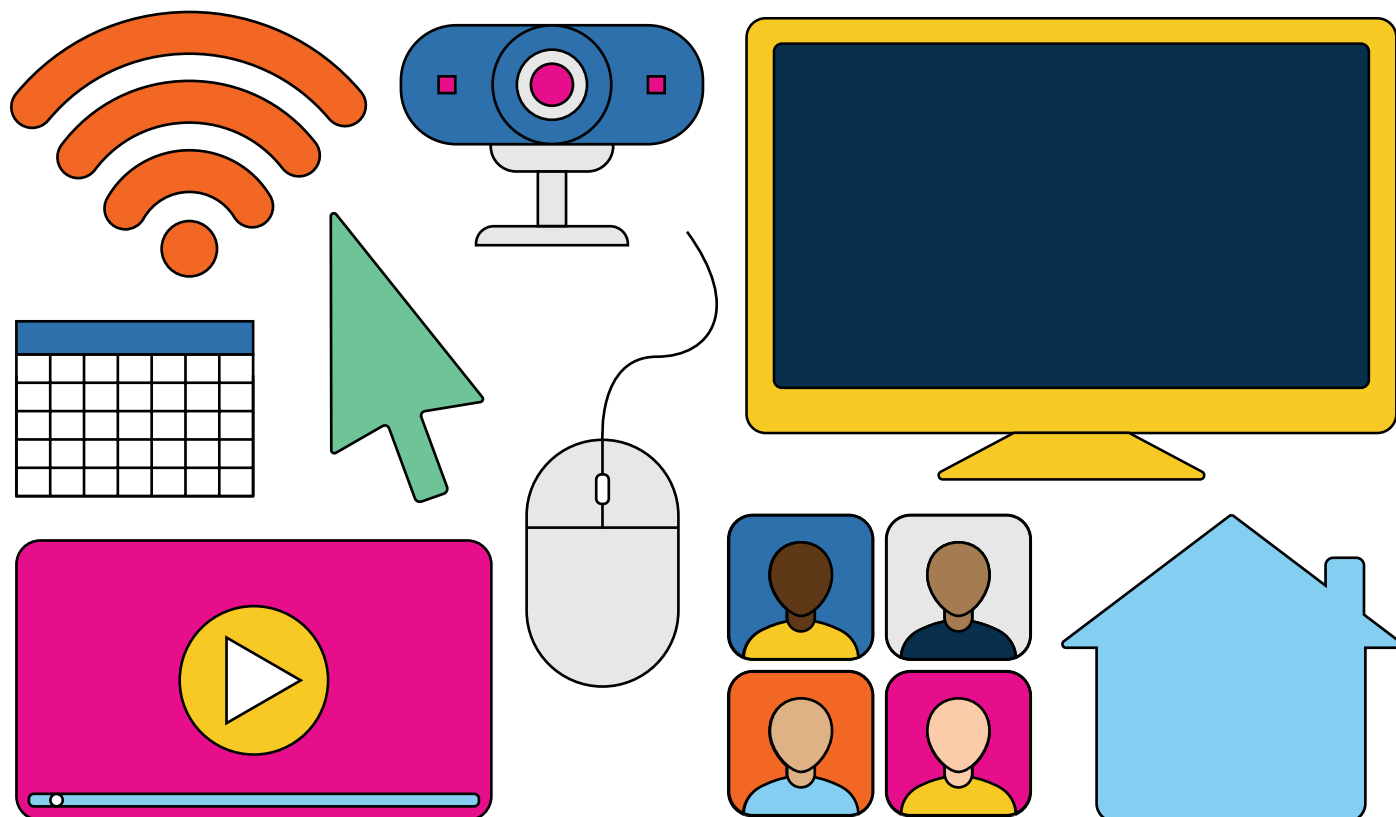




CHARTING NEW HORIZONS

**COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH CENTRE
2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

Table of Contents

Land Acknowledgement	3
Letter from Interim Executive Director	4
Two-Spirit Program	5
Research and Evaluation	7
Research Principles	7
Major Research Highlights	7
Programs	10
Advance Alliance	10
Major Program Highlights	11
Knowledge Exchange	14
Summit 2022	14
Webinars, Panel Discussions and Presentations	14
Advocacy & Rapid Response	15
Mpox	15
HIV	16
Additional Advocacy Efforts	16
Communications	16
The Update and The Read	16
Media Relations	17
Social Media	17
Dates of Significance	17
Jody's Departure	19
The Year Ahead	19
Thank You to Our Funders	20
Financial Reporting	20

Land Acknowledgement

CBRC acknowledges that as a national organization, our work spans across the unceded, ancestral, and traditional territories of Indigenous peoples on land that is currently occupied and known as Canada. This includes the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, currently known as Vancouver, where our head offices are located. We recognize and are grateful for living and working on all these lands that have been cared for by Indigenous peoples since time immemorial.

In 2016, CBRC endorsed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As an organization dedicated to the health and wellness of our communities, we recognize that true reconciliation requires more than an endorsement and have made a series of commitments in our work, including the full integration of Two-Spirit and Indigenous staff into the culture of the organization and delivery of our programs, as well as creating and centring an intentional space at the Summit for Two-Spirit and Indigenous queer and trans people.

As we continue on our path of Truth and Reconciliation, CBRC continues to learn from our Indigenous staff and partners, reflecting on the ways our actions and social policies impact the lives of Indigenous people, and actively participating in decolonization.



Letter from Interim Executive Director

To our community,

As always, this past year was a busy one for CBRC. Reflecting on these 12 months is a unique experience as I, a long-time CBRC staff member, took the helm of the organization when Jody Jollimore, our Executive Director of five years, stepped down to transition to a new role as the Executive Director at CATIE.

There is more reflection about Jody's tenure in this report, but I would like to take a moment here to personally thank him for his outstanding efforts this past half-decade as Executive Director and in years beyond that.

Under his leadership, CBRC saw tremendous growth as a positive and impactful change agent in Canada. In this past year alone we further grew our footprint, adding additional staff as well as new programs and research projects. Thank you Jody, for being a great leader and friend.

This year we also saw the fruits of years of research and advocacy. For instance, CBRC was instrumental in advocating for gender-neutral blood donation deferral policies, which were announced by Canadian Blood Services (CBS) in spring 2022. This is a huge win for more fair, evidence-based medical donation policies—and we continue to collaborate with CBS to address the stigma and discomfort that our communities feel in donation spaces.

We also secured funding from new sources to support CBRC in its efforts to diversify our offerings—branching further into sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and substance use work in the diverse communities we partner with and serve. On the partnership side, I'm especially glad to report that we've worked with more organizations that serve queer women, trans communities, and Two-Spirit communities.

Today, I'm proud to say CBRC's roster of initiatives serves people of diverse sexualities and genders. While gay men will always be part of our organization, our initial scope has grown to one that serves the full 2S/LGBTQIA+ community. We are excited for what that means for the future—and we are eager for you to learn more in this report.

Brook Biggin

Interim Executive Director

Two-Spirit Program

Two-Spirit Medicine Bundle Pilot

In April 2022, the Two-Spirit Program launched the Medicine Bundle Pilot—an online initiative designed by and for the Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous community with the goal of creating alternate pathways to HIV testing and sexual health resources in British Columbia.

Through the pilot, medicine bundles containing HIV self-test kits, Indigenous medicines (sage, sweetgrass, tobacco, cedar, lavender, Labrador tea, bear grease and Devil's club salve), sexual health supplies, and additional resources were distributed to Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous individuals, who were also invited to complete a brief follow-up survey.



Nine trusted messengers were hired and trained to distribute medicine bundles within their networks and communities. The Medicine Bundle Pilot ran until the end of August 2022, with over 150 individuals participating in the pilot. A national expansion of the Medicine Bundle initiative was launched later in the year, with over 300 medicine bundles distributed by March 2023.

Two-Spirit Symposium

As part of Summit 2022: Pushing Possibilities, the second annual Two-Spirit Symposium was held in-person in Vancouver on October 25-26, 2022. The Symposium brought over 40 Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous people together to share updates on Two-Spirit work throughout Turtle Island and to collectively create recommendations to guide further Two-Spirit resurgence.

The symposium offered opportunities for attendees to: come together in ceremony; hear from elders, knowledge keepers, and community members; strategize around particular calls to action; learn about various initiatives, including the Medicine Bundle project; and engage in storytelling through participation in a sharing circle.

Evaluation findings demonstrate that the symposium was a huge success, with 96% of respondents reporting that participating in the symposium increased their knowledge of strengths-based approaches to Two-Spirit and Indigenous health. Furthermore, several knowledge products emerged from the symposium, including a Two-Spirit health and resilience video and a graphic recording of the symposium.



HIV and HPV Prevention Learning Modules

This year, the Two-Spirit Program began developing several learning modules and corresponding practice guides for service providers working with Two-Spirit and Indigenous communities. This initiative was funded in large part through the Equality for Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression Program of Women and Gender Equality Canada.

Through engagement and consultation with community members, service providers, and partner organizations, topics were identified and outlines were developed for the first two modules and practice guides: HIV prevention was selected as the focus for one of the modules and practice guides, HPV prevention for the other. By March 2023, the content for both modules had been finalized, with plans made for live delivery of the modules via in-person training in spring 2023, followed by adaptation of the modules for online asynchronous learning.

Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day

On March 20, 2023, the Two-Spirit Program held the second annual Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day in-person in Vancouver. This celebration brought together Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous people from across Turtle Island to recognize the strength and tremendous progress made by the Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community over the years.

The celebration included a Bannock and Tea event with opportunities for discussion, rejoicing, and expression, including live entertainment from local Indigenous artists. Other community members and organizations from across Turtle Island were also encouraged to host their own events within their respective communities to elevate and recognize the role of Two-Spirit people.



Research and Evaluation

Research Principles

In February 2023, CBRC published a set of [research principles](#) to serve as a framework for guiding research we conduct in partnership with our community advisors, organizational partners, affiliate researchers, and other collaborators.

The framework includes ten principles for guiding CBRC's research work in general [*shown below*] (Access; Advance Social Justice; Balance; Bravery and Love; Community Empowerment; Centre Lived Experience; Historically Informed; Holistic View of Health; Impact-Oriented; Intergenerational), and three additional principles for CBRC's research partnerships more specifically (Commitment and Action to Support Our Communities; Community Leadership, Partnership, and Control; Financial and Operational Transparency).

The research principles are informed by frameworks that have guided CBRC's past work, including the [Communities Creating Knowledge statement](#) and the [GROW + LIFT checklist](#), along with cultural and community-specific frameworks for research with specific populations, such as [OCAP® principles](#) and the [Research, Evaluation, Data Collection, and Ethics \(REDE\) Protocol for Black Populations in Canada](#). Also, recognizing the importance of reflexivity, growth, and change, the research principles are meant to serve as a living document, which will be revisited and revised as CBRC continues to carry out—and learn from and through—our research work.

We encourage you to [read more](#) about each principle, as their development represents a unique commitment by CBRC to do community-based research differently—and we hope to set an example for other organizations to follow.



Major Research Highlights

Our Health: Canada-Wide 2S/LGBTQQIA+ Community Survey

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force, the *Our Health* study was launched by CBRC in April 2022. Our Health was an online, Canada-wide, community health survey designed to gather additional data on the health experiences and needs of 2S/LGBTQQIA+ people in order to inform recommendations for improving programs, services, and policies.

Distinguishing *Our Health* from CBRC's other surveys and reflecting our organization's new expanded scope, Our Health was the first population health study CBRC conducted that included responses from anyone who identifies as part of the 2S/LGBTQQIA+ community!

The 2022 edition of the *Our Health* survey included a suite of questions focused on COVID-19, along with a series of questions focused on chronic health—an area of research in which 2S/LGBTQQIA+ people have been significantly underrepresented. The 2022 survey also included an optional mailed Dried Blood Spot (DBS) testing component for measuring COVID-19 antibody levels among respondents.

Our Health ran until the end of September 2022, with over 4,000 2S/LGBTQQIA+ people aged 15+ participating in the survey and 800 DBS samples collected (from participants aged 18+). CBRC shared initial findings from the study at the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force conference in March 2023 and through two webinars—one on [March 7, 2023, focused on COVID-19](#) and one on [March 23, 2023, focused on chronic health](#) (not recorded). In March 2023, CBRC also began work on developing several community reports and a dynamic data visualization dashboard to support further knowledge translation of *Our Health* data.



Sex Now 2022 and Test Now

For the first time since 2018, Sex Now—the largest and longest-running survey of gay, bisexual, queer, and trans men, and Two-Spirit and non-binary (GBT2Q) people in Canada—hit the road again.

During the summer of 2022, CBRC completed in-person data collection at Pride events and other community venues in over 20 cities across Canada. The 2022 edition of Sex Now (“Let’s Get Physical”) included a 15-minute survey to capture data on new and emerging issues facing GBT2Q communities, such as the mpox outbreaks that occurred around the same time as the study. Participants could also opt in to *Test Now*, an additional study component where they could receive HIV self-test kits to use on themselves or to distribute within their networks and then receive a follow-up online survey and peer support several weeks later.



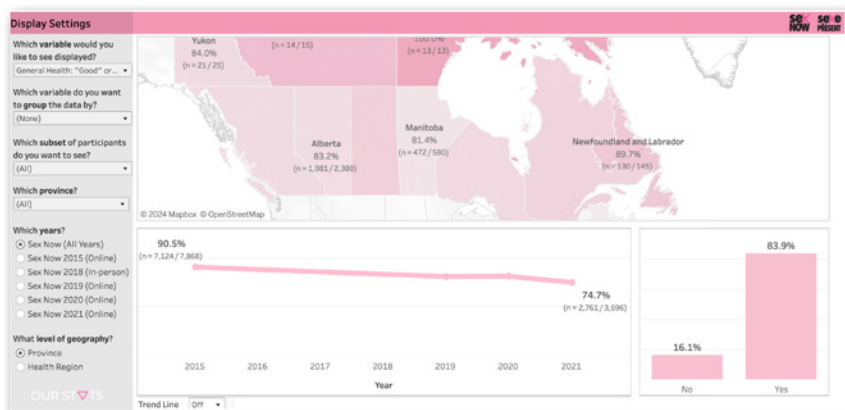
In-person data collection ran from June to September 2022, and follow-up data collection continued until January 2023. Over 3,000 GBT2Q people participated in Sex Now 2022, with half of these respondents also opting into Test Now. Furthermore, over 2800 HIV self-test kits were distributed through the study.

Our Stats Tutorial Series

In November 2022, CBRC released a series of [tutorial videos](#) designed to orient people to our data visualization tool Our Stats and demonstrate how this can be used to perform simple analyses on data from the Sex Now survey.

Funded by a Capacity-Building Program grant from Women and Gender Equality Canada, the video series includes a general tutorial (How to Use Our Stats) along with three case studies. The series demonstrates how to extract and interpret data via Our Stats to inform activities like community-based programming and campaign development.

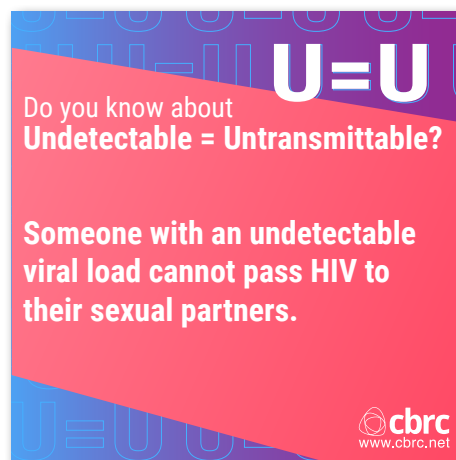
An initial pilot evaluation survey conducted after the release of the tutorial videos showed that 95% of respondents reported an increase in knowledge of using Our Stats to access health research findings about 2S/LGBTQ+ communities after viewing one or more of the videos. Furthermore, 86% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the tutorial series and 91% said that they would recommend it to others.



U=U Project

In fall 2022, CBRC conducted interviews with 15 people living with HIV to get their perspectives on the Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U) message—that HIV-positive people on HIV treatment with an undetectable viral load cannot pass on the virus through sex. Findings from these consultations were used in conjunction with data from Sex Now to develop a [campaign](#) aimed at increasing uptake of the U=U message.

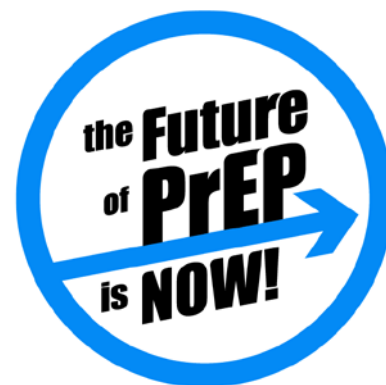
Funded through the Canada to Zero Community Research Program supported by Gilead Sciences Inc, this project included the creation of blog posts and video interviews with community members, who spoke about what U=U means to them, how it has impacted their lives, and what other people should know about it.



The Future of PrEP is Now

In partnership with Unity Health Toronto, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Victoria, CBRC began work on The Future of PrEP is Now, a new research project that aims to prepare Canada for the arrival of “long-acting” PrEP by better understanding community needs and preferences for accessing and taking this medication.

The study also aims to explore how existing inequities in PrEP access among keyGBT2Q sub-communities can be addressed through long-acting PrEP (including Indigenous, Black, and people of colour, trans and non-binary people, people who use substances, and people who live in rural and remote communities). In the spring of 2022, research ethics approval was sought for the study, and, in the fall, recruitment began for completion of focus groups and interviews with community members to explore community preferences and anticipated barriers to long-acting-PrEP delivery. Altogether, 10 focus groups and 9 semi-structured interviews were conducted from December 2022 to April 2023. By February 2023, the study team had also begun to finalize plans for a community preferences survey.



New HIV Diagnosis Project

CBRC began a qualitative research project this year called the New HIV Diagnosis Project, with recruitment and data collection taking place in early 2023. The project involved interviewing people who have been recently diagnosed with HIV (i.e., since 2018) in British Columbia. This project will shed light on the barriers to HIV testing and prevention and follow-up care experienced by a wide range of people affected by HIV. By the end of March 2023, 19 interviews had been completed for this project.

Contingency Management Program Evaluation Project

As an organization with a strong foundation in community-based research, CBRC is approached from time to time by other organizations seeking external research or evaluation support.

For instance, CBRC began a new partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) this year to provide support as an evaluation consultant on a pilot project initiated by VCH to expand contingency management (CM) programming in community-based settings, in part as a response to [previous work](#) conducted by CBRC.

CM is an approach to substance use treatment, wherein service users are given reinforcements (e.g., monetary incentives) for making positive changes in their substance use. Three novel intervention programs involving delivery of CM in community-based settings from a harm reduction approach were rolled out in Vancouver by Health Initiative for Men, PHS Community Services Society, and AIDS Vancouver, with CBRC collaborating with these partners and VCH to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the programs. By the end of March 2023, CBRC had analyzed data from over 90 survey responses and from focus groups with over 20 stakeholders (i.e., CM program participants and staff, including peer workers). Here are some of the notable findings:

- 86% of survey respondents reported that they met most or all of the weekly goals they set while attending one of the CM programs.
- 78% indicated that the CM incentives they received were important for helping them meet their weekly goals.
- Across focus groups, staff and participants acknowledged how the CM programs helped participants achieve positive outcomes in terms of their substance use, such as seeking additional treatment or reducing their use, while offering additional outcomes, like community-building and mutual aid, that fostered improved quality of life more broadly.

2SLGBTQ+ Health Hub

The [2SLGBTQ+ Health Hub](#) is a collaboration between over 50 community leaders, scholars, researchers, and healthcare providers from across Canada with the objective of building a national platform that will offer training, mentorship, networking, and capacity-building to emerging leaders in 2SLGBTQ+ health and research. This year, many of the Hub’s initiatives began to take flight, with CBRC supporting this work through participation on the Hub’s Executive Committee as the lead community-based organization partner.

In particular, this year saw the coordination of an inaugural team meeting, which was held in conjunction with Summit 2022. Additionally, the Hub conducted its inaugural fellowship program, which had 17 trainees, including 6 Health Advisors based at CBRC and 11 academic trainees (masters, doctoral, and postdoctoral fellows).

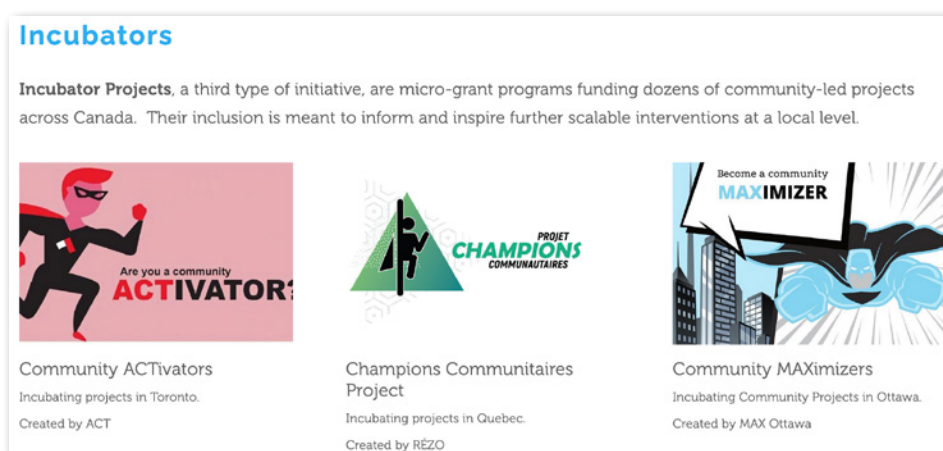
Programs

Advance Alliance

Advance is a pan-Canadian collaboration among ACT, CBRC, Health Initiative for Men, MAX Ottawa, and RÉZO to improve the accessibility and uptake of health services among cis and trans gay, bi, and queer men, Two-Spirit people, and other men who have sex with men (GBT2Q+) in Canada.

This year marked the end of the first 5-year funding cycle supporting the work of the Advance Alliance and the start of the next one. In addition to collaborating with Advance Alliance partners to complete the necessary groundwork for the new funding cycle (e.g., revisiting governance structures, revising evaluation tools, etc.), CBRC launched the [Advance Program Inventory](#) in the summer of 2022.

The Program Inventory is an online toolkit repository that showcases initiatives that have come out of the Advance Alliance. The goal of this website is to encourage information-sharing and provide resources for adoption of Advance Alliance initiatives by other community organizations serving GBT2Q+ people. As part of the new funding cycle, each year, the members of the Advance Alliance will update the Program Inventory to showcase new initiatives that they have implemented to advance GBT2Q+ health.



In addition to serving as the “backbone organization” for the Advance Alliance, CBRC conducts GBT2Q+ health promotion activities in those Canadian regions not served by the other Advance Alliance partners, namely the Atlantic and Prairie regions. Highlights from past-year activities in these regions are summarized below.

Advance Alliance – Atlantic Regional Highlights

- Community advisory/consultation sessions were conducted with 21 GBT2Q+ community members to provide input on CBRC’s work in the Atlantic region.
- The Halifax Health Programmers and 2QTHINKS networking and knowledge exchange groups were conducted again this year, reaching 77 staff from community-based organizations.
- Three online courses for healthcare providers/public health professionals (HCPs) were delivered. One of the courses focused on STBBI testing and prevention and the other two focused on the provision of gender-affirming care. There were 198 HCPs reached through these courses.
- Capacity-building sessions were conducted with 14 HCPs to support local research activities, including the PROGRESSIVE and PrEP-Rx studies focused on 2S/LGBTQIA+ pharmacy access and community-based PrEP prescribing, respectively.
- Professional skills training sessions were conducted with 24 community peer leaders, who then led 4 community outreach events to support Sex Now data collection.
- CBRC also completed mpox and HIVST projects with partners from across the Atlantic region and elsewhere in Canada.

Advance Alliance – Prairies Regional Highlights

- Community advisory/consultation sessions were conducted with 10 GBT2Q+ community members to provide input on CBRC's work in the Prairies region.
- HIVST training and presentations were conducted for professional audiences in the Prairies and elsewhere in Canada, reaching over 340 staff from community-based organizations and HCPs.
- The Trans Wellness Initiative's Introduction to Affirming Spaces Training was delivered online to 86 HCPs.
- 3 HIV/STBBI prevention pop-up events were conducted, reaching 240 GBT2Q+ community members.
- CBRC also completed mpox and HIVST projects with partners from across the Prairies region and elsewhere in Canada.

Major Program Highlights

Addressing Sexualized Substance Use Among GBT2Q in Canada

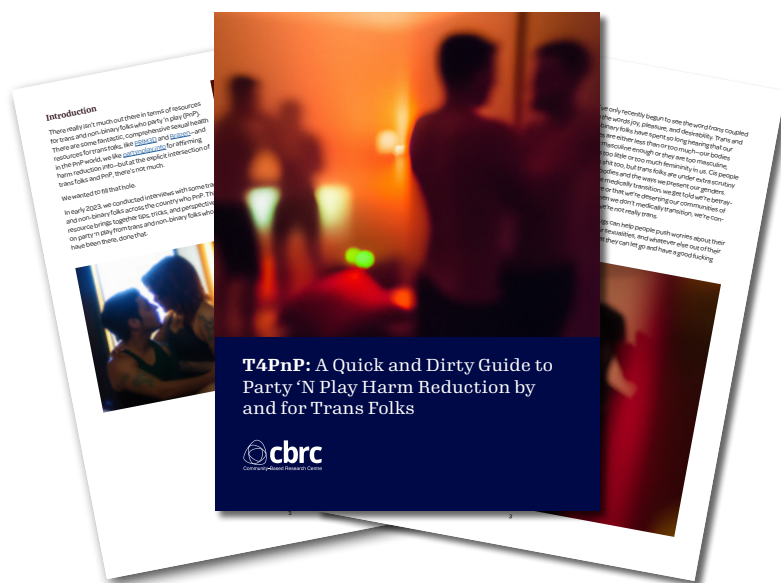
Funded through Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program (SUAP), CBRC completed a 1-year project entitled "Addressing Sexualized Substance Use (SSU) Among GBT2Q in Canada Through Frontline and Structural Interventions."

The goal of this project was to scale up the PeerNPeer program—an existing peer-led substance use and sexual health program for GBT2Q people who use drugs (GBT2Q-SU)—to sites in Winnipeg and Halifax. With the support of two key regional partners—the Sexuality Education Resource Centre in Winnipeg and AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia in Halifax—we implemented and evaluated peer-delivered, culturally-specific safer substance use and harm reduction materials and information, online self-screening, peer support services, and community education events for GBT2Q-SU in Winnipeg and Halifax.

We also conducted capacity-building at the national level through a peer caucus, a community of practice, and online workshops and presentations to support scaling up integrated addiction and sexual health interventions, reduce stigma, and improve cultural safety and competency among the professionals who work with GBT2Q-SU.

The project was a huge success, and notable achievements include:

- 25 knowledge products developed, including a [National Service Map for PnP Harm Reduction Support](#) and [T4PnP, a guide to PnP harm reduction by and for trans people](#).
- Through these knowledge products, along with 43 learning opportunities and 8 new services delivered through this project, we reached over 13,000 GBT2Q-SU and over 3,400 professionals.
- Among those project activity participants who responded to evaluation surveys, 79% of GBT2Q-SU respondents reported increased knowledge of safer drug use, and 83% of professional respondents reported that they intend to use the knowledge or skills gained from project activities to make evidence-informed improvements to policies, programs, and practices affecting GBT2Q substance users.



Community-Centered Responses to 2S/LGBTQIA+ COVID-19 Mental Health Impacts

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, this project aims to enhance mental health knowledge and capacity, and to improve mental health outcomes for 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities following the COVID-19 pandemic. This project is a collaboration with six regional partners:

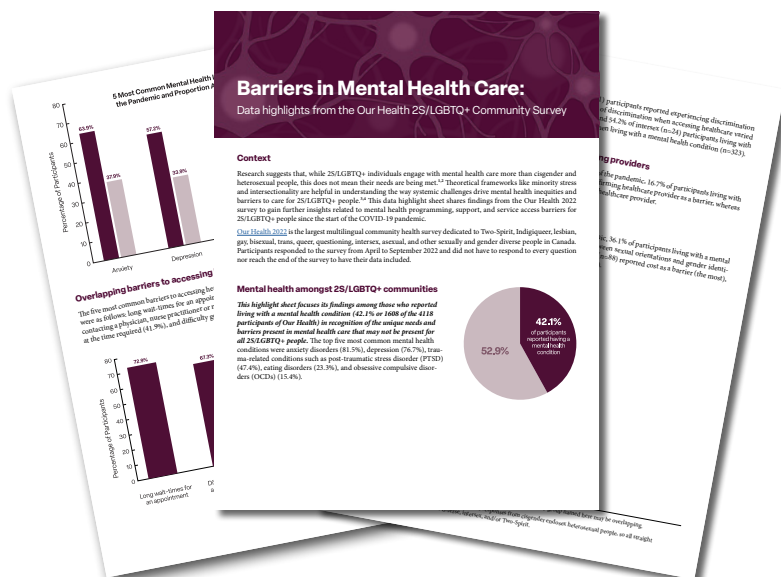
- CRUISElab (University of Toronto) in Ontario
- Health Initiative for Men in British Columbia
- Qollab (Université de Montréal) in Quebec
- Sexual Health and Gender Research Lab (Dalhousie University) in Nova Scotia
- Village Lab (University of Manitoba) in Manitoba
- Queer and Trans Health Collective in Alberta

In the first year of this project, CBRC conducted formative research, along with consultations with community members, service providers, and delivery partners, to adapt the Investigaytors program to include new content on 2S/LGBTQIA+ mental health.

Between October 2022 and March 2023, the adapted research and mental health capacity-building curriculum was delivered by regional partners, reaching 43 2S/LGBTQIA+ community members, who, in turn, developed 6 knowledge products as part of the program, highlighting key data on the mental health of 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities. Data from program evaluation surveys show that the program was a great success as well: 100% of respondents reported increased knowledge of the topics covered in the program, and 80% said that the program provided opportunities that increased their ability to take research and information and turn it into action.

The formative research and engagements from the first year of the project also allowed the development of a Two-Spirit version of the Investigaytors program (to be launched next year). This also allowed CBRC to lead the development of four service provider learning modules (to be launched next year), and a number of publications targeted at service providers and policymakers, including the following (with more to be published next year):

- Four research data reports:
 - [Coping with Minority Stress](#)
 - [Barriers in Mental Health Care](#)
 - [Social Isolation and Connection](#)
 - [Experiences of Trans and Gender Expansive Folks in Communities and Care](#)
- Four policy briefs:
 - [We're Stronger Together](#)
 - [Barriers in Mental Health Care](#)
 - [Coping with Minority Stress](#)
 - [Marginalization and Mental Health](#)



Knowledge Exchange

Summit 2022

Summit 2022 was held between October 18 and 28, with free online events taking place October 18-20, followed by a return to an in-person conference held in Vancouver on October 27-28.

The in-person conference was preceded by the second annual Two-Spirit Symposium (October 25-26). The theme of Summit 2022 was Pushing Possibilities, inviting presenters and attendees to dive deep into strategies for strengthening access and dismantling barriers that impact 2S/LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing. The caliber of our keynote speakers was incredible and included people like Hannah Kia, Chanelle Gallant, Jorge Flores-Aranda, Percy Lezard, Olivier Ferlatte, and Darrell Tan.



Summit 2022 was a huge success: there were 564 people who registered for the online events and 290 people who registered for the in-person conference. Furthermore, findings from Summit evaluation show that the Summit continues to be an effective knowledge translation mechanism: 94% of respondents said that the Summit was relevant or useful for their work.

The CBRC team is proud of the ongoing partnerships with community-based organizations, healthcare providers, and community activists that we cultivated during this year's Summit. Financial support was provided by ViiV Healthcare (Presenting Partner), Gilead Sciences Canada (Presenting Sponsor), and the Government of Canada, which included project funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The [Summit 2022 Content Library](#) is available on our website along with the [Summit 2022 Report](#). To further share Summit content, CBRC collaborated with CATIE to produce a series of [“Vox Pop” video interviews](#) with some of this year's presenters.

Webinars, Panel Discussions, and Presentations

This year, CBRC partnered with several organizations—such as Affirming Connections, Black Gay Men's Network of Ontario (BGMN), CATIE, and Statistics Canada—to collaborate on public webinars and panel discussions. Some of these include:

[Conversion ‘Therapy’ Survivors Have Spoken! Findings from CBRC’s SOGIECE/CT Survivor Support Project](#) (April 7, 2022)
With **Jordan Sullivan** (CBRC), **Michael Kwag** (CBRC), **Travis Salway** (Simon Fraser University), **Reilla Archibald** (Simon Fraser University), and **Douglas Judson** (No Conversion Canada)

[U=U, PrEP, Substance Use, and HIV Self-Testing: Key Findings from Sex Now 2021](#) (June 14, 2022)
With **Nathan Lachowsky** (CBRC) and **Nahomi Amberber** (CBRC)

[La PrEP aujourd’hui et demain](#) (June 22, 2022)
With **Darrell Tan** (St. Michael's Hospital, University of Toronto), **Vincent Mousseau** (Santé Lambda Health), **Mouloud Benkahla** (Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto), and **Séré Beauchesne Lévesque** (TransEstrée)

[Next Steps: Continued Action Against Conversion “Therapy” Practices](#) (August 17, 2022)
With **Michael Kwag** (CBRC), **Jordan Sullivan** (CBRC), and **Jessica Steingard** (Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta)

[Racism and Gay Men of Color: Living and Coping with Discrimination](#) (August 19, 2022)
With **Sulaimon Giwa**, **Robert Alsberry** (BGMN) and **Michael Kwag** (CBRC)

[Seeing Everyone: Gender Diversity in Data](#) (August 22, 2022)
With **Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost** (Université du Québec à Montréal), **Mona Greenbaum** (LGBT+ Family Coalition), **Harlan Pruden** (Two-Spirit Dry Lab), **Anu Radha Verma** (CBRC)

[The Impact of COVID-19 on 2SLGBTQQIA+ Communities Across Canada](#)
(March 7, 2023) With **Nathan Lachowsky** (CBRC)

Chronic Health & 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities: Learnings from CBRC's Our Health Study (March 23, 2023) With the **CBRC Research Team**

CBRC team members also presented at multiple conferences, including the Guythering Mini-Conference (April 2022), the WISE Practices Conference (May 2022), Governor General Leadership Conference (June 2022), [International AIDS Conference](#) (August 2022, shown to the right), the Public Service Alliance of Canada Health and Safety Conference (October 2022), the COVID-19 Immunity Task Force Conference (March 2023).



Advocacy & Rapid Response

Mpox

Spring 2022 saw the emergence of the mpox epidemic among GBT2Q+ communities both within and outside of Canada. In response to this emergent health issue, CBRC acted quickly, [sharing information](#) with community members, and partnering with other organizations to [advocate](#) for emergency financial and housing supports and wrap-around services for people with confirmed or suspected mpox infection.

Advocacy efforts were successful, resulting in funding from the federal government to support CBRC's work in the response to mpox, including regional work through the Advance Alliance, along with microgrants and national knowledge translation and exchange from CBRC.

These funds allowed CBRC to launch a national microsite called [mpox.ca](#), and to facilitate a microgrant program with 12 partner organizations. Through the microgrant program, 25 knowledge products were developed and 37 intervention and capacity-building activities were conducted, reaching 194 staff from community-based organizations, 57 healthcare providers and public health professionals, and 7,347 GBT2Q+ community members.

What is Mpox?

Mpox (monkeypox) is a virus that can cause fever, muscle pains, and a rash that develops into blisters. It's no walk in the park! Mpox generally goes away on its own, but symptoms can last several weeks or more. Mpox is related to smallpox, but the symptoms are less severe.

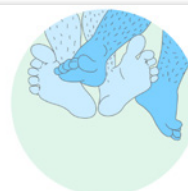
It's exceedingly rare to die from mpox based on what we're seeing in recent outbreaks, but hospitalization is sometimes required. Getting mpox also means weeks of self-isolation in order to prevent the spread of the virus, and many people experience intense pain.

How is Mpox transmitted?

Mpox can spread from person to person through contact with the lesions or scabs that may be found on the skin or mucosal surfaces (such as the eyes, mouth, throat, genitals, anus or rectum) of someone who is infected. In Canada, the vast majority of outbreaks in 2SLGBTQ+ people have occurred through sexual contact including oral or anal sex and rimming.

Mpox can also spread through:

- Contact with materials that have been used by someone infected with mpox (such as bedding, linens, towels, dressings, needles, eating utensils and dishes)
- Direct contact with rashes, sores, scabs and bodily fluids
- Respiratory droplets (such as when a person coughs or sneezes)



HIV

Following cuts in HIV funding from the federal government, CBRC partnered with 17 other organizations to lobby the Canadian government to increase HIV funding.

These organizations—known collectively as the National Advocates—launched a campaign on [HIVfunding.ca](https://hivfunding.ca). The campaign encourages people across Canada to sign letters to the Minister of Health, which call for an increase in HIV funding in Canada to \$100 million annually, and better engagement with organizations and people living with HIV.

The campaign was [announced](#) at a timely moment, shedding light on Canada's insufficient HIV funding context just one month before Canada hosted AIDS 2022, the world's largest conference on HIV and AIDS. In the period following the conference, the federal government provided funding for CBRC (and other organizations) to distribute HIV self-testing (HIVST) kits across Canada. This [funding](#) allowed CBRC to expand its HIVST kit distribution programs that were successfully piloted in the previous year, including its Test@Home mailed distribution program, its *Test Now* community-based distribution program, and its Medicine Bundle program for Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous people. By the end of March 2023, CBRC had distributed over 12,000 HIVST kits to over 5,000 GBT2Q+ community members through these programs.



Additional Advocacy Efforts

Advocacy and government relations is an evolving, year-round effort. This year, CBRC's advocacy efforts included:

- A letter to the BC Ministry of Health in support of Options for Sexual Health, which was faced with the possibility of multiple clinic closures in British Columbia.
- [Releasing a statement](#) advocating for gender-neutral blood donor deferral policies.
- Continuing its efforts to [end the poppers ban](#) ([read the update](#)).
- Launching a letter campaign in support of the community centre for Quadrangle in Newfoundland [read our report back here](#).

Communications

The Update and The Read

CBRC continued to publish The Update, its official newsletter. This monthly communications tool shares brief updates on CBRC's many activities and events, while also drawing attention to the accomplishments of our staff and community partners. More than 6,000 subscribers receive the newsletter.

The newsletter also includes "The Read," a platform for CBRC staff and community partners to share personal takes on queer and trans health. Here are just some of the articles we ran this year:

- [By Survivors, For Survivors: My Experience Leading the SOGIECE/CT Survivor Support Project](#) by Jordan Sullivan
- [Documenting Resilience at the Intersection of LGBTQ Mental Health and Cannabis Use](#) by Tara Chanady
- [Igotmpox.com: CBRC's Len Tooley Shares his Monkeypox Experience with the World](#) by Len Tooley
- [Harm Reduction the Peer N Peer Way: Community Support at the Nexus of Sex and Drugs](#) by CBRC



Media Relations

CBRC continues to be a go-to source for Canadian media outlets looking for comments on matters related to 2S/LGBTQIA+ health. This year CBRC had over 100 media engagements, speaking with both national and local news outlets, including: APTN, The Canadian Press, CBC News, CBC Radio, CBC Television, City News, CTV News, Fugues Magazine, Global News, The Globe and Mail, The Montreal Gazette, National Post, OMNI News, Outlook TV, Toronto Star, and Xtra Magazine.

Our media relations included significant coverage of major activities this year, including the *Our Health* study (where we worked with MIREMS, a media organization that specializes in monitoring and engaging with multilingual and ethnic media) and *Sex Now* studies, as well as our responses to mpox and the HIV funding issues. Media engagements also covered other ongoing issues addressed in our work, such as conversion “therapy,” blood donation policies, and the poppers ban.

Social Media

In terms of social media presence, we continued to expand our reach across multiple platforms, especially on Instagram and LinkedIn.

Platforms	2021-2022	2022-2023
Facebook		
# of New Page Likes	964	1,100
# of Reactions	42,717	32,010
Twitter		
# of New Followers	788	679
# of Likes	3,422	3,107
# of Retweets	1,754	1,635
Instagram		
# of New Followers	732	1,581
# of Likes	4,381	9,898
# of Comments	49	93
LinkedIn		
# of New Followers	913	2,584

Dates of Significance

In addition to promoting and supporting the work of CBRC, the Communications team also endeavours to amplify important days of significance for our community and find ways to create new or integrate existing CBRC projects into these days. For instance, this past year CBRC mobilized around:

May 17: IDAHOT

This year’s IDAHOT theme was “Our Bodies, Our Lives, Our Rights.” Delving into this theme, CBRC published a [blog post written by Sarah Cooper](#), which sheds light on how pressures to be masculine impact mental health outcomes in GBT2Q living in Canada.

June 21: National Indigenous Peoples Day

To celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day, we asked five of the Trusted Messengers from the Medicine Bundle Project to share why this work is important to them ([read the feature here](#)). Also, CBRC’s Associate Director of Population-Specific Programs, Darren Ho, wrote a lovely tribute to the important work that the Two-Spirit Program team is doing. [Read his appreciation post here](#).



September 30: National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

For the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, CBRC released a [statement](#) highlighting our efforts in recent years to decolonize our practices.

December 1: World AIDS Day

December 1st was World AIDS Day, as well as the start of Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week. To mark this time, CBRC [announced](#) the extension of three successful HIVST programs ([Medicine Bundle](#), [Test Now](#), [Test@Home](#)). CBRC also published a feature to highlight the personal stories of several long-term HIV survivors and their caregivers, collected as part of the [HIV In My Day](#) project.

February: Black History Month

To mark Black History Month and National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, we invited Summit 2022 presenter Delilah Kamuhanda to write a guest blog about anti-racist sexual health education and what we can learn from awareness days. Drawing from a workshop she delivered at Summit 2022, Kamuhanda traces the history of systemic racism in sexual health education with contemporary examples as well, offering a critical look at public health awareness campaigns. [Read the full article here.](#)

March 8: International Women's Day

For International Women's Day, Tara Chanady, CBRC Board member and Executive Director of the Quebec Lesbian Network, wrote about the unique challenges that lesbian, bi, and queer women face, and how lesbian and lezbiqueer folks often feel invisible in both 2S/LGBTQ+ and women's rights groups and communities. [Read it here.](#)

March 20: Jour de la francophonie (and Mois de la Francophonie)

To kick off Mois de la Francophonie, CBRC's Francophone Content Strategist, Francesco MacAllister-Caruso, writes about access to 2S/LGBTQIA+ community services for Francophones living outside Québec. Francesco highlights the issues facing queer and trans Francophone minorities, emphasizing the realities of racialized and newly-settled Francophones in Canada. To read the full article, click [here](#).

March 31: International Trans Day of Visibility

For International Trans Day of Visibility, CBRC asked activist Fae Johnstone, Executive Director of Wisdom2Action, to write about her experience participating in Hershey's Her For She campaign, a Canada-wide promotion to celebrate International Women's Day. As a trans woman, Fae was ultimately targeted with a tsunami of hate for her participation. [Read her take](#) about the devastating double-edged sword of trans visibility, and why we need our queer siblings and our allies to speak up now more than ever.



Jody's Departure

In August, Jody Jollimore stepped down from the role of Executive Director at CBRC, starting in September as the new Executive Director of CATIE, Canada's source for HIV and Hepatitis C information.

CBRC's Board of Directors thanked him for his leadership and contributions over the past five years, wishing him all the best in his new role. "During this time, Jody has led us through a period of immense growth and transformation," CBRC Board Chair Christopher Gallardo-Ganaban said in a [statement](#). "This includes expanding our team to include three satellite offices and more than 40 full-time staff across the country, dramatically diversifying and increasing our budget, and becoming the largest queer and trans health organization in Canada."



[Brook Biggin](#) stepped into the role of Interim Executive Director as the CBRC Board of Directors began the search for a new Executive Director.

The Year Ahead

We have another big year on the horizon. As we look ahead to 2023-2024, here are some things in development:

CBRC will continue activities on two large program grants received this year: Queering the Compass and Community-Centered Responses to 2S/LGBTQIA+ COVID-19 Mental Health Impacts. For the former, look out for the online adaptations of our service provider trainings, along with some additional policy briefs. For the latter, stay tuned for knowledge exchange products and events from Investigaytors participants, along with a new online mental health training series for service providers.

On the research front, CBRC will be taking Our Health on the road this summer. Surveys and dried blood spot testing will be conducted at Pride and other 2S/LGBTQIA+ events across Canada. Join us at a city near you soon!

And last but not least, Summit, CBRC's annual knowledge exchange and capacity-building conference on 2S/LGBTQ+ health research, programming, and advocacy in Canada, will be taking place in-person in Vancouver on November 16-17 at the Coast Coal Harbour Hotel. We hope to see you there!



Thank You to Our Funders

CBRC is where we are today thanks to the support of our funders.

Thank you to the funders that provided grants and sponsorship to CBRC in 2022-2023.

List of Funders:

- BC Gaming Commission
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation
- First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)
- Gilead Sciences Inc.
- Health Canada
- Heritage Canada
- McMaster University
- Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA)
- Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
- Unity Health Toronto
- University of Toronto (UofT)
- Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)
- Vancouver Foundation
- Viiv Healthcare Canada
- Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)

Financial Reporting

https://www.cbrc.net/annual_and_financial_reports

For more information and to support our work, please visit www.cbrc.net