



# 5 Key Take-A-Ways On THE RIGHTS TO HOUSING



## For Older Adults in BC

Resulting from the *Dialogue on Housing is a Human Right: New Actions to Solve Canada's Ongoing Crisis* sponsored by the **Simces and Rabkin Family Dialogue** on Human Rights in partnership with **Equitas** and **the Canadian Museum for Human Rights** and a follow up Roundtable discussion with community leaders on the Right to Housing for Older Adults in BC

## UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE



The right to adequate housing is enshrined in the United Nations 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In **Canada's 2019 National Housing Strategy Act**, housing as a human right became formally recognized.

Participants of the roundtable identified a "**perfect storm**" of factors contributing to senior housing insecurity in Canada, BC, and Greater Vancouver.

## HOUSING INSIGHTS



- By 2030, 1 in 4 Canadians will be over 65 years of age
- 1 in 4 seniors in BC barely make ends meet with an annual income under \$21,000
- 1 in 5 senior-led renter households spend **50% or more** of their income on housing
- In Vancouver, approximately 24% of individuals who are unhoused or living in precarious housing are older adults

"Solutions and preventive action is needed now"

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS INDICATED  
THAT THE SITUATION IS URGENT

"Remove barriers immediately; and strategic planning for the future."

# A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH WHERE ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY WORK TOGETHER FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT IS REQUIRED:

## (1) AVAILABILITY

- There is a lack of subsidized social housing compounded by diminishing low cost private market options due to rising rents, evictions, renovictions and new developments.
- It is necessary to stem the loss of current social housing and increase supply as well as focusing on innovative housing options, e.g., home sharing, co-housing, intergenerational housing, naturally occurring retirement communities, affordable home builds; multi-unit housing that inspire social connectivity, housing for specified community groups and age-friendly communities.

## (2) AFFORDABILITY

- Both low income and high housing costs shape housing affordability. There is a need to:
  - Provide immediate financial relief for low-income renters
  - Ensure that low income seniors are eligible for new subsidized social housing



## (4) ADEQUACY

- There is a need for increased clarity on the right to adequate housing and its implementation in policy and practice.
- It is important to involve older adults in this process and recognize the complexities of intersectionality, including age, gender, culture, language, and race.

## (3) ACCESSIBILITY



- Limited access to health and social supports is a major barrier for older adults aging in place.
- Integrated housing that combines these services is essential to enhance their safety, dignity, and independence.

## (5) ACCOUNTABILITY

There is a need to ensure that promises made are fulfilled, that policies identified are implemented and funding allocated is used appropriately.

