

BODY RUB CENTRE LICENSING RESEARCH REPORT

September, 2020

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RESEARCH OVERVIEW

GOALS

- Merits and challenges of withdrawing from licensing
- Evidence-based practices to reduce buyer demand
- Research-based recommendations

METHODS

- Focus groups/interviews: 69 participants
 - Survey: 169 participants
 - Three literature reviews
 - Licensing scan: 5 big Cities
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RESEARCH FINDINGS

THEMES

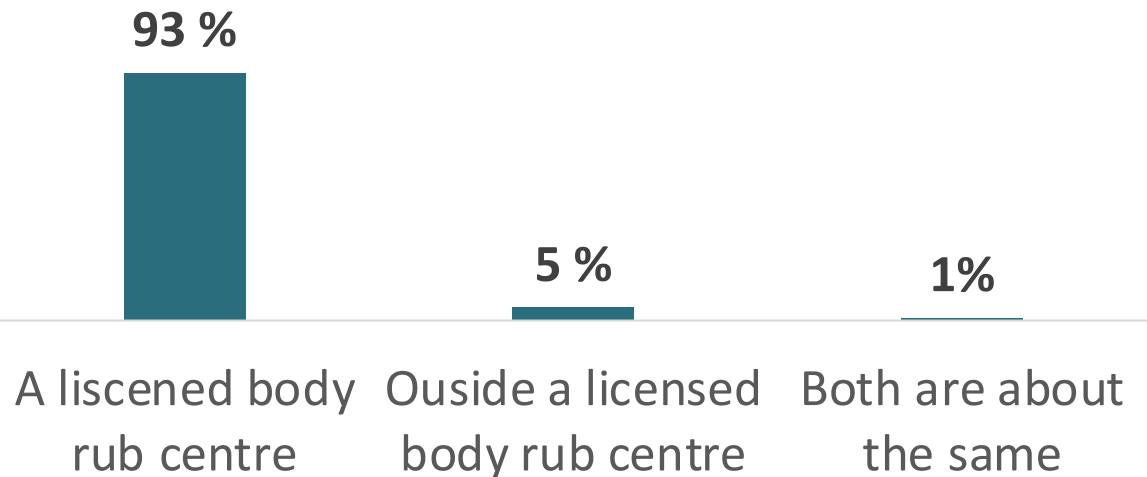
- Safety
 - Health and health supports
 - Quality of life
 - Licensing approaches and opportunities
 - Reducing buyer demand
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SAFETY

"I have worked in all environments – and I absolutely 100% feel safest in a body rub centre."

- Safety is the primary concern
- Body rub Centres are *Safer*
- Stakeholders:
Licensing appears to contradict gender equity work

Comparing working in a licensed body rub centre to doing this work outside a licensed body rub centre (i.e. escort, out calls), **I feel safer working in...**



HEALTH AND HEALTH SUPPORTS

“Without the environment of centres, the girls wouldn’t necessarily know [about] and protect their sexual health”

Compared to working in another space, centres provide better support for:

- Physical health
- Sexual health
- Mental health

Centres provide:

- Infrastructure to support hygiene
- Hub for health, safety and other information
- Social/ emotional support system for BRPs

QUALITY OF LIFE

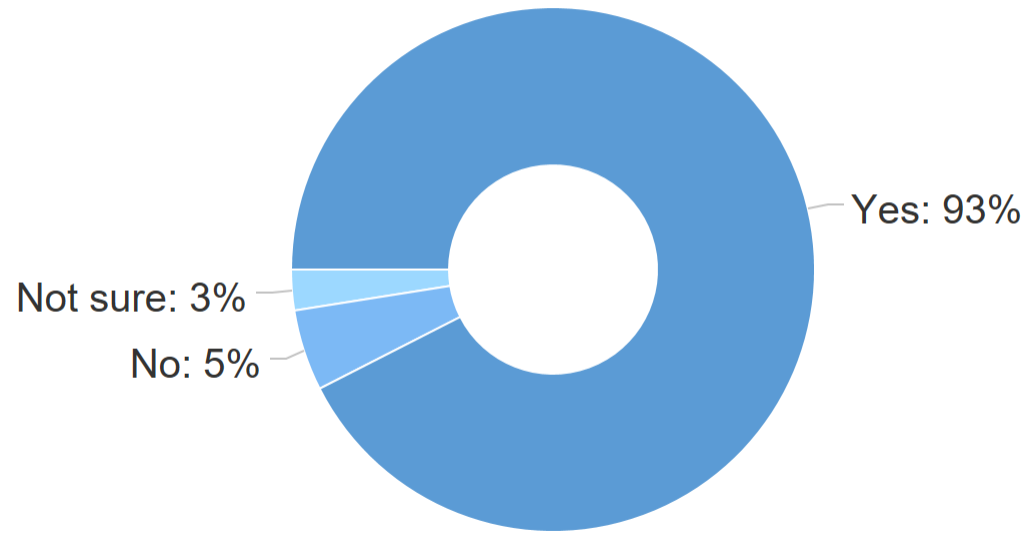
“My physical health, my mental health, everything. I have time to focus on myself, my family and put myself in a better situation for the future”

BRCs provide:

- Financial stability
 - Way for BRPs to support families
 - Better working conditions
 - More protection for BRP identities
 - Sense of a regular routine and stable work life
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LICENSING APPROACHES & OPPORTUNITIES

Do you think the City of Edmonton should continue to license body rub practitioners and centres?



- 93% of Practitioners think Edmonton should continue licensing
- Strong support for Edmonton's approach; some stakeholders disagree

LICENSING IN OTHER CITIES: 5 EXAMPLES

“Edmonton is seen as a leader for taking a harm reduction approach

City	Status
Vancouver	Licensing with additional sex work policy supports
Calgary	Licensing for massage by providers with some certification
Regina	Recently (Sept. 2) voted to begin licensing, based on a model similar to Edmonton's
Toronto	Licensing with a restriction to 25
Montreal	Licensing at borough level: approximately 350 total

REDUCING BUYER DEMAND

- There is a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of strategies to reduce buyer demand

Strategies	Notes
“John School”	Limited reach Little evidence of effectiveness
School-based education	Very few programs/ little research
Public awareness	Short-lived, local, underfunded Often not evaluated/ little research
Enforcement (Direct & using technology)	Reverse stings: costly, limited reach Penalties: limited reach, more effective Tracking/ shaming: No evidence

RECOMMENDATIONS

“ It is very, very clear that if the purpose is to minimize harm – it [ending licensing] is going to have the absolute opposite effect.”

- Continue licensing as part of a harm reduction approach
 - Enhance work to end exploitation and address trafficking
 - Review and act on the additional recommendations in our report
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