

## Cover Letter

Funder Name  
Funder Title  
Foundation  
Street Address  
City, State, Zipcode

Dear Funder,

**after BREAST CANCER** believes in ensuring that women, post-surgery, have the items needed to return to a normalcy of life after breast cancer. Following mastectomy or lumpectomy surgery, graduates often have reduced self-esteem and body positivity. Those without supplementary health insurance and with limited financial resources are left without access to breast prostheses and necessary undergarments. By offering graduates access to prostheses and specialized undergarments, **after BREAST CANCER** serves to ensure that graduates are equipped with supplies that will allow them to return to their normal lives.

Founded in 2013, “**after BREAST CANCER**,” a volunteer-driven registered charity (Charity #849225040 RR0001), helps breast cancer “graduates” with limited financial resources and no supplementary insurance obtain their basic post-operative supplies at no personal cost. We serve women who are at the poverty line, who might be a part of marginalized communities, regardless of race or religion. **after BREAST CANCER** provides women with essential items such as post-operative mastectomy bras, mastectomy camisoles and breast prostheses.

Our requested amount of \$32,000 in funding will go toward the financial investment needed to purchase the items included in each kit. Each individual package is valued at \$250, with an estimated cost of \$32,448 for the needed 128 ABC Care KIT!s. With this investment, ABC will provide graduates the supplies they need.

We would be grateful if the Canadian Women’s Foundation would contribute to our growing and thriving program. Your contribution will ensure that **after BREAST CANCER** continues to transform the lives of breast cancer graduates as they return to a “normal” life with comfort and confidence. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Cordially,

Alicia Vianga

Founder & Executive Director  
Enclosure: Grant Proposal

## Abstract

**after BREAST CANCER's** Care KIT! Program aids women in Canada who are low-income, are pre-mastectomy and have no supplementary health insurance. Our focus is helping financially disadvantaged women obtain their basic post-operative needs, including breast prostheses and mastectomy bras, at no personal cost. **after BREAST CANCER** is passionate about spreading awareness of the ABC Care KIT! Program to pre-surgical patients to ensure that they receive their kits prior to their surgery. We are dedicated to providing resources and programs that contribute to a woman's quality of life after breast cancer. Our objectives are to enable women to graduate from the ABC Care KIT! Program three to four months after mastectomy surgery. We will fulfill this objective by introducing the women we serve from the ABC Care KIT! Program to the SJHE THRIVES Program where they receive annual bra fittings and can attend monthly workshops related to learning about beauty treatments, side effects from breast cancer medications, and constructing healthy diets. We will evaluate the ABC Care KIT! Program's impact on the participants' body image and mental health using a survey that will be administered to a randomly selected test group before they receive their breast prosthesis kits, and again when they complete the program. We will measure the effectiveness of our instructional materials through questionnaires.

## Needs Statement

Breast cancer is the second deadliest cancer in Canada, affecting 1 in 8 Canadian women in their lifetime. 31% of women in Canada diagnosed with breast cancer are required to have a mastectomy. The difficulties of breast cancer do not end after the final surgery or treatment. The items that a breast cancer graduate needs after undergoing a mastectomy are expensive as the average cost of a breast prosthesis is \$425 and the average cost of a mastectomy bra or camisole ranges from \$75 to \$150. OHIP'S Assistive Devices Program does not offer funding to breast cancer graduates to assist in covering the cost of mastectomy bras and breast prostheses. OHIP only helps cover the cost of external silicone breast prostheses.

Research has shown that women who do not wear a breast prosthesis post-operatively are at an elevated risk for post-treatment mental illnesses. A lack of prostheses can hinder one's ability to interact with society and cause them to feel a sense of isolation. The inability to purchase appropriate undergarments can diminish self-confidence and lead to negative body image. Women with limited financial resources and no insurance to cover these necessary expenses cannot afford to spend hundreds of dollars on the items they need to feel confident and secure after breast cancer.

**after BREAST CANCER** steps in to make needed items accessible to women from underrepresented and low-income communities and households. Canadian graduates can enroll in the ABC Care KIT! Program if they meet the qualifications of being a breast cancer graduate or a patient in treatment. **after BREAST CANCER's** outreach is to women who are living at or barely above the poverty level and are in need of items to assist them following mastectomy surgery. Participants will graduate from the program in three to four months after

they are healed from their mastectomies. Providing the ABC Care KIT! Program to low-income women lowers the barriers that they face and improves their quality of life after breast cancer.

The ABC Care KIT! Program allows a woman to transition from seeing herself as a cancer patient to a woman who is healed and deserving of acceptance and confidence. Included in each ABC Care KIT! is a camisole, front-closing mastectomy bra, temporary prostheses, a guide to appropriate fittings and a seat belt cushion. After a graduate from the ABC Care KIT! Program is healed, she can join the S|HE THRIVES program. The program offers a graduate up to three mastectomy products annually (bras and camisoles) and a breast prosthesis or double breast prostheses every two years, catering to each woman's individual needs. The S|HE THRIVES Program builds upon the ABC Care KIT! Program to ensure that each woman has continued support.

**after BREAST CANCER** is working to make pre-surgical mastectomy patients aware of the ABC KIT! to ensure that if they are in need of the items that the kit provides, they will be prepared to receive them following surgery. The ABC Care KIT! Program is unique to Canada and remains vital to combat the financial strain that women in Canada face following mastectomy surgery.

## Goals & Objectives

The goal of **after BREAST CANCER** is to provide women with the items they need to recover after undergoing surgeries related to breast cancer.

**after BREAST CANCER** is passionate about spreading awareness of the ABC KIT! to pre-surgical patients and ensuring they are able to receive the kits prior to their mastectomy surgery.

We are dedicated to providing resources and programs that contribute to a woman's quality of life after breast cancer.

### Our main objectives include:

1. Research and Development: identifying underserved areas in breast cancer survivorship that lack resources and providing evidence-based information that can facilitate informed decision making on issues related to breast cancer survivorship.
2. Direct Support: providing women who have no insurance and limited financial resources with mastectomy bras, camisoles and breast prostheses at no personal cost after surgery (mastectomy or lumpectomy).
3. Support for the Future: offering resources that contribute to a woman's quality of life (QOL) after breast cancer.

## METHODS

The ABC Care KIT! Program achieves its objectives through the coordinated effort of the program director, trained staff, and community partners.

### Direct Support

1. Producing KIT!s that include: a mastectomy bra or camisole, temporary breast prostheses, two drainage pockets, a seatbelt pillow, an instructional guide for bra and breast prosthesis fittings, and a S|HE calendar.
2. Distributing KIT!s at the Canadian Cancer Society, St. Michael's Hospital, Hearth Place Cancer Support Centre, Gilda's Club Greater Toronto, Wellspring Downtown, Wellspring Birmingham, and Wellspring Westerkirk.
3. Performing fittings at **after BREAST CANCER** Monday through Friday 11am to 5pm as well as at the Hearth Place Cancer Support Center in Oshawa, ON the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

### Support for the Future

1. Providing women in the ABC Care KIT! Program with new single or double breast prostheses every 2 years.
2. Welcoming graduates to the S|HE THRIVES program where they receive bra fittings and monthly workshops related to beauty treatments, side effects from breast cancer medications, and healthy diets.

### Evaluation

1. Developing and administering a survey based on published scales to assess graduates' body image and mental health before beginning and after completion of the program.
2. Developing and administering a questionnaire to assess effectiveness of the instructional guide.

## ABC Care KIT! Program Budget

Program Materials Expenses			
Temporary Breast Prostheses	\$5,120.00		Each pair of temporary breast prostheses costs \$40 (\$40/pair x 128 pairs of temporary breast prostheses = \$20,000)
One-Step-in Camisole	\$12,544.00		Each one step in camisole costs \$98 (\$98/camisole x 128 camisoles = \$12,544)
One-Front Closure Mastectomy bra	\$8,704.00		Each front closure mastectomy bra costs \$68.00 (\$68/bra x 128 bras = \$8,704)
2 Drainage tube pockets	\$2,560.00		2 drainage pockets cost \$20.00 (\$20/pair x 128 drainage pockets = \$2,560)
Specialist-Approved Post-Surgery Instructional Guide	\$512.00		The printing cost of each instructional guide is \$4 (\$4/guide x 128 guides = \$512)
Packaging	\$448.00		Packaging for each kit costs \$3.50 (3.50/set of packaging x 128 sets = \$448)

Seatbelt Pillow	\$1,280.00		Each seatbelt pillow costs \$10 (\$10/pillow x 128 pillows = \$1,280)
S HE Calendar	\$1,280.00		Printing one S HE Calendar costs \$10 (\$10/calendar x 128 calendars = \$1,280)
<b>TOTAL ABC KIT! BUDGET:</b>	\$32,448		

### Program Materials

Costs are average prices for each specialized garment and prosthesis, and totals are based on the production of 128 of each item. Each of these items are essential post-recovery. The instructional guide explains bra and breast prosthesis fitting. The S|HE calendars share encouraging messages from ABC's Ambassadors who have completed breast cancer treatment.

### Request

The requested amount of \$32,000 will fund program materials expenses for 128 ABC KIT!s, a figure generated based on demand of the target population.