

December 2022

Friend

This month: Free HIV self-testing kits, a new resource on mpox, opportunities at CBRC, and more.

Note: If you prefer to receive this newsletter in either English or French only, [please change your preferences](#).

THE LATEST

1.

December 1st was World AIDS Day, as well as the start of Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week. This time, each year, is an opportunity to increase awareness and knowledge about HIV and AIDS and reduce the stigma and discrimination that still prevent people from accessing the care and support that they need.

Last week, CBRC announced the extension of three successful HIV self-testing programs, which will offer **free self-testing kits** to 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities. These programs allow communities to access HIV self-test kits in-person through participating partners, order them online, or receive them in a Medicine Bundle:

- **Test@Home** provides free HIV self-test kits by mail to 2S/LGBTQ+ folks anywhere in Canada. People can request up to four kits, which will be sent in discreet packaging. People can use this service as many times as they like.
- **Test Now: Community Edition** provides free HIV self-test kits through a network of dozens of community-based organizations and venues across the country. These kits will allow people to access HIV testing where they want, when they want, and in a private and confidential setting. Note: This program will roll out through December, with more organizations and businesses added to the list as they come onboard.
- The **Medicine Bundle** is designed by and for Two-Spirit and queer Indigenous people. CBRC's Two-Spirit Team has developed a special Medicine Bundle in what is colonially known as British Columbia. These packages include various Indigenous medicines (e.g. (e.g. sage, sweetgrass, tobacco, cedar, lavender, etc.), an HIV self-test kit, and additional sexual health resources. The purpose of this bundle is to bring the sacredness back into sex and give folks access to a holistic approach to one's sexual health needs.



2.

The Future of PrEP is Now! CBRC is seeking 2SGBQM (Two-Spirit, gay, bisexual, queer and men who have sex with men, including trans men and non-binary people) to participate in focus groups on new, “long-acting” PrEP to prevent HIV, and to explore potential needs and preferences within different communities. You will receive an **honoraria of \$60 for your participation!** Interested? Learn more about the study and details on how to participate [here](#).

3.

While mpox cases have declined considerably in Canada, the impacts of this epidemic are still front and centre for 2S/GBTQ+ people. Stories of excruciating pain, stigmatizing experiences accessing care, and long periods of isolation without support have been common. For many others, the threat of mpox meant a new source of fear adding to the existing sexual and mental health challenges experienced by 2S/GBTQ+ people.

That's why we've created a **suite of new resources available online at [mpox.ca](#)**, including specific guidance on appropriate wound care, self-advocacy when experiencing marginalization and stigma in accessing care for mpox, and updated information regarding the mpox vaccine.

Photo: Screenshot of [mpox.ca](#)

4.

We are currently completing a pilot evaluation of our Our Stats tutorial videos, and we'd love to hear your feedback! We recommend completing the survey after watching all 4 of the [Our Stats tutorial videos](#), but you can still complete the survey if you only watch 1-3 of the videos. [Click here to complete our evaluation survey](#). To show our appreciation to you for sharing your feedback, **you will be invited to enter a draw for \$500 at the end of the survey** (deadline to complete the survey: January 8, 2023).

THE READ

In The Read this month, CBRC's Chris Draenos and Martin Morberg talk about the importance of our HIV self-testing programs. We also spoke to Abbey Ferguson, Executive Director of the Halifax Sexual Health Centre, one of our community partners who are helping to deliver HIV self-tests to local community members in need of testing access. [Read the full blog post here](#).

OUR COMMUNITY:

Jose Patiño-Gomez

Jose has called Toronto home for the past six years, moving there from Colombia in 2016.

Since he arrived in Canada, Jose has been active with many cultural and community organizations – he's volunteered for Luminato Festival, imagineNATIVE, Action Positive, the Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatment (CAAT), and Pride Toronto, to name a few. During the pandemic, he has also led a project within the Latin gbtMSM/PHA community in Toronto.

A self-proclaimed “multipotentialite and a generalist” (“I love being all over!”), Jose had held both paid and volunteer positions in areas like evaluation, research, and national & international project management.

Jose has always been a project-minded person, and before landing at CBRC, worked as a full-time event planner for over 10 years, mostly planning weddings. Back in Colombia, not only was he planning events, he was teaching others the ins and outs too – he was a professor, and academic coordinator/director for first a diploma, then a technical degree in event management.

As an event planner connected to the queer community in Canada since 2016, Jose has helped put together some of the biggest celebrations for queer and trans folks through his volunteer work with Pride Toronto.

He started at CBRC in 2018 as the National Coordinator for the Advance Community Alliance, supporting communications across the various project partners. Simultaneously, Jose started supporting other CBRC initiatives like the Sex Now Survey, and saw opportunities to better promote CBRC's work to audiences across Canada. He also started supporting our digital presence through social media, digital marketing, and web projects, bringing him to his current role as CBRC's Senior Manager of Marketing and Engagement, where he oversees all of CBRC's digital platforms, coordinates the production of our digital/print products and is in charge of all promotion direction to create awareness on CBRC campaigns.

Jose finds the ability to create positive change in 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities extremely rewarding: “I'm someone who needs to find pride in and connection to the work we're doing - I love my work and the work we do. I love how our work is about creating change for our own communities.”

In his spare time, Jose is still planning events – he put on three weddings in the last month and a half! When not occupied with a side project, you'll find Jose binge-watching a show or planning his next trip.



Photo: Jose Patiño-Gomez

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- CBRC's Kirk Furlotte and [Quadrangle.NL](#)'s Charlie Murphy co-wrote [a report back](#) on efforts to create a community centre for Quadrangle, a hub for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- CBRC endorsed [Act for Mental Health](#), a campaign that seeks to address the reality that many people in Canada lack access to the mental health and substance use health supports they need and are entitled to. Targeted at the federal government, the campaign includes policy recommendations aimed at advancing transformational mental health and substance use health systems change.
- **Help us create educational resources on conversion “therapy” and the federal ban to help us put an end to these harmful practices.** CBRC is currently assessing information and education needs related to conversion practices and the federal ban on conversion “therapy” through a national project funded by the Department of Justice Canada. We want to hear from:
 - Organizations who are 2SLGBTQ+ community serving, affirming faith-based, health or social service, immigrant-serving
 - 2SLGBTQ+ community members

For full details, [click here](#).

CBRC IN THE MEDIA

CBRC's Jordan Sullivan was interviewed for the [Survivors Speak](#) podcast, which is part of a larger resource called “Let Me Be Me: a Legal Information Guide to Canada's Conversion Therapy Ban.” The resource was released earlier this month by Legal Information Nova Scotia. (Alongside the podcast, the resource includes a guide, video, and shareables. Check out the full project [here](#).)

Some more recent interviews and articles about our work:

- [Rattrapage du jeudi 27 octobre 2022 | Radio-Canada \(Panorama\)](#)
- [Entrevue avec Pierre-Luc Landry : santé et bien-être des personnes LGBTQ2S+ | Radio-Canada \(Phare Ouest\)](#)
- [Raising awareness in Québec about the new conversion therapy offences in the Criminal Code and the rights of 2SLGBTQI+ sexual assault survivors | Cision](#)

COMING UP...

Stay tuned for our Summit Content Library! We're working hard to bring you recordings from Summit 2022, both from our online and in-person sessions.

We're also working on a resource about sexualized substance use that includes conversations with 2S/GBTQ experts on what's needed to support people who party and play (PnP).

CBRC will be closed from Monday, December 26 to Monday, January 2. See you in the new year!

Get Involved

Join our team! We're looking for an [Associate Director of Research](#).

We're also seeking 2SLGBTQIA+ community members across Canada to provide input on data analysis priorities and insight into writing reports from the [Our Health](#) study. Full details including time commitment and compensation [can be found here](#).



Community-Based Research Centre

Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) promotes the health of people of diverse sexualities and genders through research and intervention development.

To learn more visit [www.cbrc.net](#).

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