

## TIPS FOR PRACTICE

1

**Bring awareness to what you're already doing.** How often do you suspect or know that a social determinants of health issue is contributing to your patient's medical issue? What do you do about it?

2

**Prescribe legal help.** Legal clinics can help people living on a low income with problems in many areas overlapping with the social determinants, including housing, government benefits, employment, human rights, contracts and debt, and wills and incapacity.

3

**Screen for poverty.** Ask everyone "do you ever have difficulty making ends meet at the end of the month?" Poverty is a risk factor for medical conditions like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and depression, and for legal problems. It requires screening and intervention.

4

**Screen for income tax filing.** Ask everyone "have you filed your income tax for this year?" Poverty is an influential social determinant of health, and many income benefits are only available to those who file income tax.

5

**Intervene on other income security issues.** Familiarize yourself with income security benefits, screen for them, and recommend them to patients. This benefits finder tool can give a customized list of benefits your patient might be eligible for: [[canadabenefits.gc.ca/](https://canadabenefits.gc.ca/)]. It does not collect or track any information entered.

6

**Screen for other social determinants of health issues.** Expand your screening questions beyond income, and make appropriate referrals for help. A tipsheet with sample questions you can ask is available under the downloadable resources for this module.