

project overview  
September 2018



## RentSafe EquIP in Owen Sound, ON

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### *Introduction*

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**RentSafe EquIP** – **E**quity-focused **I**ntersectoral **P**ractice for housing habitability and health equity in Owen Sound – is a research project that aims to catalyze and support meaningful interaction among people from diverse sectors to (1) better understand the causes and consequences of housing inadequacy as seen from multiple viewpoints, and (2) foster new ways of conceiving of issues and potential solutions. RentSafe EquIP is participatory action research, which means that academic and community-based researchers are working together to support positive change in the community.

Unfit housing conditions, such as mould, pests, inadequate heating, deteriorating leaded paint, and structural disrepair, can negatively affect tenants' physical and mental health. People living on low incomes and in other marginalizing circumstances are particularly affected. Ensuring healthy homes for all is an essential step towards health equity and social justice in the community.

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### *Activities*

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#### **Phase 1: Learning Exchanges**

The first phase of RentSafe EquIP is a series of Learning Exchanges between the research team and people with relevant institutional, professional and/or leadership roles in the community. The Learning Exchanges are an opportunity for staff from various agencies and organizations, housing providers, tenant advocates, and community leaders to sit down with the research team and share their observations and perspectives, including the barriers and opportunities they see for ensuring healthy housing for tenants in Owen Sound. The Learning Exchanges are also an opportunity for participants to hear the perspectives of the co-researchers, who include people with experience of low income and housing inadequacy.

#### **Phase 2: Intersectoral Retreat**

Building on the perspectives and experiences that people have shared during the Learning Exchanges, the second phase of the research is the RentSafe EquIP Intersectoral Retreat to be held in mid-November 2018. The retreat will bring together many of the Learning Exchange participants for 3+ days of discussion, knowledge co-creation, and relationship-building. The retreat is designed to encourage participants to explore new ways of understanding the challenges of unfit rental housing conditions as they relate to other issues in the community, including poverty, stigma, the enduring effects of colonialism, and the lack of affordable housing.

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RentSafe EquIP is led by the **Centre for Environmental Health Equity (CEHE)** at Queen's University, with funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

For more information:  
 Erica Phipps, PhD Candidate, CEHE  
[erica.phipps@queensu.ca](mailto:erica.phipps@queensu.ca)

Dr. Jeff Masuda, Director, CEHE  
 Associate Professor, Queen's University  
[jeff.masuda@queensu.ca](mailto:jeff.masuda@queensu.ca)

***Research Team:***

Tanya Butt  
 Nadine Desjardins  
 Paige Mackie  
 Jeff Masuda  
 Allison Murray (on leave)  
 Erica Phipps  
 Carlos Sanchez-Pimienta  
 Misty Schonauer

***Research Advisory Committee:***

Renee Abram  
 Lynda Bumstead  
 Eric Crighton  
 Bob Hart  
 Angela Newman  
 Stephanie Nickels  
 Dianne Oickle  
 Jill Umbach

RentSafe EquIP is linked to the Ontario-wide RentSafe initiative led by the Canadian Partnership for Children's Health Environment. To view RentSafe reports and videos, please visit [www.rentsafe.ca](http://www.rentsafe.ca) / [www.logementsain.ca](http://www.logementsain.ca)

*The RentSafe EquIP team acknowledges the history, spirituality, culture and stewardship of the land by the Indigenous peoples of the region where this research is taking place, the Saugeen Ojibway Nation and the Three Fires Confederacy, namely the Odawa, Potawatomi, and Ojibway nations.*