

Universal Periodic Review (Canada) – Research Annex

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**Wellesley Institute-supported research**

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Building Capacity for CBR with Racialized Groups: Towards a Richer Understanding of Health Disparities	Access Alliance	Black Creek CHD; Toronto Public Health, Family Services Ass., York University	Income security amongst racialized communities, how racialized inequalities in the labor market affect health; and strategies for overcoming racialized income and health inequalities.
National Housing Report Card	The Wellesley Institute		A detailed and current analysis of national housing spending and issues.
Access to Safe Shelter: FTMs, Homelessness and Housing	The 519 Church Street Community Centre (Trans Shelter Access Project)	Fred Victor Centre, Native Men's Residence, Ernestine's Women's Shelter, City of Toronto, Turning Point Youth Services, Ryerson University, School of Social, York University, Department of Political Science	Shelter needs of members of the homeless Female-to-Male (FTM) trans community, unique barriers that FTMs experience, development of a cross-sector response.
The Street Health Report	Street Health Community Nursing Foundation	Centre for Research on Inner City Health, St. Michael's Hospital	A comprehensive study of the health and well-being of homeless people.
Blueprint to End Homelessness in Toronto	The Wellesley Institute		A practical and effective 10-year strategy to end homelessness in Toronto; including a detailed framework document with statistical analysis, historical review and detailed geographical overview.
Impact of supportive housing: Community, social, economic attitude changes	The Dream Team, AIS	University of Toronto	Identify how relationships between supportive housing residents and their communities change over time, and document how supportive housing influences the social and economic health of surrounding neighbourhoods.

Coming Together: Homeless Women, Social Support and Housing	Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto	Regent Park Community Health Centre, Sistering	Staged photography exploring how women and trans-women who are homeless and marginally housed build support networks with each other in order to survive.
Critical Characteristics of Supportive Housing: residents, service providers	University of Toronto	Canadian Mental Health Association, Toronto Branch	Develop an understanding of important components of supportive housing for persons with serious mental illnesses and addictions.
Effects of supportive housing on health status and service utilization of homeless and hard-to-house	Centre For Research on Inner City Health, St. Michael's	Centre for Research on Community Services, Evangel Hall	Compare individuals entering supportive housing and wait-list individuals to determine changes in housing status, health status, alcohol and drug use, legal involvement, quality of life, and use of inpatient, emergency and outpatient health care services.
Mental Health Needs of Transitional Street Youth	Ryerson University	St. Michael's Hospital, Covenant House, Yonge Street Mission's Evergreen Centre for Street Youth	Develop a plan for intervention to meet the mental health needs of street youth.
Positive Spaces, Healthy Places	Fife House Family Medicine, McMaster University	Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy, Ontario AIDS Network, Bruce House, AIDS Niagara, AIDS Thunder Bay, York University	Provide a space for PHAs to voice housing needs in order to better develop the case for social change in housing programming and policy for PHAs that reflects the diversity within the PHA community.
Count us In! Inclusion and Homeless Women in Southeast Toronto	Ontario Women's Health Network (OWHN)	Toronto Christian Resource Centre, Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse,	Investigate how health and social services in Toronto, and Ontario, can be more inclusive and promote health and well-being of marginalized groups. Homeless and under-housed women in Downtown East Toronto led research.
A study of local response to the food and nutrition needs of homeless people	Dept. of Nutritional Sciences, University of Toronto	Second Harvest, Daily Bread Food Bank, Street Health, CRC, Fred Victor, Dixon Hall, Sherbourne HC, City of Toronto, Weston-King Drop in Centre, Youthlink Inner City	Develop a conceptual framework for future evaluations of the effectiveness of local responses to the nutrition needs of homeless people.
Failing the Homeless: barriers in ODSP for Homeless People with Disabilities	Street Health Community Nursing Foundation		Identify the barriers preventing eligible homeless people from accessing ODSP, while helping study participants to secure the benefits they are entitled to.
Creating a Space Where we are all Welcome	Fred Victor Mission	City of Toronto Public Health, Regent Park Community Health Centre	Develop a framework for a broad based supportive service which includes integrated community services offering a continuum of care, and a comprehensive health strategy.

## **Other major housing / homelessness research:**

### **Poverty, Housing and Homelessness: Issues and Options**

(First Report of the Subcommittee on Cities of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, June 2008)

“Faced with mounting debts and economic recession in the early 1990s, Canada’s federal and provincial governments reduced their provision of, and funding for, social programs. As a consequence of this withdrawal, Canadian cities faced a growing obligation to support their low-income citizens, without the resources to adequately fulfill the obligation. Shrinking programs and services to sustain those in low income constrained the ability of low-income city dwellers to ‘play the roles, meet the obligations and participation in the relationships and customs of their society’ – resulting in further disadvantage to major cities whose human capital deteriorated as a result.”

### **Right at home: Consultation on Human Rights and Rental Housing in Ontario**

(Ontario Human Rights Commission, May 2008)

“Adequate housing is essential to one’s sense of dignity, safety, inclusion and ability to contribute to the fabric of our neighbourhoods and societies... Many of us take for granted the security that an adequate and affordable roof over our heads provides. But, this is not the reality in Canada and in Ontario for many tenants. The Commission heard widespread views that it is Ontario’s most vulnerable families and individuals who bear the human toll of the inadequacies in the province’s rental housing sector. The connections between housing and human rights protected under the Code were brought out in submissions by housing providers, tenant organizations and others and have been recognized in other reports. The racialization of poverty and the overlaps between mental illness and homelessness were raised repeatedly throughout the consultation.”

### **Trends and Issues in Affordable Housing and Homelessness**

(Federation of Canadian Municipalities, January 2008)

“It’s a too-familiar scene in Canada’s big cities: The weather turns steadily colder until temperatures dip well below freezing and the city’s shelters quickly fill to capacity. Social service agencies work frantically with municipal officials to find extra spaces for dozens of people who normally sleep on the streets. Sometimes it can mean collecting homeless people in city buses and adapting empty buildings as emergency shelters. Winter in Canada is not a time for anyone to be without shelter.”

### **An Update to TD Economics’ 2002 Report on the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Economy**

(TD Economics, July 17, 2007)

“Consider the area of poverty, which is among the most complex challenges confronted in the GTA. This issue is also among the most pressing. Newcomers to the region not only suffer from high and rising incidences of low-income, but they are staying there longer. And over the next 20 years, international immigration will likely be the area’s sole source of population growth.”

### **Losing Ground: The Persistent Growth of Family Poverty in Canada’s Largest City**

(United Way of Greater Toronto, November 2007)

“Most would not have predicted this (the growth of family poverty) at the start of the new decade. In 2000, economic indicators pointed to a robust and booming economy, and in many ways that outlook has held. Canada has enjoyed high employment, and strong job growth and corporate profits throughout most of the decade. But there were countervailing economic forces that made the economic picture less rosy in the City of Toronto... On every dimension of income examined, Toronto families lost ground, falling behind families in the rest of the country: overall family median incomes were lower, as were median incomes for both two-parent and lone-parent families, and overall family poverty rates were higher, as were those of both family types.”

### **The Three Cities Within Toronto: Income Polarization, 1970 to 2000**

(University of Toronto Centre for Urban and Community Studies, December 2007).

“Before the late 1970s, few people spoke about a “housing affordability problem.” Poor people were housed, albeit in poor-quality housing, and the middle-income majority could afford what the market had to offer. It is only when the percentage of those in the middle declined that we began to hear about “housing affordability” problems. If the incomes of a significant share of people in a city fall relative to the middle, the gap between rich and poor widens. Those closer to the bottom are more numerous and find it increasingly difficult to afford the largest single item in their budget – housing (either in mortgage payments or rent). This is what has happened in the City of Toronto and its inner suburbs since 1970.”

### **Understanding Freefall: The Challenge of the Rural Poor**

(Interim Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, December 2006)

“The rural poor are, in many ways, invisible. They don’t beg for change. They don’t congregate in downtown cores. They rarely line up at homeless shelters because, with few exceptions, there are none. They rarely go to local employment insurance offices because the local employment insurance office is not so local anymore. They rarely complain about their plight because that is just not how things are done in rural Canada.”

### **Affordable Housing in Canada: In Search of a New Paradigm**

(TD Economics, June 2003)

“Housing is a necessity of life. Yet, after ten years of economic expansion, one in five households in Canada is still unable to afford acceptable shelter – a strikingly high number, especially in view of the country’s ranking well atop the United Nations human-development survey. What’s more, the lack of affordable housing is a problem confronting communities right across the nation – from large urban centres to smaller, less-populated areas. As such, it is steadily gaining recognition as one of Canada’s most pressing public-policy issues.”

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**The Wellesley Institute** advances the social determinants of health through **community-based research**, **community engagement**, the informing of **public policy and social innovation**.

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