

Lucy, part-time worker with health problems.

Lucy is a woman in her forties who lives in Northwestern New Brunswick. Her husband passed away a few years ago, leaving her alone with her three children.

When she became a widow who needed help, Lucy applied for social assistance. The amount of social assistance she was allowed was \$995 per month. Even while suffering from backache, Lucy decided she was still going to work for about twenty hours a week in a local store at \$11.37 an hour. The government lets her keep only between \$300 and \$400 per month of the money earned. Fortunately, she receives \$1,300 per month in child benefits from the government.

Lucy is living in a subsidized house which costs her \$351 per month, and she likes it there. Her children are insured through Blue Cross, which covers the cost for eye and dental care. Lucy has an old car and she worries when the price of gas goes up. As the price for all the necessities of life continues to rise, she has a hard time making ends meet.

One thing that would improve Lucy's situation would be an increase in the rate for social assistance. Furthermore, an increase in the minimum wage would be helpful for Lucy. Since she suffers from backache, one social assistance policy change that would benefit her would be to cover the cost of going to the chiropractor.