News Release

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Office of the
SENIORS' ADVOCATE
Newfoundland and Labrador



International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

Seniors' Advocate Recognizes the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

October 17 marks the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, a global call to action to address poverty and protect human dignity and human rights. This year's focus, "Safe Homes for All," highlights the importance of safe, accessible, and affordable housing as a foundation for security, independence, and quality of life.

Poverty looks different for seniors because it is not always visible. For many older adults, rising living costs, limited incomes, and a lack of affordable and appropriate housing can make it increasingly difficult to meet even basic needs. Housing insecurity can force seniors to make difficult choices between paying rent, purchasing groceries, and spending money on other essential expenses.

In its submission to the provincial Poverty Reduction and Prevention Strategy, the Office of the Seniors' Advocate (OSA) identified housing as a critical gap that must be addressed. In Newfoundland and Labrador, 6.1 per cent of seniors are in core housing need, rising to 30 per cent among seniors who are renters and live alone. The submission also highlights that people aged 55 and older account for 21 per cent of individuals using emergency shelters, representing an average of approximately 91 individuals each month. These figures certainly challenge the misconception that homelessness primarily affects younger adults and are evidence of the need for a stronger response to housing insecurity among seniors.

Quote
"Poverty amongst seniors can be obscure; less obvious. For some, poverty means living alone on a limited income, struggling to afford even the basic necessities, or living in unsuitable (likely unsafe) housing because there are no affordable options. No senior should be forced to choose between keeping a roof over their head or buying food. This province's poverty reduction efforts must include meaningful investments in affordable housing, stronger protections for older renters, and policies that reflect and address the realities of aging. Safe and affordable housing is fundamental to dignity, independence, and wellbeing at every age; it is not a luxury."

Pamela Dawe
Seniors' Advocate NL (Acting)