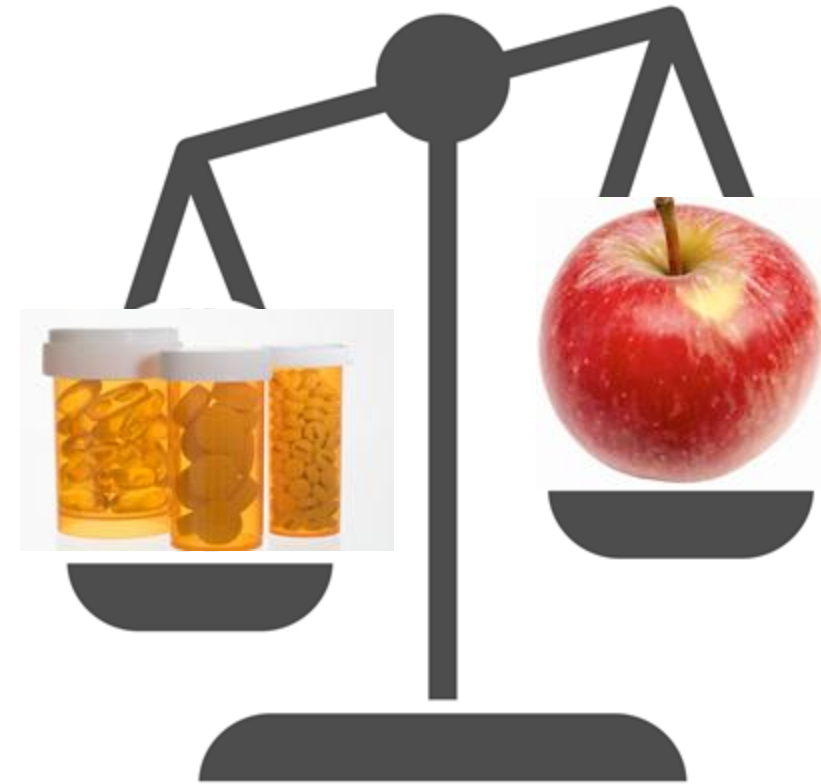
Cooking knowledge:

- How to use unfamiliar, nutrient dense foods to the client's current meal pattern
- Amping up pre-packaged foods
- Ways to season and make food tasty



What we can offer as clinicians: Ensure appropriate medical advice

- Review medications to ensure appropriate for living situation and to optimize costs
- Avoid blanket statements or judgement





Case Presentation- Ms. A



Ask questions! Determine barriers to care.

#1- Address FI: Increase income. Find coverage for meds/supplies.

#2- Discuss lower cost food options, ensuring they are appropriate for living situation and cultural preferences.

#3- Individualized education and goal setting.



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Thank You & Have a Great Night!

PCN Steering Committees & PCN Providers

VANCOUVER PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS