

In Full Bloom

Community-Based
Research Centre

2023–2024
Annual Report



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Land Acknowledgement
4	Letter from the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board of Directors
5	Blooms of the Season: Major Milestones of 2023-2024
12	 Two-Spirit Program
14	 Communications
16	 Education, Knowledge Mobilization, and Programs
19	 Research and Evaluation
22	 Operations
	Thank You
24	List of Funders
	Financial Report

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 we 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.

On page 6, you can find more information on some of the actions taken this past year to support Two-Spirit and Indigenous queer and trans people.

Letter from the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board of Directors

To our communities, partners, and funders:

This past year at CBRC has been a very special one for us, and we hope for all of you as well. It was Michael's first year as Executive Director — after having worked at CBRC in various capacities since 2004 — and it has been a joy for us to see how the organization has blossomed.

This year, we saw a number of projects go into full bloom as they wrapped up their final year of activities. Among these projects were our *Queering the Compass* and Community-Centered Responses to COVID-19 projects, which flowered an array of new programs and resources, including a variety of [2S/LGBTQIA+ health learning modules for service providers](#), a [research capacity-building program specifically for Two-Spirit and Indigenous queer and trans people](#), and [family planning tools for 2S/LGBTQIA+ community members](#).

On the advocacy front, we responded to a number of perennial issues. For example, we launched [StopConversionPractices.ca](#) to increase awareness, knowledge, and understanding of conversion practices and their impact on 2S/LGBTQIA+ people in Canada. We also released a series of [2S/LGBTQIA+ health policy briefs](#), along with a [U=U campaign](#) to challenge HIV stigma.

As for our research and evaluation work, we've been building a rich garden of knowledge through quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies. In particular, we made extensive progress on our New HIV Diagnosis and IBPOC Conversion Practices qualitative projects, and we received almost 5,800 responses to the 2023 [Our Health: Canada-Wide 2S/LGBTQIA+ Community Survey](#).

Finally, to strengthen CBRC from the root, we secured specific funding to develop a new strategic plan, improved human resources management systems, and skills development initiatives for CBRC staff and partners. Through these efforts, we hope to increase our capacity to support 2S/LGBTQIA+ health leadership and mobilization across Canada.

We are truly honoured to be involved in nurturing this organization and its many initiatives to promote the health of people of diverse sexualities and genders. And it is with great pleasure that we invite you to learn more in the coming pages about how our work has bloomed this year.

Michael Kwag
Executive Director

Christopher Gallardo-Ganaban
Chair, Board of Directors

BLOOMS OF THE SEASON:

Major Milestones of 2023-2024

Michael Kwag's First Year as Executive Director

This was Michael Kwag's first year serving as CBRC's Executive Director, and he showed us how much he has blossomed as a leader in the sector since the budding of his career in 2004, when he served as a peer youth coordinator for CBRC's Totally Outright program. He did this by supporting staff in the completion of several large projects with significant competing demands, and then by maintaining stability in the organization following the departure of several team members as a result of the completion of the aforementioned projects. He also brought in new funds to help nurture the organization, including a WAGE Community Capacity grant with activities aimed at strengthening CBRC's strategic direction and organizational infrastructure.



Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration & Awareness Day

On March 19, 2024, the Two-Spirit Program held the third 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 celebrate the radiance and diversity of Two-Spirit identities, expression, and experience.

The celebration included an afternoon of activities at The Junction (1138 Davie Street), featuring an opening ceremony with Coast Salish Elders and Knowledge Keepers, an open dialogue session, interviews, live entertainment, and drag performances by local Indigenous artists. Just over 100 people participated in the event.

Additionally, March 19 was proclaimed as Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day by the Government of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver, as advocated by the Two-Spirit Program team at CBRC. In honour of the day, Vancouver City Hall flew the Two-Spirit flag, along with the trans and pride flags, up until March 21.



Two-Spirit Resurgence

Led by Martin Morberg, *Two-Spirit Resurgence* is a film project that speaks to the ways Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ people share knowledge amongst each other. This film is also a response to the ways in which research projects about Indigenous people are typically framed as deficit-based rather than based in a community's strengths. As Martin says, "To be dissected, pulled apart, have scientific jargon used to describe who and what we are, what we're 'at risk of,' that we're a 'vulnerable population'... that continues to perpetuate anti-Indigenous racism." The film, then, is about reclamation. More specifically, Martin notes that the film is meant "to say that Two-Spirit people are here, and that we're here to rewrite the narrative and reclaim our roles as Two-Spirit people. . . . We're also teaching settlers about why these spaces are important, what we get from them, and why we do this." The film premiered on Indigenous People's Day (June 21st) and has since had 250 views/screenings.

HIV Self-Testing Initiatives

This year, we implemented a suite of initiatives to distribute HIV self-testing kits and combination prevention information resources across Canada. Among these initiatives were those started in the previous year, including Test@Home (mailed kit distribution), Test Now Community Edition (third-party distribution via community partners), Test Now at Pride (in-person distribution at Pride events), and Medicine Bundle (mailed, in-person, and third-party distribution for Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous people). However, we also launched MyTest, a new mailed kit distribution initiative developed in partnership with Grindr 4 Equality to further expand access to HIV self-testing kits. Through these initiatives, we distributed 45,525 HIV self-testing kits to 18,282 people this year.



Community-Centered Responses to COVID-19

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, this project was developed to enhance mental health knowledge and capacity, and to improve mental health outcomes for 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities following the COVID-19 pandemic. We saw this project go into full bloom during this (the last) year of the project through many significant accomplishments, including the development and delivery of 4 [mental health-focused learning modules](#), a suite of [mental health information resources](#) and other knowledge products, a research capacity-building program for Two-Spirit & Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community members, and 18 mental health-focused Investigaytors leadership development, capacity-building, health promotion, and knowledge exchange activities. In turn, we reached over 60,000 people through our activities and knowledge products combined!



Queering the Compass:

Pathways to 2S/LGBTQIA+ Sexual and Reproductive Health

Queering the Compass

Queering the Compass is another project that blossomed in its final year of activities. Funded by Health Canada, this project was designed to promote the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities by advancing the knowledge and skills needed to navigate their SRH care, and by improving the capacity, knowledge, and skills of the healthcare/service providers who serve them. Final year activities included a number of noteworthy achievements, including holding our third annual Two-Spirit Symposium, adapting and delivering the Pivot program with a focus on addressing the systemic and structural factors that impact 2S/LGBTQIA+ SRH care, delivering live and [online](#) (asynchronous) trainings to service providers working in SRH care, and creating SRH knowledge products targeted at 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities (e.g., [Your Family, Your Way](#)) and professional audiences (e.g., [Health and Healthcare Access for 2S/LBTQ+ Women and Gender-Diverse People in Canada](#)). In total, we reached 580 people through our activities, and over 8,500 people accessed our knowledge products online.





Our Health 2023

The *Our Health: Canada-Wide 2S/LGBTQIA+ Community Survey* continued to flower this year as we completed a second round of data collection—this time in-person! That's right, the [2023 Our Health survey](#) went on the road to complete data collection in 20 cities across the country, recruiting almost 5,800 participants. These efforts have generated an extensive data set that will allow us to learn more about our communities' experiences and needs, particularly with regard to how our communities navigate chronic health conditions.

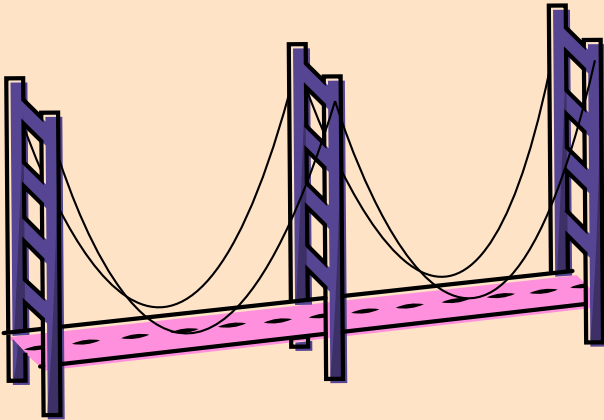
Summit 2023: Together in Action

Summit 2023: Together in Action took place in-person and via livestream from November 16–17, 2023, inviting presenters and attendees to re-energize our collective efforts in pushing for progress on the freedoms, health, and wellbeing of all 2S/LGBTQIA+ people. The Summit was a huge success with 641 registrants and a lineup of fantastic speakers, including Alexandre Dumont Blais, Bilal Baig, Fae Johnstone, and Teddy Syrette. To learn more about the conference, check out the [Summit 2023 Content Library](#), the [Summit 2023 Report](#), and the [Summit 2023 "Vox Pop" videos](#).



Bridging the Gap

Funded through Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), the *Bridging the Gap* project was designed to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of primary care providers to provide affirming, relevant, and up-to-date healthcare services and supports to 2S/LGBTQIA+ people. Through this project, we designed a suite of healthcare competency resources inclusive of [online training modules](#) and [quick reference practice guides](#) for healthcare providers. With the launch of these resources following the end of the project this year, we are delighted to share them with healthcare providers in order to improve the services and supports accessed by our communities.



WAGE Community Capacity Grant

While one of our WAGE grants came to an end this year, we were also successful in obtaining another one through WAGE's Community Capacity program. Over the next three years, this grant will allow us to increase our capacity to support 2S/LGBTQIA+ health leadership and mobilization in Canada by: designing a new strategic plan; improving our human resources management systems for recruitment and selection, performance management, and compensation; and creating skills development initiatives for CBRC staff and partners. We are excited and grateful for the opportunity to continue to nurture our work through this grant.

PROJECTS SPOTLIGHT:

Activity highlights
of 2023-2024

Two-Spirit Program

Activity Highlights:

2 HIV and HPV prevention (Care in Action) learning modules launched	→ 128 learners	→ 92% of learners surveyed reported improved ability to provide culturally safe and clinically competent services
1 national HIV self-test kit and Indigenous medicine bundle distribution program delivered	→ 1,232 HIV self-test kits and 477 medicine bundles distributed to 252 people	→ In consultations, community members reported being excited to share the medicine bundles in their networks in order to engage local Indigenous communities in conversations about sexual health and HIV
2 in-person gatherings held, including the third annual Two-Spirit Symposium and the third edition of the Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day	→ 200 attendees	→ 96% of attendees surveyed reported increased knowledge of strength-based approaches to Two-Spirit and Indigenous health
1 Two-Spirit Resurgence film produced (for more information about the film and how to access it, please contact jessy.dame@cbrc.net)	→ 250 views/screenings	→ Increased strengths-based representation of Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ people



Project Spotlight: Knowledge 2eekerS

As we wrapped up our two-year Public Health Agency of Canada-funded project, *Community-Centered Responses to COVID-19*, one of the most exciting achievements that came out of the project this year was Knowledge 2eekerS. Knowledge 2eekerS is a research capacity-building program for Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community members. The program includes a curriculum adapted from our original Investigaytors program and anchored in Indigenous values and ways of knowing. After consulting and collaborating with Two-Spirit leaders at CBRC and across Canada in the first year of the project to develop the program, we piloted Knowledge 2eekerS this year with a cohort of thirteen Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community members.

For six months, Knowledge 2eekerS participants met weekly online to learn about community approaches to research, often through storytelling. By the end of the program, 100% of participants surveyed said they felt supported and prepared to step into research activities as an Indigenous person. Furthermore, in a sharing circle held at the end of the program, many participants commented on how the program nurtured their spirit/spiritual health and provided a space that helped them feel connected, accepted, and safe:

"It's things like this that remind me like you're not a lone wolf. Like, there are places that you belong exactly as you are. . . . I don't always feel a part of LGBT spaces. I can't guarantee that it's gonna be a safe space." – Knowledge 2eekerS participant.

Communications

Activity Highlights:

Expanded The Update , CBRC's monthly newsletter	→ 7,712 subscribers	→ Increased awareness of CBRC's work and expansion of our membership
2 HIV-related campaigns launched, including a U=U anti-stigma campaign and a new HIV self-test kit distribution platform (MyTest)	→ over 20,000 web and social media engagements with these campaigns	→ Increased awareness of and access to HIV prevention and stigma reduction strategies, including U=U and HIV self-testing
35 media engagements completed	→ 18 news outlets sharing our work	→ Increased awareness of CBRC and our initiatives to advance the health of 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities
17 blog posts published	→ 7,232 online engagements with blog posts	→ 2S/LGBTQIA+ health knowledge and insights shared through diverse voices from our communities
5 communications projects initiated for CBRC's 25th Anniversary, including the creation of a new website, the development of a timeline of CBRC's history, a video project, a social media campaign, and a strengthened brand identity	→ (reach numbers forthcoming; campaign launched at the end of the fiscal year)	→ Celebration of CBRC's work over the years, with valuable new and updated tools to share that work with others

Project Spotlight:

Summit 2023:

Together in Action

Summit 2023 took place in-person from November 16–17, 2023, at the Coast Coal Harbour Hotel in Vancouver, with live-streaming available to allow online participation for keynote plenaries and select breakout sessions.

The theme of Summit 2023 was “Together in Action”, inviting presenters and attendees to re-energize our collective efforts in pushing for progress on the freedoms, health, and wellbeing of all 2S/LGBTQIA+ people. The caliber of our keynote speakers was incredible and included people like Alexandre Dumont Blais, Bilal Baig, Fae Johnstone, and Teddy Syrette.

Summit 2023 was a huge success: there were 641 people who registered for the conference. This included 367 in-person registrants (a 27% increase from the previous year) and 274 online registrants. The communications team was instrumental in promoting the event through CBRC’s networks and channels. The team improved many aspects of both in-person and online experiences of the conferences through, for example, enhancing the event’s livestream experience, expanding bilingual audio and caption offerings, and providing new engagement opportunities throughout the event. Findings from Summit evaluation show that the Summit continues to be an effective knowledge translation mechanism: 84% of attendees surveyed reported increased knowledge of 2S/LGBTQIA+ health research and health care.

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 Gilead (Presenting Partner), ViiV Healthcare (Presenting Partner), the Public Health Agency of Canada, and SIECCAN.

The [Summit 2023 Content Library](#) is available on our website along with the [Summit 2023 Report](#). And to further share Summit content, CBRC collaborated with CATIE to produce a series of “Vox Pop” video interviews with conference presenters, which you can access [here](#).



Education, Knowledge Mobilization, & Programs

Activity Highlights:

2 presentations at the 2024 Nova Scotia Health 2S/LGBTQIA+ Affirming Care Conference, including one on cervical screening for trans and non-binary people and one on PnP (“party and play”) among 2S/LGBTQIA+ community members	→ 472 healthcare provider participants	→ 93% of participants surveyed reported increased capacity to provide culturally responsive and culturally safe services
4 mental health-focused learning modules developed for the <i>Community-Centered Responses to COVID-19</i> project, including one on coping and connection, one on service access, one on conversion practices, and one on emergency services	→ 127 learners	→ 75% of learners surveyed reported increased knowledge of 2S/LGBTQIA+ mental health and evidence-based responses
4 national HIV self-testing programs delivered (Test@Home, MyTest, Test Now Community Edition, Test Now at Pride)	→ 44,723 HIV self-test kits distributed to 18,030 people	→ 90% of kit recipients surveyed said they were very satisfied with the programs and 79% said they were very likely to use HIV self-test kits again

Launched StopConversionPractices.ca, a knowledge centre about conversion “therapy” practices in Canada	→ 3,659 online engagements	→ Increased awareness, knowledge, and understanding of conversion practices and their impact on 2S/LGBTQIA+ people through centralized provision of information about the federal criminalization of conversion “therapy” practices in Canada
Queer and Trans Healthcare Mentorship Group launched in the Prairie provinces	→ 39 healthcare provider participants	→ 100% of participants surveyed reported increased capacity to provide culturally responsive and culturally safe services

*Stop
Conversion
Practices*



Project Spotlight: Queering the Compass - Pathways to 2S/LGBTQIA+ Sexual and Reproductive Health

Funded by Health Canada starting in 2022, the [Queering the Compass project](#) promotes the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities by advancing the knowledge and skills needed to navigate their SRH care, and by improving the capacity, knowledge, and skills of the healthcare/service providers who serve them. In this second and final year of the project, we worked with seven project partners (Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance, Halifax Sexual Health Centre, Planned Parenthood Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Health Centre, Quadrangle, Queer & Trans Health Collective, Sexuality Education Resource Centre, YouthCO HIV and Hep C Society) to adapt the Pivot community health leadership program for broader 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities (not just gay, bi, and queer men) and with a focus on addressing the systemic and structural factors that impact SRH care. The program was delivered in six regions across Canada, reaching 74 2S/LGBTQIA+ people aged 18+, among which 94% of those surveyed reported increased knowledge of SRH care and the systemic and structural factors that impact it.

We also worked with Queering the Compass partners to develop and deliver live (synchronous)



as well as [online](#) (asynchronous) trainings to service providers working in SRH. The trainings covered a range of topics, from affirming care to reproductive justice. 213 service providers completed the live trainings and 206 completed the online trainings. Among those surveyed, 92% said that completing the training(s) improved their ability to deliver culturally safe and clinically appropriate sexual and reproductive health services/supports to 2S/LGBTQIA+ people. Often, this was achieved with help from the trainings' practical components—as one participant said, "I am most appreciative of the tangible, concrete actions and steps that can be taken within a practice (and looking inward) to provide a more affirming service."

Finally, adding to the repertoire of knowledge products developed through the Queering the Compass project, we created several new resources, including some targeted at 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities, like [Your Family, Your Way](#), and others targeted at policymakers, like [Health and Healthcare Access for 2S/LBTQ+ Women and Gender-Diverse People in Canada](#).

Research & Evaluation

Activity Highlights:

18 mental health-focused Investigaytors leadership development, capacity-building, health promotion, and knowledge exchange activities delivered in collaboration with 6 partner sites as part of the *Community-Centered Responses to COVID-19* project to increase 2S/LGBTQIA+ health and research literacy and knowledge mobilization

→ 898 activity participants, including 425 community members and 473 professionals

→ 92% of participants surveyed reported increased knowledge of key mental health issues impacting 2S/LGBTQIA+ people

Data collection, transcription, and coding completed for the New HIV Diagnosis Project, a qualitative study conducted with people diagnosed with HIV in BC since 2018 to understand gaps in HIV prevention and care

→ 31 interview participants (including 27 Two-Spirit, gay, bisexual, and queer men and non-binary people)

→ Trained 4 peer researchers in qualitative interviewing and thematic analysis, and [presented at CBRC's Summit](#) to share the study's findings on key gaps in the HIV prevention and care cascades faced by populations that experience systemic health inequities

Qualitative data collection, transcription, and coding completed for the IBPOC Conversion Practices Project

→ 15 interview participants

→ Creation of new knowledge (as reported [here](#) for example) on the often-undocumented experiences of IBPOC, immigrants, and newcomers with conversion practices

Mixed-methods data collection and analysis completed in collaboration with Vancouver Coastal Health and 5 partner sites for the Contingency Management Program Evaluation Project

→ Additional 117 survey and 34 focus group responses (totalling 258 and 78, respectively, since 2022)

→ Comprehensive pilot evaluation data demonstrating that community-based contingency management programming delivered from a harm reduction approach is associated with positive outcomes, including safer substance use and increased social connection, among people who use drugs in Vancouver





Project Spotlight: Our Health

Initially launched in spring 2022, the *Our Health: Canada-Wide 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Survey*, was our first population health study that included all 2SLGBTQIA+ people! With a focus on COVID-19 and chronic health, the survey was designed to gather comprehensive data on the experiences and needs of community members in order to advocate for programs, services, and policies that better support the health and well-being of 2SLGBTQIA+ people across Canada. The focus on chronic health, an area of research in which 2SLGBTQIA+ people have been significantly underrepresented, allows CBRC to contribute to new knowledge while also supporting moving from knowledge to action.

While the 2022 Our Health survey took place online (and included an optional mailed component to screen for COVID-19 antibodies, HIV, Hepatitis C, and Syphilis), the [2023 Our Health survey](#) went on

the road for in-person data collection in 20 cities across the country. Almost 5,800 participants were recruited through Our Health in-person in 2023 (in addition to the 4,000 recruited online in 2022), generating an extensive data set that will allow us to learn more about our communities' experiences and needs. Analysis of Our Health data so far has included community-specific analyses (including understanding the unique experiences of: trans and non-binary folks; Indigenous communities, Black communities, and communities of colour; people with disabilities; youth; individuals in rural and remote communities; and more!)—and many community-based organizations and researchers are keen to [use the data](#) themselves. In an effort to support data democratization, we also used Our Health 2022 data to develop a [data dashboard](#) focused on chronic health and key determinants of health.

Operations

Activity Highlights:

Sustained our largest annual budget yet (\$7.4 million)

→ Enabled us to maintain a large and diverse team, which brought a variety of lived experiences necessary for informing project activities and contributing to the growth and capacity of the organization

Bade farewell to several team members due to the completion of several large projects, including *Queering the Compass* and *Community-Centered Responses to COVID-19*

→ Allowed us to celebrate team members who contributed boundless passion, knowledge, and experience to nurturing our work at CBRC, while also providing an opportunity to learn and reflect on sustainability in the context of a project-based funding environment

Moved to a new site for our Toronto satellite office

→ Increased our capacity in the Greater Toronto Area and opportunities for in-person collaboration and relationship building



Project Spotlight: WAGE Community Capacity Grant

This year, CBRC received a Community Capacity Grant from Women and Gender Equality to focus on increasing our capacity to support 2S/LGBTQIA+ health leadership and mobilization in Canada. Over the next three years, we will be working towards this goal through a range of activities focused on strengthening CBRC's strategic direction and organizational infrastructure. More specifically, we will develop: a new strategic plan; improved human resources management systems for recruitment and selection, performance management,

and compensation; and skills development initiatives for CBRC staff and partners. By the end of this year, we had already made meaningful progress on several of these activities, including partnering with consulting firms Impact ON and MNP (formerly Jouta Performance Group) to begin data collection and consultation activities for our new strategic plan and improved HR management systems, respectively.

THANK YOU!

CBRC continues to blossom and bloom because of the hard work and care of our staff, partners, and communities—thank you all!

A big thank you as well to the funders that have also helped nurture our work, including those that provided grants and sponsorship to CBRC in 2023–2024:

List of Funders

BC Gaming Commission
Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
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)
University of Victoria (UVic)
Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)
ViiV Healthcare Canada
Women and Gender Equality (WAGE)

Financial Report

cbrc.net/annual_and_financial_reports

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

