

Background

- **Canada approved its first HIV self-test in November 2020**, which uses blood via finger prick.
- We developed a **community-based implementation "Test@Home" study** that provided free mail-home HIV self-tests to gay, bisexual, trans, and queer men as well as Indigenous Two-Spirit and non-binary people (GBT2Q) across Canada.

Objective

- We sought to examine which GBT2Q opted-in to participate in the Test@Home study and their experience in the study.

Methods

- Participants were **recruited during Canada's third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic (from 03/2021-09/2021)** via the online community health Sex Now survey:
 - Sex Now 2021 recruited using advertisements on sociosexual websites/apps, and community-based organizations' social media and email lists
- **Eligible participants** were:
 - At least 18 years old,
 - Lived in Canada, and
 - Either identified as non-heterosexual or reported recent sex with a man.
 - Women were ineligible
- After self-completing Sex Now 2021 as a baseline questionnaire, participants could opt-into Test@Home and request **up to 3 free HIV self-tests**:
 - HIV self-tests could be used by the participant or distributed to others who were then invited to complete all study surveys
 - Of note, GBT2Q living with HIV were eligible to participate
- Participants completed a 2-week follow-up survey (data shown) as well as 1-month, 3-month, and 6-month (data not shown)
- Trained peer support "Test Now Buddies" were available via text, email, or toll-free telephone in English and French
- Chi-square tests compared participants who opted into Test@Home versus not on demographic and sexual health indicators (**p<0.05 significant**)



Test@Home Participation

- Of all eligible Sex Now 2021 participants, **2261** GBT2Q or **38% opted-in** to participate in the Test@Home study.
- A total of **5428** HIV self-tests were requested and **5318** or **98%** were successfully delivered.

Demographic Differences

Participants who **opted-in** (vs. not) were **MORE** likely to...

- Be aged 30 and under: **33%** (versus 22%)
- Experience financial strain: **10%** (versus 6%)
- Live in urban core: **32%** (versus 26%)
- Be born outside Canada: **25%** (versus 18%)
- Have a disability: **18%** (versus 14%)
- Identify as a person of colour: **20%** (versus 13%)

Participants who **opted-in** (vs. not) were **LESS** likely to...

- Self-report living with HIV: **4%** (versus 10%)
- Identify as bisexual: **17%** (versus 28%)

Other Findings

- Test@Home participants were less likely to delay or skip STI testing during the COVID-19 pandemic: **26%** (versus 47%)
- Most Test@Home participants were not first-time testers: **91%** (versus 84%)
- PrEP use was more common among Test@Home participants: **28%** (versus 24%)
- Awareness of HIV self-testing was higher among Test@Home participants: **41%** (versus 38%)

Uptake and Acceptability

- Participants completed a **2-week follow-up survey** to assess their experience with Test@Home.
- **Uptake:**
 - **65%** of participants received **3** kits
 - **70%** of participants reporting passing on 1 kit
- **Acceptability:**
 - **88%** rated the overall experience as very or somewhat good
 - **88%** found the kit very or somewhat easy to use
 - **88%** would be very or somewhat likely to use it again
- Participants indicated the greatest benefits of Test@Home were it being more private (**70%**) and more convenient (**81%**) than going to a clinic.
- **47%** saw no drawbacks to the Test@Home study



Scan here to learn more about CBRC, Sex Now & Test@Home

Questions? Feedback? Ideas?
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Conclusions

- **Mail-home HIV self-tests reached several, but not all, target sub-populations of GBTQ2 during COVID-19.**
- **Additional follow-up to 6-months will further understandings of HIV self-test use, distribution, and linkage to care.**