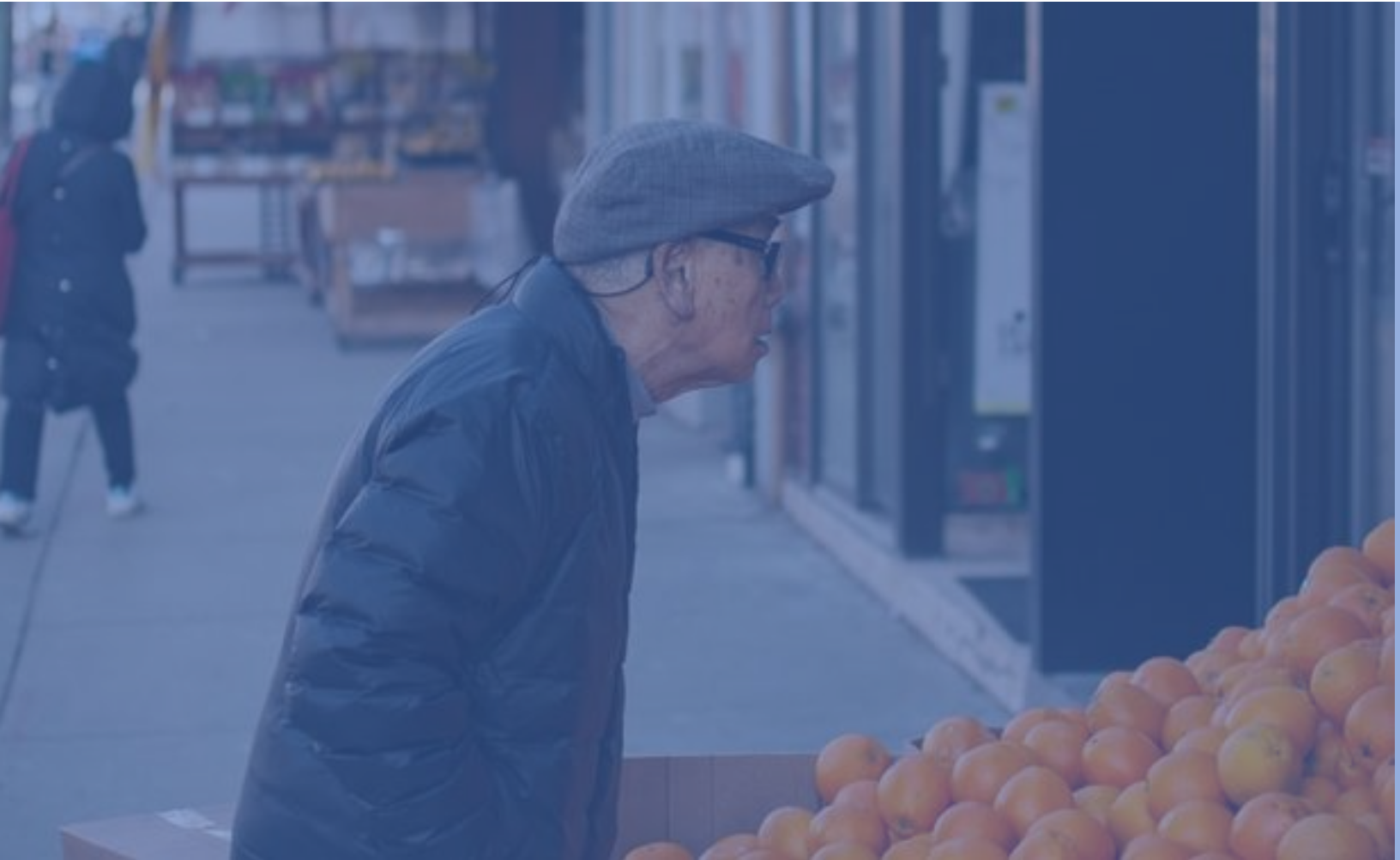


CHECKLIST

Improving Food Security and Nutrition for Community-based Seniors in British Columbia through Community Food Programs

June 2020



Prepared by Michael MacNeil, Master of Public Health

For the Community-Based Seniors Services (CBSS) Nutritional Supports Provincial
Working Group, hosted by United Way Healthy Aging (British Columbia)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
CHECKLIST	4
Additional considerations for culturally diverse seniors such as immigrants and newcomers:	6
Additional considerations for Indigenous seniors:	6
Appendix A: How-to Toolkits for various community food programs	7
Appendix B: Multilingual and multicultural nutritional resources and cultural competency toolkits	8
Appendix C: List of existing community food initiatives relevant to seniors in British Columbia	9
Appendix D: Other Key Resources	10



Introduction

The following checklist provides step-by-step guidance for community-based programs to improve food security and nutrition for community-based seniors in British Columbia. This checklist was developed using the key findings provided in an accompanied literature review (*‘Improving food security and nutrition for seniors in British Columbia: a literature review of existing approaches and best practices’*, MacNeil, June 2020); the checklist compliments the literature review’s ‘Recommendations’ section.

The steps provided in this checklist can be considered best or promising practices for community-based programs looking to address seniors’ food insecurity and malnutrition. CBSS (Community-Based Seniors’ Services) agencies are encouraged to consider these steps when planning a new food program or to enhance elements of an existing one.

CHECKLIST

ACTION ITEM	SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS	✓
<p>1. Adopt community-based collaborative approaches, planning actions that address the needs of seniors and the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a Community Food Assessment if needed to identify the level of household and community food insecurity, the existing mix of programs and services available, and where gaps exist in the community (see Appendix D for ‘How-to’). • Encourage nutritional screening of individual seniors, as this often leads to increased participation in food programs. 	
<p>2. Plan programs that contribute to the mix of existing food security initiatives in the community, including secondary and tertiary prevention, short-term and long-term relief, and those along the food security continuum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary prevention (e.g., nutrition education) is more suitable for seniors who are not already experiencing malnutrition and its effects; tertiary prevention (e.g., community meals) is more suitable for seniors who are already exhibiting overt signs. Both types are found to be effective in preventing further malnutrition in their respective target groups. • Short-term relief solutions, such as food banks, and long-term relief solutions, such as affordable markets, are both needed. • Coordinated activities along the food security continuum (i.e., charity, community development, and social enterprise) running in parallel are important to address food security in communities. 	
<p>3. Review best practices, tips, and action items specific to the type of food program planned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review evidence-informed ‘How-to’ guides for your specific program, e.g., a food bank, food delivery service; several have been developed and are available online (see Appendix A). 	
<p>4. Prioritize distributing nutritious, affordable, healthy, local, culturally appropriate food as a means of alleviating both hunger and malnutrition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See considerations for culturally diverse and Indigenous seniors below. • Use Nutritional Guidelines developed specifically for seniors in BC (see Appendix D). • Partner with local food distributors. 	
<p>5. Adopt and promote a holistic view of nutrition and nourishment and human dignity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic nutrition acknowledges food as a means of fulfilling social and cultural needs, forming a healthy attitude towards body image and eating for pleasure, honoring people’s ability to make food choices, recognizing the cultural significance of food. • Create a welcoming space, with helpful volunteers and no line-ups; creating a drop-in area can remove the need for a line, which are known to be stigmatizing. 	

<p>6. Enhance and maintain participation of seniors and create plans that support the sustainability of the program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known motivators for seniors’ participation in food programs include recognition of their own nutritional risk, personal health beliefs, influence from significant others and their environment, and encouragement from a doctor to eat healthy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are also known barriers to participation including lack of transportation to the facility, stigmatization, and restrictions in the frequency of assistance. • Collaborate with seniors and multiple sectors and organizations in the community. 	
<p>7. Create opportunities within food programs that provide social interaction and build social capital.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional intake and quantity of food consumed can increase by up to 40%–50% when around friends or family. • Social capital can be built through interventions that bring participants together to share activities or share in volunteering. 	
<p>8. Adopt person-centered approaches that meet participants’ social and cultural needs. If providing a meal, consider ‘mealtime practices.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person-centered approaches prioritize learning about each participant’s background, personal history, choices, and needs and incorporate this knowledge into the design of a program. • ‘Mealtime practices’ include stimulating environments, the ability to choose between options or select own food, and visually appealing and tasteful food. • Incorporate considerations for culturally diverse and Indigenous seniors (see considerations listed below). 	
<p>9. Offer an education component, which develops or enhances individual food skills and improves nutritional knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As mentioned, this type of intervention is considered secondary prevention and is most effective for seniors who are not experiencing overt malnutrition or its effects. • Education opportunities include classes or groups and workshops or seminars. • Some food programs have learning experiences inherently within them, such as community kitchens and community gardens. 	
<p>10. Develop partnerships with other sectors and organizations and connect program members to other supports, programs, and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking and partnering with neighbourhood agencies can build community support and prevent service duplication. • Consider organizations in the food industry, agricultural sector, social agencies, transportation, other food programs, governments, and businesses. • Existing food programs are great places for users to be connected with other supports, programs, and services that are available (including other non-food related health promotion activities). 	

Additional considerations for culturally diverse seniors such as immigrants and newcomers:

- Acknowledge that food security or sovereignty is not achieved unless culturally diverse seniors have access to culturally appropriate food.
- Allow for choice and selection whenever possible (e.g., use a voucher system, encourage the development of affordable markets).
- Include racially and culturally appropriate components in nutrition education initiatives and meal programs.
- Ensure the person purchasing food for a community food program has a culturally diverse knowledge of cooking.
- Consider common characteristics, dietary restrictions and food practices (around mealtime, etc.) of different groups, including religious groups (e.g., Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus): see Appendix B.
- Consider organizing workshops and events centered around traditional foods for different cultural groups and highlight traditional and/or cultural knowledge about nutrition.
- Use translated nutritional guidelines to support learning and/or distribute to culturally diverse seniors (see Appendix B).
- Adopt other non-food related best practices for engaging with culturally diverse populations. Prioritize maintaining or enhancing cultural competency and culturally adapting program interventions (see Appendix B).

Additional considerations for Indigenous seniors:

- Acknowledge that food security or sovereignty is not achieved unless Indigenous seniors have access to culturally appropriate food. For Indigenous peoples, this means access to market foods in the conventional system as well as traditional foods through traditional harvesting methods.
- Adopt non-food related best practices for engaging with Indigenous populations. Prioritize maintaining or enhancing cultural competency and culturally adapting program interventions (see Appendix B).
- Create or support opportunities for traditional harvesting methods if appropriate (i.e., hunting, fishing, gathering).
- Create or support opportunities for receiving and sharing of food and other cultural practices that lead to cultural values such as cooperation, reciprocity, respect, and relationships.
- Create or support opportunities where the transfer of traditional knowledge from Elders to younger generations and sharing of traditional foods takes place. These could be workshops, classes, community kitchens or gardens, or other educational programs regarding traditional food harvesting and food preparation.
- Use translated nutritional guidelines to support learning and/or distribute to Indigenous seniors (see Appendix B)

Appendix A: How-to Toolkits for various community food programs

- Community Kitchen Toolkit – developed by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador. See: https://www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community_Kitchen_Best_Practices_Toolkit.pdf
OR Community Kitchen and Community Meal Program Toolkit – developed by Community Food Centres. See: <https://cfccanada.ca/en/Learn/Resource-Library/Resource-Categories/How-to-start-a-community-meals-program?categoryid=5>
- Congregate Meal program Toolkit – developed by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. See: <https://wrha.mb.ca/wp-content/site-documents/community/seniors/files/congregate-meal-toolkit/2.1CongregateMealProgramGuidelines.pdf>
- Enhancing a Food Bank Toolkit – developed by Community Food Centres. See: <https://cfccanada.ca/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=8b59410d-87b9-4c6c-853c-f305e4326d58>
- How-to handbook for a variety of programs including cooking clubs, community gardens, good food boxes, voucher programs, and more – developed by Community Health Centres in Ontario. See: <https://www.fhc-chc.com/sites/default/files/reports/CHC%20Food%20Security%20Handbook%20-%20July%202012.pdf>
- Guide to gardening for Older Adults. See: https://ecosource.ca/wp-content/uploads/Get-Growing_Guide.pdf

Appendix B: Multilingual and multicultural nutritional resources and cultural competency toolkits

- The Government of B.C. has translated their Healthy Eating for Seniors Handbook into Chinese, French and Punjabi: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/seniors/health-safety/active-aging/healthy-eating/healthy-eating-for-seniors-handbook>
- The Dieticians of Canada have developed “Healthy Eating While Spending Less” guidelines adapted for different cultural groups, including South Asian, Latin Americans, Chinese, and African and Caribbean: <https://bc.healthycaringcore.ca/resources/tips-healthy-eating-spending-less-adapted-versions-chinese-south-asian-latin-americans>
- HealthLinkBC has guidelines for healthy eating and healthy aging for adults, available in Chinese, Farsi, French, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/healthy-eating-adults>
- Canada’s Food Guide has been translated into four Indigenous languages: Inuktitut, Ojibwe, Plains Cree, and Woods Cree: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/reports-publications/eating-well-canada-food-guide-first-nations-inuit-metis.html>
- The Community Tool Box by the University of Kansas has developed guidelines for adapting community interventions for different cultures and communities: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/analyze/choose-and-adapt-community-interventions/cultural-adaptation/main>
- The Community-based Seniors Services (CBSS) Intercultural Provincial Working Group, hosted by United Way Healthy Aging recently developed a toolkit and checklist for CBSS agencies looking to enhance the cultural competency and relevancy of their programs: <https://bc.healthycaringcore.ca/resources/toolkit-enhancing-cultural-competency-community-organizations-attached-checklist>
- Common dietary restrictions of all major religious groups: <https://www.chapman.edu/campus-life/fish-interfaith-center/files/religious-dietary-restrictions.pdf>.
- The First Nations Health Authority has developed Healthy Eating Guidelines for Indigenous individuals to make healthier food choices in their daily life or during group gatherings: https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/Healthy_Food_Guidelines_for_First_Nations_Communities.pdf

Appendix C: List of existing community food initiatives relevant to seniors in British Columbia

***Note:** Refer to the accompanied literature review (*i.e.*, Improving food security and nutrition for seniors in British Columbia through Community Food Programs: a literature review of existing approaches and best practices, *MacNeil, 2020*) for more details on each type.

- Affordable markets and voucher / coupon system
- Community Gardens and urban agriculture
- Community Kitchens
- Community Meals or Congregate dining (*i.e.*, with socialization)
- Day programs that also offer meals
- Events and food festivals
- Food banks
- Food Networks and Coalitions
- Free nutritional supports (for low-income populations)
- Gleaning
- Good food boxes or Food buying club.
- Grocery Support
- Home programs
- Meals on Wheels
- Multifaceted food programs that integrate two or more types of activities Umbrella organizations that provide food to community food programs
- Workshops and nutrition education

Appendix D: Other Key Resources

- Conducting a Community Food Assessment – developed by Provincial Health Services Authority (B.C.). See: <http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/communityfoodassessmentguide.pdf> and the Companion Tool, which assists with developing indicators: <http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/communityfoodsystemassessmentacompaniontoolfortheg.pdf>
- Healthy Eating Guidelines for Seniors
 - Developed by the BC Ministry of Health. See: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/people/seniors/health-safety/pdf/healthy-eating-seniorsbook.pdf>
 - Developed by the Dietitians of Canada. See: [https://www.unlockfood.ca/EatRightOntario/media/ERO_PDF/en/Seniors/Food-For-Healthy-Aging_E_Apr19-\(2\).pdf](https://www.unlockfood.ca/EatRightOntario/media/ERO_PDF/en/Seniors/Food-For-Healthy-Aging_E_Apr19-(2).pdf)
- Healthy Eating Guidelines for First Nations Communities (for individuals). See: https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/Healthy_Food_Guidelines_for_First_Nations_Communities.pdf