

Peer – Supportive Partnerships and Navigation (SPAN)

Six vacancies. 21 hours per week, up to 12 months in duration

Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre (Parkdale Queen West CHC) is a dynamic, community-based healthcare organization serving mid-west downtown Toronto. Offering a broad range of services, including primary health care, dental care, harm reduction, health promotion, counselling, and community development programming, we are also committed to serving people who face barriers to health care, and we strive to reduce these barriers. PQWCHC is a multi-sited organization.

Reporting to the Harm Reduction Manager, the SPAN Peer is an entry-level role responsible for short-term task focused client work for individuals who use drugs. SPAN Peers are expected to collaborate with an interdisciplinary harm reduction team to facilitate health and social care for people who use drugs through supportive conversations, education, advocacy, and accompaniments.

General Responsibilities: The SPAN Peer will provide time-limited and focused care to support and improve access to health services for clients who use drugs and experience high levels of marginalization.

Program and Service Delivery: This role will be completing tasks as listed below.

- Apply active listening skills and non-judgemental communication while providing supportive conversations to build professional and trusting relationships with clients and service users who use drugs.
- Use listening skills to help meet immediate, basic needs and to identify appropriate health and support resources.
- Provide plain-language information on service access and eligibility requirements and offer warm referrals where appropriate and achievable.
- Collaborate with the SPAN Case Manager and Harm Reduction Manager to identify service users seeking access to support and referrals
- Provide client accompaniment support, as identified (HIV testing, medical, legal, housing etc....).
- Practice client advocacy when needed to resolve barriers and facilitate access to needed services
- Support clients in being active in their care
- Provide clients with needed harm reduction supplies, onsite and in the community.
- Provide educational opportunities for people who use drugs including safer drug use, HIV, Hep C prevention and overdose prevention & response.
- Complete assigned administrative tasks in a timely manner.
- Build upon your existing network of resources by actively and professionally engaging with community partners and program stakeholders to build mutually supportive relationships.
- Demonstrate healthy and effective relationships by setting, maintaining and modelling clear professional boundaries with clients.
- Able to work as part of a team as well as independently, out in the community with clients one-on-one.
- Employ sound judgement and creative problem-solving to resolve client-related issues promptly.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to individuals who are in crisis by employing de-escalation interventions
- Other duties as required.

Qualifications:

- You bring substantial knowledge of drug use, specifically injection drug use, acquired through a combination of work experience, lived experience and/or education or training, are familiar with community services and resources, and respect and value the diversity of communities and individuals.
- Experience with client support.
- 2 years of harm reduction experience in a community setting working with homeless and marginalized populations including people who inject drugs.
- Experience working with staff and service users who come from diverse racial, gender, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and who may have lived experienced of homelessness, living in poverty, mental health, social isolation, and substance use.
- Working with people who use drugs, racialized populations, Indigenous peoples, people who engage in sex work, prisoners/ex-prisoners, people with mental health challenges, and people who have experienced trauma.
- Strong understanding of and commitment to harm reduction, trauma-informed, and anti-oppression practices.
- Confident in asserting and maintaining strong boundaries.
- Advocacy, crisis intervention and prevention, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills.
- Extensive knowledge of community-based resources.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Computer literacy. Experience with Microsoft Office 365 suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive) an asset.



Working Conditions:

This position will work out of the community. Regular travel on TTC to partner agencies and to conduct home and community visits will be an expectation of this position. Exposure to unpredictable behaviours and different risk environments is a core part of the role.

The Harm Reduction team at Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre is committed to representing the communities we serve. People with experience using drugs, working in the sex trade, Indigenous people, racialized people, people from the LGBTTT2SQQIA community, people living with HIV, people with experiences of incarceration and institutionalization, people who have experienced trauma, and people who have experienced homelessness or street involvement will be given special consideration.

Compensation: \$21.33 per hour + 4% vacation pay. 21 hours a week.

Application forms are available onsite at our Queen West location, 168 Bathurst St., for those without access to computer and can be completed in writing.

Please forward your resume and cover letter or hand-written application form by **January 31, 2025, to the hiring committee through the following channels:**

Email (or drop-off) your cover letter and resume or hand-written application form (as one document) ASAP, we will be contacting qualified applicants for interviews as resumes come in. In the subject line of your email please include what is shown below.

**E-Mail: emerlos@pgwchc.ca
Subject Line:**

OR

**Drop-in: Application to the attention of Liz Merlos
Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre**

**Queen West site: 168 Bathurst St., Toronto ON M5V 2R4
We regret that only those to be interviewed will be contacted.**

Employment is conditional upon having had a COVID-19 vaccinations (as per Health Ontario) 14 days before starting employment.