

The CBRC

update

September 2021

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the CBRC Update, your source for the most current information on Community-Based Research Centre's programs and activities.

This month, we provide an update on Summit 2021, reflect on why more young people are not on PrEP, and offer several opportunities for you to put pressure on various sectors of government to ensure better physical and mental health outcomes for queer and trans people in Canada.

THE LATEST

1.

The **2021 Summit** Programming Committee is building an exciting schedule that will speak to the theme of this year's conference: Disrupt and Reconstruct. We'll soon be promoting some of our keynote speakers and can give you a sneak peek of three of them: jurist and bioethicist Florence Ashley, assistant professor and activist Francisco Ibanez-Carrasco, and author and community healer Kai Cheng Thom. Registration will open very soon, but for now, be sure to save the Summit dates: October 27-29, 2021.

2.

It's time for Newfoundland and Labrador to have a 2SLGBTQIA+ community centre! CBRC is proud to be supporting **Quadrangle NL** in their campaign that is putting pressure on various sectors of government to fund a shared home for more than a dozen 2SLGBTQIA+ community organizations and initiatives currently working without physical space in the province. If you live in Newfoundland and Labrador, you're invited to sign the petition.

3.

We did not expect alkyl nitrites to become such a hot topic during the federal election, but it seems **our campaign to end Health Canada's crackdown on poppers** has sparked a national conversation! Executive Director Jody Jollimore did not hold back when talking to Xtra magazine about CBRC's calls on the government to create a safe supply. Be sure to add your voice and sign our petition. We're also collecting personal stories on how the poppers ban has impacted queer people in Canada – share yours here.

THE READ

Why aren't more young people on PrEP? That's the question CBRC's Policy Mobilization and Communications Intern Liam O'Brien poses in an opinion piece that explores the reasons why so many queer and trans men of his generation are reluctant to take up this highly effective HIV prevention strategy. It seems that despite our best efforts to educate our own communities and broader society about HIV, the legacy of shame and stigma continues to shape the way many young people think about their sex lives and HIV prevention. Read the opinion piece here.



(Photo description: PrEP pills spilling out of a pill bottle)

OUR COMMUNITY: Rusty Souleymanov

After completing his PhD in Social Work at the University of Toronto, **Rusty Souleymanov** joined the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba where his applied research continues to study 2SGBQ+ men and others who face discrimination and multiple barriers to accessing health care.

To narrow the growing health and social inequities among 2SGBQ+ people and other marginalized groups in Manitoba, Rusty and his team set up the Village Lab, a community-based research lab, earlier this year. **Village Lab** focuses on the impacts of social disparities on the health and wellbeing of marginalized communities, including 2SGBQ+ men, people living with HIV, Indigenous people, as well as immigrants and refugees. Rusty's lab also hosts the Investigaytors Winnipeg research capacity training program for young 2SGBQ+ men.

Rusty serves on the board of Nine Circles Community Health Centre, the main provider of HIV services in the province. He's also on the Manitoba HIV/STBBI Collective Impact Network, a network that brings together provincial stakeholders to address various issues in HIV/STBBI policy.



(Photo description: profile shot of Rusty Souleymanov)

“With one of the highest—and growing—HIV rates in the country, Manitoba still has a lot to do to address HIV and other socio-economic disparities in our province.” – Rusty Souleymanov

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- A few weeks ago, CBRC co-hosted a webinar with **Black Gay Men's Network of Ontario (BGMN)** to discuss Sex Now findings among Black same gender loving men. **“What We Know”** featured Robert Alsberry, Jermane Hall, Lance McCready and Kymani Montgomery from BGMN in conversation with CBRC's Knowledge Exchange and Policy Development Director Michael Kwag. Together, our guests looked beyond the numbers and discussed the lived experiences of African, Caribbean, and Black queer men as they relate to the survey results. Watch the webinar here.
- CBRC in the Media: Atlantic Regional Manager Kirk Furlotte spoke with CBC Nova Scotia about how **Canadian Blood Services** will need to regain the trust of LGBTQ people once men who have sex with men are permitted to give blood again. Sex Now data was also quoted in a Toronto Star op-ed by Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes of the Metropolitan Community Church on the **importance of passing Bill C-6**, the federal bill to ban conversion therapy practices in Canada.

COMING UP...

- The **Canada-Wide 2SLGBTQQIA+ COVID-19 Survey** will launch soon. The survey will ask questions about experiences throughout the pandemic and provide an opportunity to test for COVID-19 antibodies from home.
- CBRC's Two-Spirit Program team is creating a **Terminology Guide** and an **Elder Engagement** document to provide language and protocol for researchers to use when working with Two-Spirit Peoples and communities.
- The Test Now team at CBRC is working on an executive summary of its national virtual **peer support initiative**, which saw Test Now “buddies” offering peer support, answering questions, and sending follow-up surveys to those who received HIV self-test kits as part of Sex Now's Test@Home initiative.
- Summit 2021 will once again include the **Creators Project** as a part of this year's conference. We'll be inviting (and paying!) for artists and content creators to attend online conference sessions and create a piece of content inspired by what they've learned. Stay tuned for more details!

GET INVOLVED

Are you a survivor of conversion therapy or attempts to change, deny, or suppress your sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression? Do you know a survivor who may be interested in sharing their experience? The deadline to participate in the SOGIECE/CT Survivors Project has been extended to **September 30**.

CBRC is now hosting the project in collaboration with No Conversion Canada and Dr. Travis Salway at Simon Fraser University. The goal of this project is to develop support systems for Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ people in Canada who have been harmed by the experiences of change or denial efforts. Click here to participate.



Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) promotes the health of gay, bi, trans, Two-Spirit, and queer men (GBT2Q) through research and intervention development.
To learn more visit www.cbrc.net.

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