

Poster Abstracts

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P. Altass, A. Bergen

The Community Researcher Project: Exploring Economic Hardship in Guelph and Wellington County

Community based research is a collaborative approach in which all participants are active contributors to the research process. Here we report on a community based research project that took place in Guelph and Wellington County during the winter, spring and summer of 2010. For this project, community members with lived experience of poverty were trained to work as community researchers in order to identify gaps in services and programs and issues with accessing services and programs for those living in poverty.

Our poster provides a description of the training provided for community researchers, outlines research methods used and discusses project findings as analysed collaboratively by community researchers and university researcher. We will outline some of the services and programs discussed in the three focus groups and will highlight the positive aspects and areas for improvement discussed for each. Next we will discuss the major themes relating to issues faced by programs and services in general, with a focus on how to improve the overall lived experience of those facing economic hardship.

This was not research conducted for a community, but with and by a community, highlighting the lived experiences, strengths and challenges of those facing economic hardship in the Guelph and Wellington County area.