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Getting involved

RNAO Resources:
- Best Practice Guidelines
- e-learning Modules
- RNAO Communities
- Policy & Political Action

External Resources:
- WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health
- Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts
- Canadian Nurses Association
- Health Providers Against Poverty
- 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction

For additional information on ways to get involved, please go to: www.rNAO.ca/sdh

We believe health is a resource for everyday living and health care is a universal human right. We respect human dignity and are committed to diversity, inclusivity, equity, social justice, democracy and voluntarism.

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What are the Social Determinants of Health?

The social determinants of health are the “circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness.” These circumstances are shaped by a wider set of political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental conditions and forces.

Applying the Social Determinants of Health to Teresa’s situation:

As her nurse and/or health care provider, what are some interventions you could take to improve Teresa’s health in this situation?

What are the interventions that would tackle the structural drivers of the conditions of daily life, such as the inequitable distribution of power, money and resources?

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Teresa is a 32-year-old woman in your practice who frequently misses her appointments, and at other times shows up without an appointment, often in crisis. She currently uses alcohol and tobacco, and has started to use street drugs. As you have developed a therapeutic relationship with Teresa, you learn that she grew up in a household with a violent father who frequently assaulted her mother, her sisters and herself. Although now estranged from her father, the impact of his violence presents itself on a daily basis as Teresa struggles to cope with the trauma she experienced. Teresa left school early, has few marketable skills and has never been able to hold a job for more than three months. Teresa receives $606 per month from Ontario Works and has no money left for food or other essentials at the end of the month. She is currently in a relationship with a man whom you suspect may be violent.