

The CBRC update

Friend,

In this month's newsletter: Summit 2025 registration now open, regional action plans to address syphilis in our communities, protecting trans folks in Canadian national identity, and more.

THE LATEST

1. **Registration is now open for [Summit 2025: Convergence and Emergence!](#)** Join us in Montreal from November 20–22 for CBRC's annual Summit — Canada's leading knowledge exchange and capacity-building conference focused on 2S/LGBTQIA+ health research, programming, and advocacy. **Early-bird rates are available until October 10.** [Click here to register](#) and get more info.



2. In response to Canada's ongoing and regionally-varied syphilis epidemic, CBRC's Advance Alliance has developed **a series of provincial action plans to address syphilis among 2S/GTBQ+ communities.** These action plans reflect the unique challenges and opportunities present in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia, and aim to strengthen local responses to syphilis through actionable, community-informed recommendations. Download all five of them [here](#).
3. **The Our Bodies, Our Health survey is in full swing!** Our Research team has been visiting Pride events and other Two-Spirit, queer, and trans community spaces across the country, both large and small. This month, you can find our team in Montreal, Yellowknife, Edmonton, and more (to see our full tour schedule, [click here](#))



Photo: Lucas Gergyek and Bryan Quinones

THE READ

As Canada faces mounting pressure from a more hostile U.S., it's tempting to focus on trade, sovereignty, and the economy — sidelining trans communities or treating their rights as bargaining chips. In their piece [Elbows up for trans people, too](#), former CBRC staff and current Political Science Ph.D. candidate at Concordia University, Francesco MacAllister-Carusso, writes that **asserting our national identity means standing firm on the values that define us**. “As we celebrate Pride across the country this summer, Canada has an opportunity to recommit itself to the pursuit of social justice on the international stage. **By standing strong in defence of 2S/LGBTQIA+ people — especially gender-diverse individuals — we can push back against the forces of polarization and authoritarianism that are gaining ground in the U.S.**” they write. “For the sake of each other, and our future, Canada must not compromise on its leadership on trans rights.” [Click here](#) to read the full article.

OUR COMMUNITY: Ricky Rodrigues

Ricky Rodrigues’s path to CBRC is a long and winding one. As Associate Director,

Reporting and Evaluation, Ricky (he/him) brings a wealth of diverse experiences to the role — all rooted in his early days working in queer and trans community building and advocacy.

“I came out at 14, at the end of my first year of high school,” he says. “It was a big transition. I was really shy before, but coming out gave me a lot of confidence.” Ricky’s newfound self-assurance set him on a path of activism and engagement. He started a Gay-Straight Alliance at his Catholic high school, and volunteered with Planned Parenthood Toronto to educate peers about homophobia. This led to more work with queer and trans students at the University of Toronto, and eventually with ACT (the AIDS Committee of Toronto).

“There was something about queer advocacy that fuelled me, and I wanted to do more of it.”

Through ACT, Ricky participated in, and later worked for, the [Totally Outright](#) community health leadership program. This inspired Ricky to pursue a career in social work. At first, he thought he would stick with counselling work, but later he found himself more drawn to research and policy. In October 2020, he joined the CBRC team, first as a coordinator before moving up the ranks to become Associate Director, Reporting and Evaluation.

“Evaluation work is so important. We have increasing funder requirements for accountability, and so the amount of performance measurement work that we have to do keeps growing, and at the same time the capacity to do this work in our sector is limited.”

In his role, Ricky helps CBRC’s staff and partners to understand and address very complicated funder reporting requirements, which can significantly vary across grants. This includes helping to gather evaluation data, monitoring program activities, and helping to develop tools to effectively track and report on those activities.

“Whenever we’re doing evaluation at CBRC, we try to keep two things in mind — understanding the outcomes, but also where we can improve, because although we can have great outcomes, we can also have better outcomes. Our community continues to grow and change so much with time, and so if we’re not making an effort to learn about how we can improve we won’t be well-situated to meet the community’s changing needs.”



Photo: Ricky Rodrigues

"The impact of well-done, effective evaluation is noticeable almost immediately. Either you're funded again or you get other grants. And if that happens, that's because you've proven to the funder with the data you've provided that the work you're doing is making a difference."

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- Seeking to recognize and attend to the diversity of 2S/LGBTQQIA+ communities across Canada, we prepared a series of **community reports from the Our Health 2022 study**. The latest of these reports capture the experiences of 2S/LGBTQQIA+ [youth](#), [people with disabilities](#), and [trans and nonbinary people](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Previous reports focused on 2S/LGBTQQIA+ [older adults](#), [people of colour](#), [people living in rural areas](#), [people who use substances](#), [newcomers](#), and [Black people](#) in Canada.
- In 2020, HIV self-tests (HIVST) were licensed for use in Canada, making it easier for people to learn their HIV status. In 2022, the Public Health Agency of Canada provided a short-term financial investment in community-based HIVST distribution across the country, allowing CBRC to distribute tens of thousands of HIVST kits to 2S/LGBTQQIA+ communities across Canada from 2022 to 2024. **Our report, [Good Times Getting Pricked!](#), highlights learnings from CBRC-led HIV self-test distribution programs.** You can also watch the **recording of our recent webinar, [HIV Self-Testing: Reflections and Wrap-Up](#).**

CBRC in the Media:

- The Our Bodies, Our Health survey was covered in [CityNews](#).
- Marie Geoffroy, Associate Director of Research at CBRC, [spoke to Radio-Canada](#) about the Our Bodies, Our Health survey (French).

COMING UP

Want to get more involved with the queer and trans community? **CBRC is launching the Community Call**, a new monthly email full of meaningful ways you can take action and help build a better future for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people across Canada. Look for it in your inbox later this month!

GET INVOLVED

Help make history by taking part in Canada's first-ever national survey on 2SLGBTQ+ poverty. Run by York University, the **2SLGBTQ+ Poverty in Canada: Improving Livelihood and Social Wellbeing** study is a community-based research project examining the social and economic realities of 2SLGBTQ+ people across the country. Your participation will help generate vital data to inform policies and programs that support greater equity, inclusion, and well-being. [Sign up for the survey here](#), and within 24 hours you will receive a link to complete the survey (remember to check your spam folder!). For more information, click [here](#).

Queer Bet\$ is a research project exploring gambling within 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities. If you're 18 or older, live in Quebec, and gamble regularly (at least 3 times a month) or have faced gambling-related challenges in the past 5 years, you may be eligible to participate. The photovoice study involves attending two meetings and taking photos that reflect your gambling experiences. Financial compensation is provided. To take part, contact qollab@espum.umontreal.ca.



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



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