

**Prepared for Dragonfly Fund
by Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre
Nail Salon Workers Project
2022**

Charitable Organization Name:	Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre	
Project Title:	Supporting the Nail Technician Community During COVID	
Grant Amount:	\$20,000 +\$2,000	
Grant Period:	November 2021 – May 2022	
Contact:	Name/Title	Director, Health Promotion and Community Engagement
	Bronwyn Underhill	

Share a Story

Why was your project important locally and across Canada?

- We were able to find out about, respond to, and share with appropriate stakeholders the cleaning and disinfecting risks and challenges faced by nail technicians and owners.
- The project activities were responsive to the community’s needs; we provided learning opportunities (webinars, resources, connections) that supported technicians and owners through the pandemic and will continue to serve their sector beyond the current pandemic.
- Our final gathering served as a starting point for the future membership development of the NTN; an opportunity for members to begin to look forward, and the Nail Salon Workers Project Team to reflect on and begin a new phase of rebuilding in the current state (“beyond” pandemic-focused work).
- We shared the findings from our work through the Healthy Nail Salon Network, including partners from other provinces and partners who are engaged in advocacy work and other industries.
- We were able to connect with and find a position within the newly formed Workplace Health Without Borders – Nail Salon Working Group and will communicate our findings through these channels.
- Through our continued work in the sector, we learned of a new initiative geared toward health and safety training in the beauty industry that poses opportunities and risks for the people in the discount nail salon sector. We were able to liaise with this group, communicate their work to our networks, and push this new initiative to better serve the most vulnerable in the sector.
- We were asked to contribute to a forthcoming case study about the Nail Salon Workers Project from the National Coordinating Centre on the Determinants of Health.
- The team was able to attend a research conference, *Advancing Worker Health and Safety in the Nail and Hair Salon Communities*, communicating the current state of the discount nail salon sector in Canada and continuing to build connections with other work being done. The team learned about the latest research conducted in the U.S. affecting nail technicians and the beauty industry, and other trends in the sector.

- We shared information and opened communication with new technicians entering the sector: many nail technicians left the sector, and now as salons open again, new technicians have filled those gaps. We also hired a new peer outreach worker, and this has created new connections in the Vietnamese community.
- Cleaning and disinfecting materials created were shared with others from Manitoba doing similar work (at the Manitoba Federation of Labour Occupational Health Clinic) and agencies tackling these issues in the U.S.

What lessons did you learn about the project and how will that impact you, your organization, and others involved moving forward?

- There is high frequency use of bleach in the sector. Through this recent work we gained some concrete evidence of this, and a better understanding of why this is and how difficult this will be to overcome.
- Word of mouth is very powerful. Many owners buy products they learn about from suppliers and personal connections.
- Many owners and technicians are unclear about public health regulations/requirements and where to get reliable information. Many are unclear about specific elements of the regulation (e.g. cleaning and disinfecting are different).
- Many owners and technicians are afraid of not meeting the regulations/requirements.
- Covid-related updates to regulations created more confusion in this area and increased the use of harmful chemicals.
- Fear related to covid-19 and income are top priority. This puts other health concerns lower on the priority list (and poses increased risk for the health of workers in the sector).
- There is a continued need to advocate for appropriate supports, communication, and information from public health; both in terms of understanding and meeting the regulations, and about working safely with cleaning and disinfecting products.
- There is a need for the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to better serve small workplaces with high experiences of marginalization: workers need protection against harmful chemicals.
- There is a need for better federal regulation of harmful chemicals in cleaning and beauty products.
- Sourcing products and understanding safer cleaning and disinfecting options continues to be a need from within the community.
- There is an increasing number of nail technicians operating out of their home or clients' homes. This presents new challenges to find, connect, and engage with the technicians in these situations.

What's next for you and those involved in the project? Are there any other stakeholders or communities that you'd like to engage going forward?

- Continue to relay concerns, confusion, and risks presented from the communities to Public Health, Ministry of LITSD, and Health Canada. Assist in creating better connection between the discount nail sector and these public health and labour supports.
- Advocate for changing how public health (IPAC) standards are communicated and what products are encouraged.
- Continue to push for research on chemical exposures and risk levels based on workplace exposures.
- Push for research on cumulative exposure limits.

- A lobby group within the beauty sector was awarded significant funds to run health and safety training in the beauty sector. This poses opportunities and concerns for the discount nail salon community. We are navigating our role in the work they are set out to do.
- Re-engage in a rigorous outreach process to rebuild the Nail Technicians Network. Including new ways of outreach to include the expanding sector of nail technicians working from home or in clients' homes.
- We are going to engage in a priority setting process to help focus the work for the short, medium and long term.
- We were awarded a 5-year SSHRC grant in collaboration with the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the U of T. This will provide some base funding to give the peer outreach team some longer-term contracts and consistent working hours. It will also include working with a researcher from the Institute for Work and Health.
- We are gearing up to launch a public awareness campaign in support of better working conditions in the sector.

Please share links to any coverage of your work in the media.

[Discount nail salons exposing employees to tons of toxic chemicals | News \(dailyhive.com\)](#)

[Nail technicians exposed to high levels of chemicals in Canadian salons: study | CTV News](#)

[Alarming levels of hazardous chemicals found in some nail salons could impact workers, U of T study finds | The Star](#)

[Study shows high level of chemical exposure at Toronto nail salons | CityNews Toronto](#)

[Nail salon workers exposed to high levels of toxic chemicals, new study reveals | CBC Radio](#)

Learning

Outputs and achievements:

- We conducted online workshops based on the content of our resource: *COVID-19 Safe Disinfecting*, in three languages (Mandarin, Vietnamese, and Korean).
- We also created a resource and workshop content responding to NTN member questions about masking and ventilation. This was translated into three languages (simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean).
- We continued to circulate our Responding to Anti-Asian Racism resource.
- We conducted surveys approximately one month following our Keeping Nail Salons Safe During Covid workshops. The following is a summary of findings from these surveys:
 - The workshop was helpful and had new information for most of the participants
 - Almost everyone (15/17) said they would share what they learned with someone else
 - Almost everyone (15/17) said they were using FEWER harmful products and MORE safer products following the workshops
 - The workshop increased awareness AND lead to behaviour change
 - Behaviour change: reducing risks. Most common: 1) using soap and water and 2) pouring cleaning product (rather than spraying)

Toronto

832 College St.
Toronto, ON M6G 1C8

Vancouver

400-163 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC V6B 1H5

Yellowknife

300-4902 49 St.
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P8

makeway.org

1.866.843.3722

- Increased awareness: thinking about the chemicals they use and the ingredients in the products; using soap and water, and alcohol
- Significant value of the survey was another opportunity to discuss content - reminders, new information for some, another chance to chat one-on-one about the content with an outreach staff
- Some transfer of the workshop content into personal life (e.g. using microfibre cloths at home and less harmful cleaners)
- Increased awareness of masks - differences between masks and what protection they offer.
- Some behaviour change with respect to masks; main reported change was reusing masks (may help with using more expensive, higher protection masks)
- Owners and technicians need additional support transitioning to alternative products. Some reported learning new things and thinking it's important, but not changing behaviour (e.g. "don't know where to get [it]"; although this information was given in the workshops.
- Ventilation - external help needed; technicians have limited power; (e.g. "when it's cold out, door is closed".)
- Technicians report that owners hold the power for what products are used
 - Owners know each other; they use products what each other uses.
 - Need involvement from TPH to encourage less harmful substances; hearing directly from public health would help tackle the fear that they won't pass inspection with safer products.
 - NTN could contact and work with suppliers for different products to be circulated and encouraged
- We continued to collaborate with our OCADU partners for the PhotoVoice project. We are now planning an animation-based project for NTN members.
- We hosted an in-person get together for the NTN members at the Toronto Zoo. It was the first time seeing the Network together in a long time! The discussion and connection was amazing. During the visit to the zoo we facilitated games and activities to review and reinforce safer cleaning and disinfecting strategies.
- With our mental health support dollars, we hired an experienced outreach lead in Toronto to guide our team through in-person training about the project goals, team building, and developing our outreach strengths and capacity. Outreach and relationship building has been hard for the team throughout the pandemic, and this wears on the team's feeling of success and impact. As we shift our focus to rebuilding the NTN and return to in-person outreach, the peer outreach team needed some support to feel empowered and aware of their own capacity and strengths to do this challenging work.

Financial Update

Toronto
832 College St.
Toronto, ON M6G 1C8

Vancouver
400-163 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC V6B 1H5

Yellowknife
300-4902 49 St.
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P8

makeway.org
1.866.843.3722

Review the budget you submitted in your proposal and compare the actual amounts expended (see the template below). Please also provide an explanation for variances of 15% or more.

Expense Type	Expense Detail	Total Project Amount (\$)	Actual Amount Expended (\$)
Peer Team	Outreach, community engagement, needs assessment, content delivery & demonstration to nail technicians & owners	\$5,895	\$7,151.37 ¹
Community Health Worker	Liaise with the work of NTN, assist with project implementation	\$3,721	\$3,721.00
Project Researcher	Research relevant articles/news and put together literature reviews for project delivery Liaise with stakeholders of different levels of government, relevant networks/committees, academics/researchers	\$3,816	\$3,180.00 ²
Participant Honoraria	On-site demonstration for 15 nail salons Honoraria will be given either in gift cards or items related to cleaning and disinfecting (hand sanitizer/moisturizer, alcohol wipes, cleaning clothes, gloves or masks) of the equivalent amount Honoraria for answering the survey	\$1,100	\$900.00 ³
Demonstration Materials	Purchase of PPE, utensils, cleaning and disinfecting materials for 20 on-site demonstrations	\$300	\$287.25
Translation	Translation of survey questionnaires and results	\$1,200	\$136.20 ⁴

¹ We extended the length of the project and we continued to pay the peer team for this longer time period.

² The Project Researcher completed the activities linked to the role and left the project earlier than planned.

³ We switched the on-site demonstrations to virtual workshops based on COVID transmission rates at the time and input from community members. We reduced the amount of the honoraria to reflect the change.

⁴ The surveys and subsequent responses were designed in a way that the translation was able to be completed by the team members (rather than paying an external translator as we do in many instances).

Printing	Reprinting of existing materials in English, Vietnamese, Chinese and Korean	\$506	\$1,222.68 ⁵
Transportation	On-site outreach & demonstrations	\$812	\$619.75 ⁶
Special Event	In-person end of project special event to be held in April with activities to consolidating the cleaning and disinfecting learning	\$450	\$581.75 ⁷
Administrative Costs	10% of the total budget of \$22,000	\$2,200	\$2,200.00
Total		\$20,000	\$20,000
Emotional Health & Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anti-Asian Racism, stress management and related mental health webinars - Facilitator honoraria - Purchase of tools for training on communication skills and team building - Reprinting of the Anti-Asian Racism pamphlets 	\$2,000	\$2,000.00

⁵ We reallocated funds from other budget lines to print our collection of resources tailored to nail technicians. Given the significant changes in workforce in the sector, we are using our print materials to conduct outreach to new salons and new technicians/owners within the sector.

⁶ We switched the on-site demonstrations to virtual workshops based on COVID transmission rates at the time and input from community members. This resulted in less travel expense for the team.

⁷ Given the need to rebuild connectedness within the Nail Technicians Network (NTN) we reallocated some underspent budget lines and prioritized spending on an NTN outing to the zoo (that still included the intended project-related activities).