

PRESS RELEASE
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Two-Spirit Medicine Bundle Pilot to create alternate pathways to testing and sexual health resources among Two-Spirit and queer Indigenous people in B.C.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA – The Two-Spirit Program at Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) has launched the **Two-Spirit Medicine Bundle Pilot**, a research project made by and for the Two-Spirit, queer and trans Indigenous community with the goal of creating alternate pathways to testing and sexual health resources in British Columbia.

“Under the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, which weaves western and Indigenous knowledge for the benefit of all, the Medicine Bundle is an Indigenous approach to accessing sexual health resources,” says Martin Morberg, CBRC’s Two-Spirit Program Coordinator. “The purpose of our pilot is to bring sacredness back into sex and give Two-Spirit and queer Indigenous folks access to a holistic approach to their sexual health needs.”

Available to be customized and ordered through [CBRC’s website](#), the Two-Spirit Medicine Bundle contains an HIV and STBBI self-test kit, Indigenous medicines (such as white sage, sweetgrass, tobacco ties, and more), sexual health supplies and additional resources. To be eligible to participate in the pilot and receive a Medicine Bundle, folks must identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit), be a resident of what is colonially referred to as British Columbia, be 18 years of age or older, and agree to fill out a short survey.

Folks requesting a Medicine Bundle will receive it at the address of their choosing, with additional support provided by the Trusted Messengers and Two-Spirit Program. All participants will receive a small honorarium for completing the follow-up survey.

“This Medicine Bundle will explore the uptake of Indigenous-designed, peer-led, and culturally competent approaches to sexual health through HIV self-testing and dried blood spot (DBS) testing,” says Lane Bonertz, Two-Spirit Program Support. “Creating opportunities that not only position Indigenous people as the ones accessing resources, but as providers, uplifts and strengthens community. As Indigenous people, we have the knowledge and relationships in our own communities to provide sexual health guidance and support in ways that cannot be achieved by those without those same connections.”

The Medicine Bundle Pilot will be supported by the Trusted Messenger program, composed of Indigenous and Two-Spirit folks from across the province who will provide localised peer support and connection to additional resources within their own communities and health regions. Messengers have received training on STBBI/HIV treatment and prevention, as well as teachings from Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, activists, and academics working in Indigenous



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community care. The Trusted Messenger role is one that recognizes the strength in lived experience and working from and within the community to create more accessible approaches to sexual health care, particularly in rural and remote areas where gaps to appropriate and sensitive care still persist.

The Medicine Bundle Project was made possible by REACH Nexus, CANFAR, FEAST Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research, the University of Victoria, National Microbiology Laboratory, Provincial Health Services Authority, and the First Nations Health Authority.

For more information, please visit www.cbrc.net/medicinebundle.

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