

CITY OF CALGARY
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Corporate Record
CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

Social Wellbeing Advisory Committee (SWAC)

March 13, 2019

Dr. Victoria Burns, PhD, RSW

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Volunteer member, Age-Friendly Cities and SWAC

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I AM 97
AND
HOMELESS
PLEASE HELP

Introduction

- Madame Chair and members of City Council. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Victoria Burns. I am a social worker, assistant professor at the University of Calgary, and volunteer member of Age-Friendly Calgary and SWAC. As a community member with over 15 years experiencing working with older, marginalized people, including individuals experiencing homelessness, I can attest to the urgency of the adoption of the SWAC principles (i.e., equity, prevention, culture and Truth and Reconciliation). If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me: Victoria.burns@ucalgary.ca

Why do the SWAC principles matter? Inequity and lack of prevention leads to homelessness and costs the city \$\$\$

↑ homelessness aged 50+y
Canadian urban centers

50% shelter users aged 50+



Older homelessness - unique vulnerabilities

Gaps in policies and practices

↑ Health issues/premature death compared to non-homeless older adults (McDonald et al., 2007)

↑ Social isolation and loneliness than younger homeless (Crane & Warne, 2007)

Housing First PSH (mostly scattered site) (Padgett et al., 2015)

Aging in place: assumes stable housing

Few supportive housing models meet complex health & social needs including addiction

Inequality, a poem by Anne Cartledge, age 68
lived experience of homelessness, founder AISH to Pension



