

# Food Insecurity: An Urgent Public Health Issue

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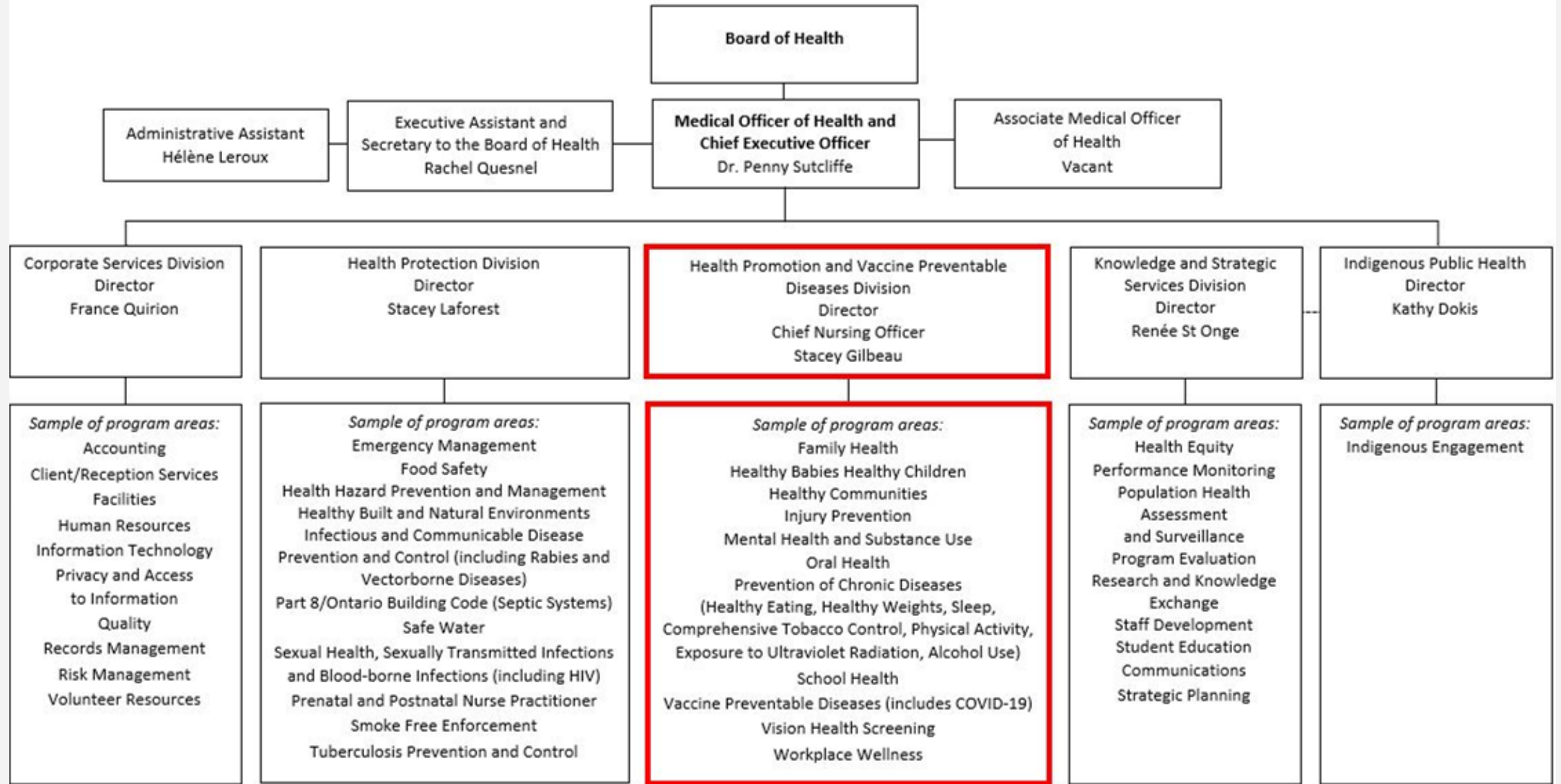
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**Public Health**  
**Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS



R: January 8, 2024

# Food insecurity can:

- A. Cause serious health issues when people must choose between spending money on food and other necessities.
- B. Make it more difficult for a child to learn and grow.
- C. Lead to difficult decisions like choosing between food and rent, bills, and transportation.
- D. Impact the ability to thrive at work, resulting in absenteeism, low productivity, and low performance.
- E. All of the above.

<https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/faculty-staff-well-being/nutrition/food-nutrition-security/act-against-hunger-quiz>

# Household food insecurity

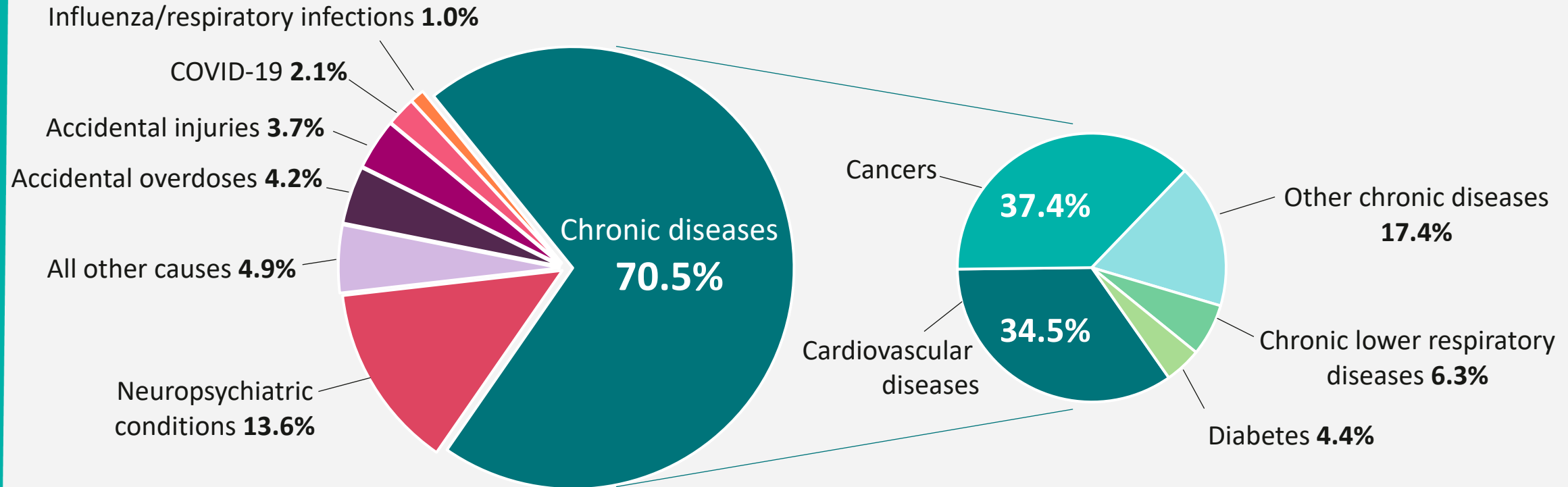
## What is it?

- Inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints.

## How do we measure it?

- Household Food Security Survey Module
  - Canadian Community Health Survey, since 2004
  - Canadian Income Survey, since 2019

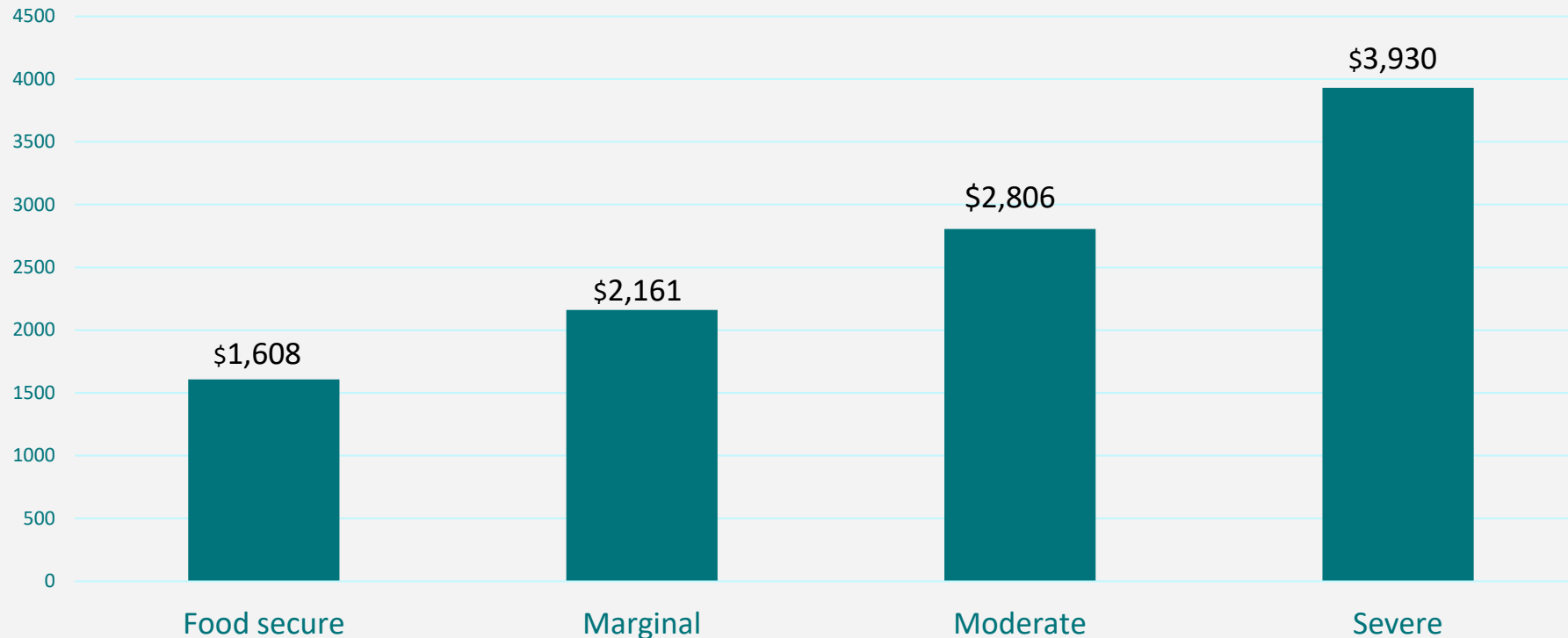
# Causes of death in Sudbury and districts, 2021



Source: Ontario Mortality Data 2021, Ontario Ministry of Health, IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Extracted October 31, 2023

# Chronic disease prevention and well-being

Figure 1: Average health care costs per person incurred over 12 months by Ontario adults aged 18-64 years, by household food insecurity status



Source: PROOF (2023). What are the implications of food insecurity for health and health care? Identifying Policy Options to Reduce Household Food Insecurity in Canada. Data source: Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) 2005, 2007-08, and 2009-10.

# Who is most at risk?

- Female single-parent households
- Those living in rental housing
- Households receiving any form of social assistance
- Non-white households
  - Note: Racial disparities within food insecurity rates point to the serious consequences of historical and on-going colonialism and systemic racism.

# Monitoring food affordability



**Family of 4, Ontario Works**

**Monthly income**  
**\$2,815**

**Rent**  
**\$1,473**



**Cost of a nutritious diet**  
**\$1,166**



**What's left?**  
**\$176**





# Monitoring food affordability



**Single-parent household  
with 2 children, Ontario Works**

Monthly income  
**\$2,581**

Rent  
**\$1,254**



Cost of a nutritious diet  
**\$858**



What's left?  
**\$469**



# Monitoring food affordability



**One-person household,  
Ontario Disability Support Program**

Monthly income  
**\$1,383**

Rent  
**\$930**



Cost of a nutritious diet  
**\$419**



What's left?  
**\$34**



# Monitoring Food Affordability



**One-person household,  
Ontario Works**

Monthly income  
**\$879**

Rent  
**\$796**



Cost of a nutritious diet  
**\$419**

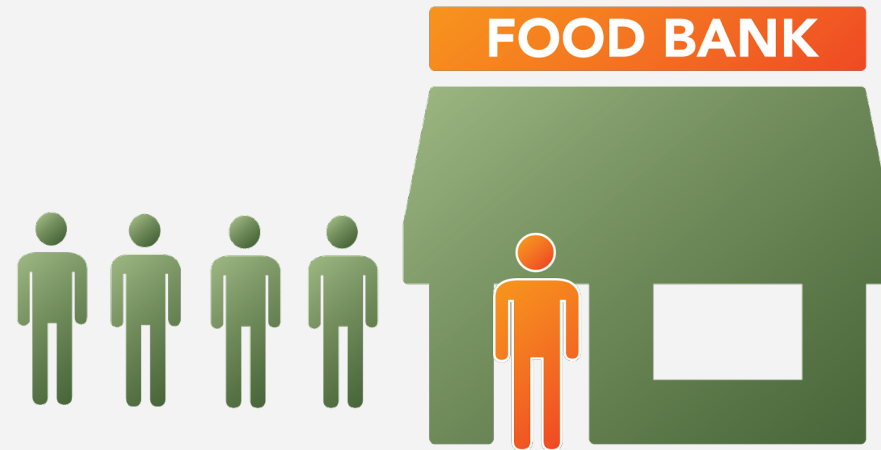


What's left?  
**-\$336**



# Current Solution

- Food banks and other food charity programs.





**Food insecurity is a  
serious health problem**

**Food insecurity is an urgent public health problem and a serious human rights and social justice issue for federal, provincial, and local public policy agendas.**

# Food insecurity can be caused by:

- A. Lack of affordable housing
- B. Chronic diseases
- C. Systemic racism and racial discrimination
- D. Low Income
- E. All of the above

<https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/faculty-staff-well-being/nutrition/food-nutrition-security/act-against-hunger-quiz>

**Thank you. Merci. Miigwetch.**



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