

# **Develop and Evaluate a Targeted Educational Program in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx to Protect Vulnerable Communities from Hazardous Skin Lightening Products**

## **Investigators**

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## **Project Summary**

This project seeks to develop evidence-based education materials and culturally specific dissemination strategies to increase awareness of the potential risks of using skin lightening products containing hydroquinone and mercury among underserved communities. This project is a collaboration with local community-based organizations working with South Asian, West African, and Hispanic or Latino women and femme-identifying individuals in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx. The educational materials are designed to increase awareness about:

- (1) The health risks of hydroquinone, mercury, and other substances commonly found in skin lighteners;
- (2) Upstream social and cultural drivers of skin lightening use, including colorism; and
- (3) Strategies for individual and collective action to avoid toxic exposures and to ensure safer beauty products.

This project helps to connect at-risk and underserved communities with informational resources related to skin lightening products in a sustainable and culturally appropriate manner. In addition, it helps build community capacity to drive behavior change and provide much needed data so that the educational materials can be improved for future use.

**Populations Served:** Asian, Black or African American, and Hispanic or Latino

### **Goals/Aims:**

- To develop an educational module, designed to provide community members with strategies to recognize banned skin lightening products and avoid them as well as to take action to report them.
- To develop and deliver a train-the-trainer guide to supplement the EHJLT module and conduct a train-the-trainer intervention with staff members at three selected community-based organizations serving South Asian, West African, and Hispanic or Latino populations in Northern Manhattan and the South Bronx. This includes translating materials appropriately for all three populations.
- To conduct a preliminary evaluation of the intervention/module. In addition, revise the intervention/module in response to participant feedback and disseminate the module and project findings via a report and a dedicated landing page on the WE ACT website.

## **Publications/Abstracts/Posters, etc.**

- Manuscript in preparation.