

## Ethical Resolution Process Summary: Food Security Scenario

Ethical Dilemma	
State the <b>ethical dilemma</b> as a question.	How should public health nurses proceed with implementing a proposed food security program that may not meet the needs of their clients?
Identify relevant <b>values and principles</b>	<p>The proposed response to food insecurity may support good stewardship and sustainability, but conflict with upholding Indigenous Cultural Safety, humility, inclusivity, and accessibility.</p> <p>Solidarity and accountability to community members, including members of equity-deserving groups, may be in conflict with accountability to funders.</p>
Interested Parties	
Who are the <b>interested parties</b> ? Which parties were engaged. Which were not engaged?	The interested parties include seniors, newcomers, Indigenous people, people who are Deaf/hard of hearing, people with disabilities, public health nurses Mary and Jun Lo, the local First Nation, municipal officials, and provincial funders. All parties were engaged.
Information	
What <b>information</b> is central to the analysis?	<p>Food insecurity is influenced by many economic, geographic, social, and environmental factors.</p> <p>Community organizations have cautioned that food banks are often a “band-aid solution” that do not work for many groups. They express frustration that they were not consulted earlier in the process and call for improved collaboration.</p> <p>Members of equity-deserving groups face barriers to accessing food banks and similar services, including physical inaccessibility, language barriers, and stigma.</p> <p>New provincial funding has been awarded to support a food bank located in the police station.</p> <p>Existing public health resources have traditionally been used to provide nutrition workshops.</p>

## Information

What **information** is central to the analysis?

Community organizations that have ongoing relationships with those experiencing food insecurity have suggested ideas for community-driven programs (e.g., community kitchens).

Community members want to have an ongoing role in deciding how to steward resources to ensure access to healthy and culturally relevant foods.

Community organizations want to support the development of sustainable, community-driven solutions for food security.

The local First Nation wants Nation-governed responses to address food insecurity.

Attention should be given to the impacts of colonialism on access to traditional foods among Indigenous people and to culturally important foods for newcomers.

## Options

Which **options** were considered?

**Option A:** Open the food bank in the police station. Mary and Jun Lo provide nutrition service outreach at the food bank and community organizations.

**Option B:** Propose an alternate food bank delivery program, providing standard food box delivery based on household size. Mary and Jun Lo provide nutrition service outreach and enroll people in the food box delivery program at community organizations.

**Option C:** Deliver a collaborative program designed by community organizations (e.g., Senior Centre, Friendship Centre, health centre, adult education centre). Host community kitchen programs and food pantries (small food banks) at community sites that are physically- and transit-accessible. Mary and Jun Lo support community organization staff during community kitchens.

## Options

Summarize the **ethical analysis** of the options considered.

### Intersectional bioethics analysis

An intersectional bioethics analysis can be helpful in determining the best approach to resolving an ethical dilemma that involves systems serving people who experience multiple forms of marginalization (e.g., due to race, class, and gender). In this scenario, intersectional bioethics helps us consider how social systems (e.g., government, public health) impact the food security of people who are members of multiple equity-deserving groups (e.g., newcomers with disabilities).

- Option A does not meet the accessibility needs of members of equity-deserving groups. It also does not address biases, structural barriers, and power differences. It provides the greatest amount of food and supports choice in food selection; however, it may be inaccessible to the people experiencing the greatest health disparities.
- Option B allows people to access the food delivery program with low barriers, addressing barriers related to transportation and service hours. Power differences between service providers and recipients remain and people are unable to choose their own food. While a lower-barrier food box delivery program could meet the needs of many community members, it is limited to people who have a fixed address.
- Option C gives power to members of equity-deserving groups in designing and delivering programming. Community members have choice in where to access programming and in food selection. It is low-barrier, accessible, sustainable, and designed for cultural relevance.

### Rights-based ethics analysis

A rights-based approach can be helpful when ethical issues involve human rights or Indigenous-specific rights. In this scenario, it can guide decision-making about how public health professionals should proceed with implementing a food security program that poses barriers to members of equity-deserving groups.

## Options

Summarize the **ethical analysis** of the options considered.

### Rights-based ethics analysis

- Option A increases sustainable food and education resources for some community members; however, others will continue to experience barriers. It offers the least protection against unfair treatment and power is held by public health and municipal officials. The rights to the highest attainable standard of health is supported through access to food and nutrition programming.
- Option B increases access food but not nutrition services. It protects against unfair treatment but continues to give power to public health and municipal officials. This option supports the right to the highest attainable standard of health and the right to be free of discrimination (accessible services).
- Option C increases access to culturally relevant food and nutrition services. It is best designed to ensure fair treatment, by delivering services in spaces that members of equity-deserving groups have identified as welcoming. Power is shared between public health and community organizations serving equity-deserving groups. Option C upholds the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to be free of discrimination (accessible services), and the Indigenous-specific rights to improve economic and social conditions, to maintain Indigenous health practice, and to develop and administer health programs.

Describe the **feasibility** of the options considered.

All options can be realistically implemented. Option A carries safety concerns due to the lack of accessibility of the food bank in the police station basement. Option B can be implemented safely in terms of accessibility, but cultural relevance and Indigenous Cultural Safety are not addressed. Option C can be safely implemented in terms of accessibility, cultural relevance, and Indigenous Cultural Safety.

Resolution	
Describe the <b>resolution</b> .	<b>Option C:</b> Deliver a collaborative program designed by community organizations (e.g., Senior Centre, Friendship Centre, health centre, adult education centre) which includes accessible community kitchen programs and food pantries.
Describe the <b>ethical justification</b> for the resolution.	Option C ensures people with multiple, intersecting identities can access culturally relevant food and nutrition services from inclusive and accessible locations. Power is shared between interested parties. Human rights (to the highest attainable standard of health, to freedom from discrimination) and Indigenous-specific rights (to improve economic and social conditions, to maintain Indigenous health practices, to develop and administer health programs) are supported.
Was there <b>consensus</b> about the resolution?	All interested parties agreed that this plan best meets the immediate needs of people experiencing food insecurity in the community.
How was the resolution <b>implemented</b> ?	Mary and Jun Lo collaborated with all parties to implement, sustain, and evaluate the programs.
What are the key considerations for <b>communication</b> ?	Mary and Jun Lo were best situated to communicate with interested parties, ensuring information is translated and provided in accessible formats to meet community needs.
What were the key findings from the <b>evaluation</b> ?	<p>Resources were stewarded well via sustainable community programs to help people experiencing food insecurity.</p> <p>Mary and Jun Lo connected with more people through community organizations and demonstrated accountability to and solidarity with the local First Nation and members of equity-deserving groups.</p> <p>Members of equity-deserving groups reported feeling comfortable accessing food and nutrition services, indicating that accessibility, humility, and inclusivity had been addressed.</p> <p>In the future, collaborative processes should be embedded in program and funding design.</p>