Food Banks Canada

Link2Feed Client Intake: Best Practices

Purpose of data collection

- Explain to the client that the purpose of this questionnaire is to understand more about food bank clients in order to:
    - Improve client services by targeting specific programs and benefits
    - Allow food banks, provincial associations and Food Banks Canada to advocate on behalf of clients for improved social policy and access to income supports. Some previous successes include:
        - supporting the creation of the Canada Child Benefit that has helped reduce children in food banks since 2015;
        - pushing for an increase in the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for single seniors in 2016;
        - helping to justify the expansion of the Working Income Tax Benefit (now the Canada Workers Benefit) to allow low-income workers to keep more of their income through employment without losing other benefits. We also continue to work with the provinces to push for increases to social assistance and disability payments, particularly for single-person households at the provincial level.

Consent and choice

- Clients must make an informed decision to answer the intake questions and sign a consent form, which can be done electronically through L2F.
- Let clients know that their participation is voluntary; this will empower them and allow them to be in control of the intake process.
- Clients are more likely to feel comfortable responding to the questionnaire if you make it clear that any information provided will not be used to deny services now or in the future.
- Clients have the right to refuse to answer any question, you can select “Prefer Not To Answer”

Confidentiality

- Client information is protected in a safe and secure manner. It’s the same level of security as online banking.
- When client information is shared with Food Banks Canada and the provincial association, data will be de-identified and anonymized.
- This means that we can run reports to look for trends and learn more about the community, but the reports will not identify any specific individual’s information.

Sensitivity

- Clients may consider some questions to be more intrusive or uncomfortable than others. It is important to ask questions with sensitivity and kindness.
- Do not make assumptions based on the way the client looks. Ask them to choose the option they are most comfortable with.
- Consider all response options as normal. If they are confused about the options, then explain that they can pick the one that they think is closest or select “Don’t Know” or “Prefer Not to Answer”
    - Question pertaining to **ethnicity:**
        - Explain that racial disparities exist with respect to food insecurity and having this information will allow us to tailor our programs and services for all users and advocate for clients with an understanding of these disparities.
    - Question pertaining to **income**
        - This question is sensitive as the client may feel that judgements are being made about their lifestyle choices or their eligibility for services. It might be helpful to reiterate that answers won’t affect their ability to access services, but will help advocate for meaningful change.
- If you are unable to ask a specific question, you can always select “Didn’t Ask.”