

EDITORIAL: Flann-tastic

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As soon as we ran our story about Fran Flann, the 82-year-old cancer patient in a homeless shelter, our phones rang off the hook and our inboxes filled with messages from folks, both local and from across Canada, offering to pay for Flann's hotel costs and help her get back on her feet.

It was a heartening display of community.

But Flann's happy outcome isn't the norm for people in her situation. In some senses, Flann was lucky compared to many other vulnerable people and seniors. She had a dogged advocate in friend Robyn Brown. She had a media circus. She had politicians name-dropping her in the British Columbia legislature.

Many in similar situations don't have access to the kind of action-inducing public outrage her story generated. Nobody knows about them.

In Flann's case, B.C. Housing also offered to pay for a hotel but only after the excrement hit the air-con.

It shouldn't take a scandal.

There are still many questions not answered to our satisfaction about how this was allowed to happen.

Flann's case is a maddening mash-up of holes in the provincial safety net: Not enough protection for renters. Not nearly enough temporary or low-cost housing. Too much reliance on non-profits with too little funding to fill the gaps.

And this case was a shot across our bow. We've got an aging population and there are plenty of Flanns coming down the pipe – people who could be your neighbour down the street, your brother or your mom.

We need to decide now what we're willing to invest to see that this doesn't happen again.

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

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