

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Christie Ngozi Gabriel (she/her) has started a new role with AESHA as assistant project coordinator! Since joining AESHA as an Interviewer/Outreach Worker in 2020, Christie has shown tremendous

commitment to the work and we are so excited to see her take on this new role. Christie brings diverse community and research experience to the AESHA team and was attracted to the opportunity to combine frontline work with structural understandings of sex workers' health and social needs. She has a Bachelor's degree in social work and experience working with vulnerable populations, and is excited to continue to apply frameworks including strengths-based practice, harm reduction, and trauma-informed practice to her work with AESHA. Congratulations and thank you, Christie!



Tasha Feuchuk (they/she) joined our team as an Interviewer/Outreach Worker last summer and has been an invaluable addition to the AESHA team! They bring their lived experience as a

disabled, neurodivergent sex worker of colour (half Filipinx) who has experienced sexual violence and unstable housing. Their public speaking skills and strong online community presence is a welcome addition to AESHA's team. Outside work, they're often found cross stitching, writing, singing and playing with their cat or lately, running and gardening. Thank you for a great first year, Tasha!

RESEARCH TO POLICY

In April 2020, in collaboration with West Coast LEAF, the AESHA team submitted two reports to federal committees seeking to implement new policies around online pornography: *Protection of Privacy and Reputation on Platforms such as Pornhub*, and *Bill S-203: An Act to Restrict Young Persons' Online Access to Sexually Explicit Material*. Using AESHA research, the reports highlight the ways that punitive restrictions to online sex work have the potential to compromise digital work environments.

In both submissions to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics and the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, we urged the committees to:

1. Meaningfully consult with sex workers in any deliberations about online sexually explicit content; and
2. Refrain from implementing further punitive restrictions to regulate online sex work environments.

Then in May, we submitted evidence-based policy recommendations to the *Special Committee on Reforming the BC Police Act*, drawing from over a decade of AESHA peer-reviewed community-based research. Our report urges the government-appointed committee to endorse the following priorities to ensure the occupational health and safety of sex workers in BC:

1. Stop the enforcement of all sex work-related offences as outlined under current "end demand" federal sex work laws;
2. Implement a Good Samaritan policy that allows sex workers and third parties to call for police assistance on their own accord and without the threat of arrest or immigration-related repercussions; and
3. Eradicate systemic racism and xenophobia within police agencies, divest from policing of sex work and poverty, and reinvest in sex worker-led community supports.

All AESHA Knowledge Translation products can be found by visiting <https://bit.ly/3xDrYoW>. We will continue to distribute and discuss our reports with participants and other stakeholders. For printed copies of any mentioned reports or digital copies of research papers, please email jennie.pearson@cgshe.ubc.ca

OPERATIONS UPDATE

- The AESHA team is excited to be back in the office to conduct in-person interviews and support participants under careful safety protocols! We are thrilled to have our nurse, Lois, back in office offering clinical support and testing to participants! Lois is currently supporting the AESHA team every Wednesday and every other Monday.
- The outreach team has continued to connect with participants in Surrey and Vancouver on Sunday evenings. Our team offers weekly support, referrals, and supply drop-offs like condoms, lube, harm reduction supplies, food. We encourage participants to get in touch if they would like to connect with outreach staff: 778.891.6252.
- AESHA outreach staff have also been reconnecting with massage parlours and managed indoor spaces as COVID-19 restrictions continue to lift. We are looking forward to continuing our long standing relationships and creating new connections, and are very grateful to be so warmly welcomed back!
- In recognition of International Sex Workers Day on June 2, we fundraised within CGSHE to purchase fun and functional items that we have been distributing within the community. It has been a pleasure to provide items that are not always accessible and available!
- The AESHA outreach team has continued to liaise with community partners and outreach services. We have been working closely with Kingsway Community Station to share information and resources and build connections. We value the work that the team at Kingsway Community Station has done over the course of the pandemic to keep people safe.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION UPDATE



In June 2021, the AESHA team released the three-page summary, *End Police Harassment and Surveillance to Advance Sex Workers' Health and Labour Rights During and Beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Based on calls from community-based organizations and partners to end both police "wellness checks" and the enforcement of sex work laws, this report summarizes 10 years of AESHA community-based research to demonstrate how criminalization, policing and surveillance hinder occupational safety for sex workers, and in particular, racialized, Indigenous and im/migrant workers.

Among other findings, the research summary suggests that:

- "Police checks" and other forms of police surveillance and harassment make it harder for Indigenous, Black, trans, and low-income sex workers to access safety, health, harm reduction, and other services
- Police surveillance reproduces historical violence against racialized sex workers and reduces access to justice.
- In-call workplace surveillance and harassment by police limits occupational health for im/migrant sex workers.



NEW PUBLICATIONS

3rd Party Myths & the Failure of “End-Demand” Laws

The AESHA team has recently published a number of new research articles showing some important findings. Out of 25 interviews with third parties who provide services for indoor sex workers, we found that most third parties were women and current/former sex workers. Third parties provided client screening, security and sexual health resources for sex workers, yet end-demand laws restricted condom availability and access to police protections in case of violence, thereby undermining sex workers' health and safety¹. We recently released an infographic on our research on sex work third parties, *Debunking Third Party Myths*.



Additionally, despite “end-demand’s” supposed goals of increasing access to justice, our recent findings suggest no significant change in sex workers’ ability to report violence to police following implementation of the new laws. From 2010-2017, 38 percent of all AESHA participants and only 12 percent of im/migrants who experienced workplace violence reported this violence to police. Our research also found that “end-demand” laws did not remove barriers to justice faced by sex workers; rather, they perpetuate harm through ongoing criminalization².

Book Launch: *Sex Work, Health and Human Rights*

In May, 2021, the Centre for Gender and Sexual Health hosted an international book launch for *Sex Work, Health, and Human Rights: Global Inequities, Challenges and Opportunities for Action* in partnership with the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP). Co-edited by AESHA PI Dr. Shira Goldenberg, Ruth Morgan Thomas (NSWP) and co-editors from the US and featuring chapters written by several CGSHE colleagues, this open access book is the first global textbook co-written with sex workers about sex work. Drawing upon community case studies and data from around the world, the book highlights the health and social inequities that sex workers in all of their diversity experienced, along with solutions and recommendations for policy change³. Download a free copy of the book here: cgshe.ca/app/uploads/2021/04/SexWorkHealthAndHumanRights.pdf

References

1. McBride, B, Shannon, K, Murphy, A, Wu, S, Erickson, M, Goldenberg, SM, & Krüsi, A. (2020). *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 1–17.
2. McBride, B, Shannon, K, Bingham, B, Braschel, M, Strathdee, S, & Goldenberg, SM. (2020). *Underreporting of Violence to Police among Women Sex Workers in Canada: Amplified Inequities for Im/migrant and In-Call Workers Prior to and Following End-Demand Legislation*, *Health and Human Rights*, 22(2), 257–270.
3. Goldenberg, SM, Morgan Thomas, R, Forbes, A, & Baral, S. (2021). *Sex Work, Health, and Human Rights*. Springer International Publishing AG.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- To better understand the impacts of COVID-19 for sex workers, we’ve spent the last 18 months interviewing over 200 cohort participants about their experiences with COVID-19 and access to resources and work safety. In addition to sharing preliminary findings with our community partners, we’ve presented this work in progress at meetings including the US National Institute on Drug Abuse International Forum (June 2021). We look forward to sharing more findings with our participants, community partners, and policymakers!
- The qualitative team has been recruiting and interviewing new participants as part of our research project in collaboration with The Corner and HIM/HUSTLE exploring occupational health and safety of men, Two-Spirit and non-binary sex workers in Metro Vancouver and Victoria. We look forward to sharing results based on over 20 interviews.
- With support from the Vancouver Foundation, the AESHA qualitative team has begun planning a new arts-based participatory research project with sex workers of all genders who work across diverse environments, including street-based and online. AESHA is collaborating with PACE Society, Kingsway Community Station, HIM/HUSTLE and Pivot Legal Society on this project, which aims to examine how both the COVID-19 pandemic and overdose crisis have impacted sex workers’ working environments, occupational health and safety, and wellbeing. We are working closely with our community partners to develop this project and are currently forming community advisory teams to guide its implementation. Stay tuned for more on this exciting work!



JOB POSTINGS

The AESHA team is currently seeking a **Sexual Health Research Nurse** who will support the the implementation and execution of all clinical research activities for AESHA, including pre/post-test counseling, testing and treatment follow-up for HIV, STIs, and HCV, treatment, and sexual health education. The ideal candidate has experience in community-based research or healthcare settings with marginalized communities. Experience with, and knowledge about sexual health with the marginalized populations we work with, such as homeless women, sex workers, people living with HIV and gender diverse communities is preferred.

We're also seeking 1-2 new multilingual (Mandarin/Cantonese) staff members to join us as an **Interview/Outreach Worker** or **Community Health Associate** supporting in-call sex workers. We are looking for passionate, community-orientated individuals with basic sexual health knowledge as well as experience working with marginalized populations such as im/migrant women and sex workers. If you have this experience and are interested in one of these exciting opportunities, we'd love to hear from you! For full job posting and details on how to apply, visit cgshe.ca/about-us/careers/



We're hiring!



Sexual Health Research Nurse



Interview/Outreach Worker - Multilingual



Community Health Associate - Multilingual

APPLY >> cgshe.ca/about-us/careers

Interested in participating in the AESHA Project?

Want to know more?



778.891.6252



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We acknowledge the land on which we work is the unceded traditional territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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