

# The CBRC update

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**In this month's newsletter:** CBRC's new documentary, Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration & Awareness Day, why gender-inclusive writing is a health issue, and more.

## THE LATEST

1. The wait is over! **You can now watch [By Us, For Us: 25 Years of Community-Based Research in Action](#), CBRC's short documentary celebrating 25 years of impact and community leadership.** The film traces our journey from our humble beginnings in 1999, responding to the HIV crisis affecting gay men in BC, to becoming a leading national 2S/LGBTQIA+ organization grounded in community-based research and collective care. Also, last month we hosted a private documentary screening in Vancouver, which united CBRC founders Rick Marchand and Terry Trussler with former and current board, staff, and program participants. You can view the full album of event photos on CBRC's [Facebook page](#).



Photo: Michael Kwag, Rick Marchand, and Terry Trussler

2. In honour of [Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration & Awareness Day](#), the Two-Spirit Program team will be premiering Two-Spirit

Resurgence, a short documentary spotlighting the ongoing resurgence of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer identities across Turtle Island, on CBRC's website the morning of Friday, March 20. Also that day, Two-Spirit Health Program Coordinator RJ Jones will join Indigenous gamer and educator AngeeNoel for [a special livestream on Twitch](#) to talk about Two-Spirit identity and queer Indigenous expression online (beginning at 11 AM ET).

3. **Reach Into Self Expression (RISE)** is a collaborative research project between CBRC and B.C.'s Health Initiative for Men, aiming to understand **gender-based violence** in 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities. The first phase of RISE involved data collection from 2S/LGBTQIA+ survivors through a series of arts-based workshops. From March 24-28, join our team in Vancouver for **a powerful art exhibition** showcasing work created by project participants to better understand their experiences, needs, and hopes for change in relation to gender-based violence. Learn more about RISE and the art exhibit [here](#).

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## THE READ

Last September, the Government of Quebec announced new restrictions to the province's official language policy. In our latest blog post, Estelle Grenier-Robillard (they/them), French Content Editor at CBRC, writes about how this change will affect trans and non-binary folks in the province. "Through this attempt to suppress practices of inclusive writing, these policymakers are hindering 2S/LGBTQIA+ people's health and access to care by denying the very existence of our diversity," Estelle writes. "If healthcare providers refrain from using gender-affirming language, the multitude of our unique identities are neither seen nor accurately reflected. **The risk is that our communities are less likely to seek and access the care they need because the binary language has invisibilized/erased us.**" Read the full blog post [here](#).

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## OUR COMMUNITY: RJ Jones

RJ Jones (he/they) is the Two-Spirit Health Program Coordinator at CBRC. A seasoned facilitator and educator, he has been working in nonprofit organizations for the past decade, particularly in the realms of Indigenous health and wellbeing and sexual and reproductive health. Some of his past experience includes Planned Parenthood Ottawa and the Native Youth Sexual Health Network. He is also a full-spectrum doula.

"Over my career, I've worked in a lot of non-Indigenous spaces around queer and trans issues, as well as in Indigenous spaces that were not focused on queer and trans issues," RJ says. These experiences — and living at the intersection of being trans and Indigenous — made him feel that there was little conversation happening about queer and trans sexual health among Indigenous people, and vice versa. "Being part of CBRC's Two-Spirit Program team is the first time I've been in a space with other Two-Spirit people, and that's been nothing but a gift."

RJ is also a regular streamer on Twitch, an online platform most commonly used for livestreaming gaming. He is part of various Indigenous groups who use Twitch "to empower and uplift other Native streamers," he says. Along with his friend and fellow

Twitch streamer [Angee Noel](#), RJ will be bringing together his work and his hobby for this year's upcoming [Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day](#). RJ and Angee are teaming up to do a livestream on Twitch to talk about experiences of queerness, Two-Spiritness, and Indigeneity. (You can [join the livestream](#) on **March 20 at 11am ET.**)

Many online platforms popular with gamers — like the broadcast-focused Twitch or the private servers of Discord — are also where 2S/LGBTQIA+ community-building is taking place. “Queer and trans people from different backgrounds are coming together and are wanting to consistently spend time together,” RJ explains. “It goes back to the fact that a lot of us are being impacted by the current political landscape of the US and Canada and anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments happening right now.”

Outside of work and livestreaming, RJ enjoys making art (spray-painting, watercolour, and digital art are his mediums of choice) and spending time with his online and offline friends, his fiancé (who he met on Twitch!), and his cat Niibi.



Photo: RJ Jones

**“ Sometimes people are lonely, or don’t have many community connections, and just want a space where they can feel like themselves. Oftentimes, streaming on Twitch is just hanging out, gaming, and joking around, but also having engaging conversations with other queer and trans Indigenous folks.”**

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## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- For **Black History month**, we showcased the work of leading Black queer and trans community-based health researchers in Canada on social media. [Dr. OmiSoore Dryden](#), [Cornel Grey](#), [Garfield Durrant](#), [Orville Burke](#), and [Dr. Sulaimon Abiodun Olawale Giwa](#) generously shared their answers to our questions on the past, present, and future. We also profiled social worker, researcher, and community organizer [Vincent Mousseau](#) in our February newsletter.

### CBRC in the Media:

- “[Why it’s so hard for queer and trans people to quit smoking](#)” CBRC’s Smoke Break program was featured in an in-depth article on *Script* looking into why our community is more likely to become addicted to nicotine.
- Carlisle Kfoury, Peer Support Worker for CBRC’s Smoke Break program, appeared on French-language radio shows [Phare Ouest](#) and [L’actuel](#) to talk about our latest harm reduction program.
- Britt Dorland, a Smoke Break advisory committee member, was on CBC Radio Montreal’s [Let’s Go](#) to talk about the program and their experience with tobacco use.

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## COMING UP

On Tuesday, March 17 (11:30 am EST), join CBRC and Smoke Break for our upcoming webinar, [Practical Strategies to Improve the Health of 2S/LGBTQIA+ People Who Smoke](#), featuring Albert McLeod, Prudence Ndiweni, and Ruben Tarajano, in conversation with Chris Draenos, along with Julia Falco and Kate Fish from the Smoke Break team.

On Thursday, March 19 (12 pm EST), join CBRC and CATIE for a webinar on [HPV and anal cancer screening for people living with HIV](#). This webinar builds awareness of anal cancer, its link to HPV and the importance of anal cancer screening for people living with HIV.

Save the date! Summit 2026 will be taking place in Toronto at the Westin Harbour Castle from October 29-November 1. Later this month, we will be releasing our **call for proposals**.

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## GET INVOLVED

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.

If you are a 2S/LGBTQIA+ person in Canada with **experience of an HPV diagnosis or treatment, or experience supporting someone with HPV**, we invite you to join our Community Champion Network. Click [here](#) for full details and to apply.

**Are you a gender-diverse im/migrant or refugee living with HIV in Canada?** We invite you to [apply to be a community advisor](#) for a national study that aims to understand the experiences and needs of these communities.



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