

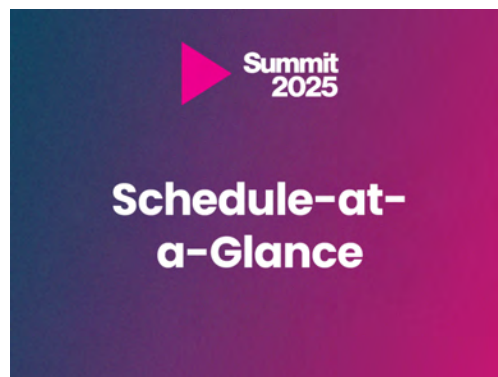
The CBRC update

Friend,

In this month's newsletter: Summit 2025 plenary sessions and schedule-at-a-glance, Quebec's controversial *Comité de sages* report, and more.

THE LATEST

1. The wait is over. The **Summit 2025 plenary programming** and **schedule-at-a-glance** are here! Plenary sessions include an **Indigenous opening and welcome**, an **in-circle session with CBRC's Two-Spirit Program team**, and panels on **queer and trans dissidence in Quebec, intimate partner abuse, health literacy and community mobilization, and legal advocacy**. A full program, including expanded descriptions of sessions and interactive exhibits, will be released in early November, but for now please check out the full lineup of presentations, panels, workshops, roundtables, and more in our [schedule-at-a-glance](#).



2. This is the week you're going to want to make sure you register and book your travel and accommodations for Summit. We've extended the **early bird registration deadline** to October 17, so be sure to [register now](#) and save on conference fees! We also have [exclusive hotel room rates](#) available to Summit attendees at our host hotel, Le Centre Sheraton Montreal. And whether you're coming by plane or train, [discount travel codes](#) are available for participants.
3. In addition to our core programming, **Summit 2025 will include a variety of ancillary events, meetings, and consultations hosted by partner organizations**. Ancillary events will take place on Thursday (between 9 am – 4 pm) and Sunday (between 12 pm – 2:25 pm). All events will be announced next week, but for now here are two you can register for (separate registration is required at the links below):

- [Setting a Community-Based Research Agenda By, With, and For 2S/LBTQ+ Women and Gender-Diverse People](#)

Sunday, November 23 | In-person gathering: 10:00 AM–2:15 PM EST | Online & in-person public panel: 10:30–11:30 AM EST

In collaboration with Dr. Celeste Pang, Assistant Professor at Mount Royal University, CBRC is co-organizing an **agenda-setting gathering on issues facing 2S/LBTQ+ women and gender-diverse communities**. The meeting will include two main activities: a gathering for 2S/LBTQ+ women and gender-diverse participants, and a public panel open to everyone.

- [Queering Pandemic Preparedness: Addressing the Mpox Response and Where We Go from Here](#)

Sunday, November 23 | 12:00–2:00 PM EST

This event will be hosted by research teams from the University of British Columbia, the Université de Montréal, and University of Toronto to gather inter-provincial, cross-sectoral collaborators to **discuss experiences, learnings, and study findings from two CIHR-funded team grants researching the learnings from mpox**.

4. **Did you know that CBRC was started by a small group of dedicated gay men in 1999 as a response to rising HIV rates in British Columbia?** Two and a half decades later, we're taking a moment to reflect on our past, present, and future... and to **tease our upcoming documentary!** Born from a desire for gay men to live healthier, happier, and longer lives, CBRC's focus has expanded along the way: from gay men to more diverse identities, and from HIV to other pressing health concerns. Featuring interviews with many former and current CBRC staff, board members, and supporters, our documentary explores these changes, and the past 25 years of community connection, research, and growth. [Watch the documentary trailer here](#), and stay tuned for the **full documentary, which will be screened at Summit 2025**.

THE READ

Since the announcement of the formation of Québec's **Comité de sages sur l'identité de genre** in 2023—**without a single member from the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community in its ranks**—the committee has remained controversial. Tasked with addressing issues of gender expression and recognition in the province, the group released a 280-page report in May 2025. The report makes numerous **recommendations affecting the lives of trans people in Quebec**—some of which are positive, while others are misinformed at best, and actively harmful at worst. **Celeste Trianon** has long been an outspoken and visible trans advocate throughout Québec and across Canada. [We spoke with her](#) for her expert opinion on the *Comité* and its report.

Celeste will also join us at Summit 2025 as part of the ***Queer and Trans Dissidence in Quebec: Resisting Exclusion and Institutional Intimidation*** plenary session on November 21.

OUR COMMUNITY: Katie O'Brien

Katie O'Brien (they/them) is a research coordinator at CBRC. With experience in community-based, nonprofit, and academic settings focusing on 2S/LGBTQIA+ advocacy, Katie is currently finishing a Master of Social Work degree at the University of Victoria.

They completed their Bachelor of Arts in Sociology at the University of Calgary, then shifted to the social work field, completing a diploma of Social Work at Mount Royal University. Katie then worked in frontline 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth housing, connecting Calgary's queer and trans youth to social services. When the pandemic hit, they went back to school, this time for a Bachelor of Social Work through the University of Manitoba, during which they did a student placement at CBRC. "I've been in university for a long time!" Katie laughs.

Reflecting on their field of study, Katie says that when people hear 'social work,' they often think of therapy or taking kids away from their families. "I'm not interested in participating in either of those things—I'm much more interested in broad, community-based and policy-level social interventions," Katie explains. "Deconstructing rigid understandings of health, wellness, and care is the overarching theme of my research interests."

For their Master's thesis, Katie is creating an autoethnography on their experiences as a trans person with a complicated relationship to food and eating. The project—cleverly called Trans Fats—touches on the medical industrial complex and focuses on Katie's experiences adjacent to it. "Autoethnography means combing through your personal narratives to learn about social experiences, and communicating those learnings through story," they explain. Katie is currently working on developing Trans Fats into a podcast.

One of the projects Katie is currently supporting through CBRC is the [Intergenerational Connection Study](#), which explores the importance of intergenerational social connections between 2S/GBTQQIA+ men and masc folks. "We're matching up younger queer folks with older queer folks to see what the impacts of those intergenerational connections are, which is really exciting" Katie explains. "It's also exciting to work with community members who provide feedback on making our studies more accessible and inclusive."

Outside of work, Katie enjoys gardening with their wife ("I love pulling weeds!"), listening to podcasts, and writing poetry. They are particularly interested in concrete poetry—layering words, concepts, and ideas in order to create something new. They are currently working through Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata, layering the score atop itself as an exploration of grief.



Photo: Katie O'Brien

“There are so many things younger folks can teach older folks, and so much that older folks can teach younger folks. Getting to be part of this knowledge production feels incredibly meaningful.”

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- September 30th was the **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**. At CBRC, we are committed to the meaningful inclusion of Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community members. **One small way we practice reconciliation that points to our foundational frameworks is our acronym use.** [We took some time on September 30th](#) to outline the “why” behind the acronym, as well as reflections on its use.
- CBRC recently announced **Dr. Jad Sinno** (they/them) as its **new Research Director**. Read more about Jad [here](#).
- Our [latest resource](#) outlines **Canadian Blood Services’ new donation criteria** and what they mean for 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities in Canada.
- This summer, we hosted community leaders, researchers, and public health professionals in Montreal to **address inequities in HIV PrEP access in 2S/GBTQ+ communities** across Canada, and asked some of the participants to

[share their reflections](#) on the experience.

CBRC in the Media:

- Understanding Canada's health care system can be frustrating, so the Canadian Medical Association started the **Healthcare For Real** initiative to demystify healthcare. CBRC is cited in their Healthcare 101 article, [How does gender-affirming health care work in Canada?](#)

COMING UP

At this year's Summit, we will present **Strategy 2030**, our strategic plan for the next four years. Join us in November to be the first to hear about it!

Over the past few weeks, we have been piloting **Smoke Break**, our latest harm reduction project, which will launch officially and nationally very soon—stay tuned!

GET INVOLVED

Help improve HPV-related cancer care for 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities! We're recruiting 2S/LGBTQIA+ community members for a **Champion Network**, who will provide input, share lived experiences, and help guide the development of culturally-relevant resources. **For those who want to contribute but can't commit to ongoing meetings, we are also seeking participants to join a virtual consultation.** [Complete this form](#) to sign up to participate in the Champion Network and/or a project consultation session.

CBRC is a partner on SHAPE+, a community-led project focused on centering the voices of 2S/LGBTQIA+ people in Canada living with chronic pain. [Share your experiences](#) through a short, anonymous survey to help guide the co-development of research questions that truly reflect what matters most to 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities living with chronic pain.



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