



# Advancing Testing Innovation Among Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Trans and Two-Spirit Men

A CBRC-REACH Collaboration



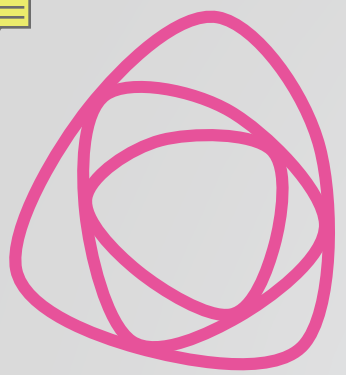
I live, labor, and love on the traditional territories of the Songhees,  
Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples.



# POC/DBS



Point of care and dried blood spot testing  
for gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex  
with men

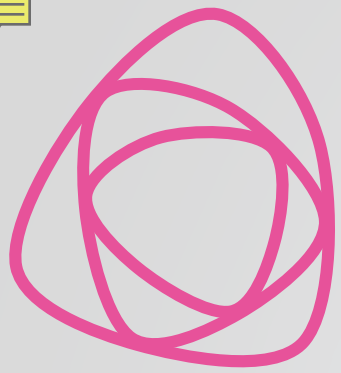


# Partners



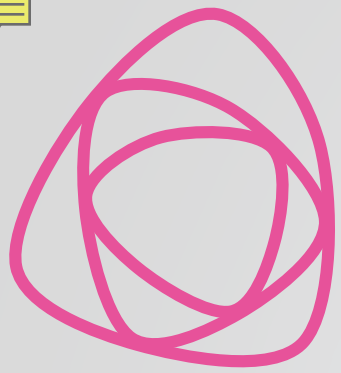
CBRC National partnerships





# Our Three Year Vision

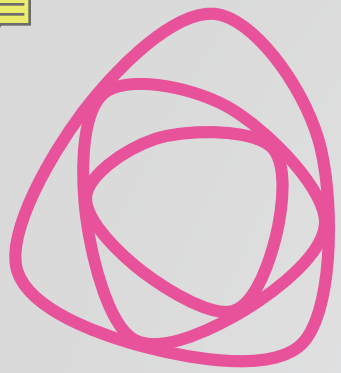
- Strengthened community infrastructures
  - Centering and training peers
  - Culturally relevant and accessible testing
- Increased testing options (100,000 tests!)
  - technology and process
  - scale up and scale out
- Broader sexual health and harm reduction frameworks



# Innovations

1. Event-Based Testing: Oral Point-of-Care HIV Testing
  - 5,000 OraSure POC oral HIV test
2. Mail-Home Self-Collection: Dried Blood Spots
  - 5,000 tests\*
3. National Peer-Based Linkage Line to manage returning results.
  - Goal: 100,000 tests for GBQT2.
4. Acceptability of new testing technologies among Two-Spirit communities across BC;

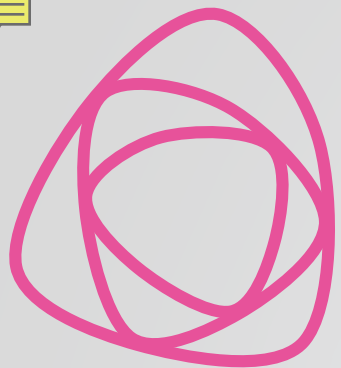
\*The precise tests to be included in the kits remains to-be-determined and is largely dependent on what innovative testing technologies come to market in the next 18 months (e.g. DBS, oral POC, HIV POC self-test).



# 1. Event-based Testing

- Community protocols and partnerships
- Meet people **where they are at**
- High volume testing



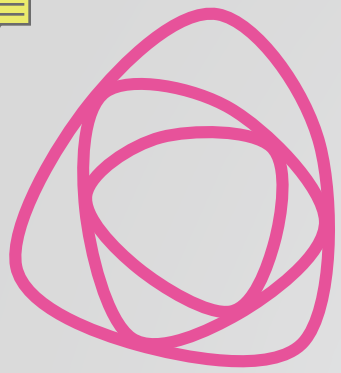


# Peer-based Testing

- Pilot and Acceptability of Oral Fluid HIV Point-of-Care Tests in 2020

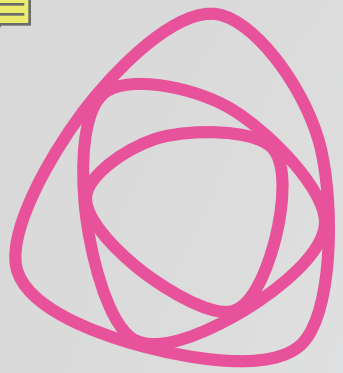






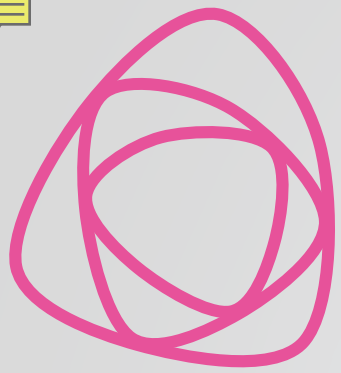
# Uptake of DBS

- 87.32% provided a DBS (n=3077/3524)
- Demographic factors associated with providing a DBS:
  - Recruitment site (78% in Winnipeg to 93% in Montreal)
  - No differences by age, gay identity, non-binary identity, or trans experience
  - Looking at ways to make this better.
- Over 99% had enough blood on the DBS card to screen for HIV.
- Over 95% had enough to do a second test (HCV)



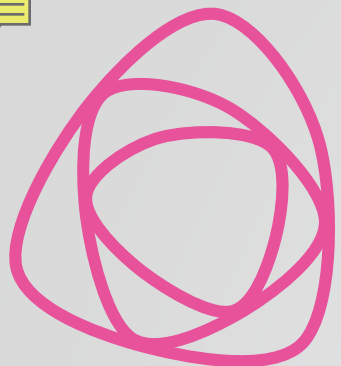
# Returning Results

- Previous PHAC-funded surveys were anonymous.
- New non-nominal peer-based referral process developed.
- Of all participants, 69.2% requested results back to them.
- “REACH”-funded mixed methods evaluation underway.



## 2. Mail Home Self-tests

- **In the 2015 national Sex Now survey:**
  - 71% said they would use an at-home HIV test
  - 33% preferred at-home testing for their next test
- **Sex Now 2019 – BC Pilot**
  - 72% said that they would “Likely” or “Very Likely” use this service.
  - Online survey, opt-in DBS self-collection kits
  - Purolator kits to participants, back to study team
  - Testing at PHAC National Laboratory for HIV Reference Services (Dr. Kim)
  - “Multiplex” screening: HIV, Hep C, and syphilis
  - Peer-based returning of screening results
  - Linkage to confirmatory testing services and care (as needed)
  - To date, 477 test kits have been requested/mailed within British Columbia
    - 20% of who had not been tested in the past year.
- **Sex Now Online 2020/21 – National Mail-Home Kits**
  - Delivery ‘platform’ that could include various testing technologies: choice!



# 3. Peer-based Linkage

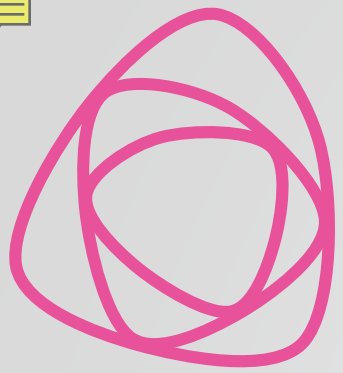
- Develop, pilot and evaluate a **national bilingual ‘linkage line’**
  - Multiple technology platforms
- Community- and **peer-based**
- Cross-sectoral/jurisdictional
- **Low barrier** access:
  - Questions, concerns, remote test supervision, troubleshoot, **linkage** to confirmatory testing and health systems/services
- App-based HIV linkage





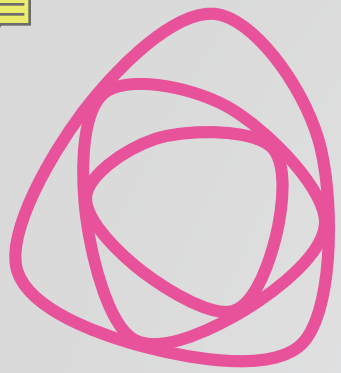
# 4. Two-Spirit Peoples

- Difficulties accessing testing are compounded among Indigenous people living in the Northern region of BC.
- Gauge Two-spirit people's interest in and acceptability of several different testing options – including DBS, INSTI POC, and OraSure.
- Consult with Indigenous leaders and organizations to identify appropriate strategies for testing and linkage to care.
- Indigenous testing tool kits, including print materials that speak to the specific health needs and lived experiences of Indigenous men



# How to get there.

- Offer choice and respect autonomy
- Listen, and listen some more
  - Preparing for reactive results
- Partnerships and collaboration
- Scale out, scale up, and scale deep
- Address intersecting stigmas



# Questions?

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