

## REPORT ON HEALTH, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SENIORS & YOUTH

As we know, many of our portfolio aspects overlap, such as: Health & Housing with poverty, homelessness, safety, childcare, clean water & appropriate, accessible food for all communities in Canada. Various age groups are more vulnerable than others, as mentioned in our President's Briefs to the Federal Government, the Pre-Budget Brief to the Minister of Finance and the recent special letters to various Federal Government Ministers on these subjects. See [Briefs on the NCWC website](#).

The very young and old, isolated and poor, and those marginalized groups of the 'working poor' struggling to survive are most at risk. Various indigenous and immigrant groups are poor, struggling and are at risk due to their lack of support and resources.

So many of the urgent current health, housing, seniors and youth issues have been mentioned in our recent reports; the solutions are urged in detail and the replies are slow in coming, delayed and very generalized. We have great hopes when each new Federal Government takes office and their promises are planned for implementation.

Many non-profit and private organizations have helped implement aspects of the suggested solutions to the national shortcomings in the health & housing fields.

The Federal Government is now struggling with the huge, immediate additional immigration needs of the desperate Syrian people, to be combined with our already stretched budgets for assimilating the many would-be immigrants on the country's waiting lists, both groups of whom need all types of support for young families and particularly women with many children. The churches, private companies and community groups prepared to sponsor the new refugees are a wonderful new source of support, but it may slow the progress of those already waiting for many months.

Seniors' issues are growing in many parts of Canada as many of our elderly are more isolated than in the previous century. Our youth seem to be less connected with supportive family and friends, requiring more innovative methods of helping those homeless, addicted, abused and in the criminal system in our big cities in particular. Mental health problems seem to be increasing for both these disparate age groups and the services, having been cut back in recent years, need to be replaced and improved.

Our recent and new NCWC annual Resolutions include: better food supply, the right to potable water everywhere, homecare access, federally funded HIV/Aids strategy following many cutbacks of medical clinics & services, improved access to prescription & generic drugs, treatment of seniors in care homes and retirement homes.

Each of the Conveners may have additional concerns and solutions in this newsletter.

***Sheila Pepper, VP, Social Development, NCWC***