

MANITOBA  
COMMUNITY  
EVENT-BASED STBBI  
TESTING

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AN EVENT PLANNING TOOLKIT FOR  
SERVICE PROVIDERS AND  
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

SECOND EDITION: AUGUST, 2023



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THIS PROJECT IS A PARTNERSHIP OF THE MB HIV-STBBI COLLECTIVE IMPACT NETWORK AND THE MANITOBA HARM REDUCTION NETWORK. (2023).

Welcome to the Second Edition of the *Manitoba Community Event-Based STBBI Testing Toolkit* (2023)!

The First Edition (2021) was developed as a collaboration between the MB HIV-STBBI Collective Impact Network, Nine Circles Community Health Centre, and the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network. We would like to thank the Manitoba Harm Reduction Network for their incredible work in developing the First Edition.


The First Edition (2021) was piloted during 2022 with a variety of community-based organizations. This usability study examined both the Toolkit content, as well as the processes within it. The study was funded through the generous support of REACH-Nexus. As a result of these learnings, plus changes in innovative testing modalities and processes, we have developed this Second Edition. During 2023 we will be conducting a second usability study to determine how well this version works for the users of the Toolkit.

We would like to thank the following organizations that contributed to the development of this Second Edition, including the 2022 usability study participants, the study organizations, partner organizations, community members, and healthcare staff that made this study and the events possible.

We thank the following participating organizations: Equal Housing Initiative, Huddle South Central in partnership with Youville Community Health Centre, Manitoba Harm Reduction Network, Sexuality Education and Resource Centre, and Winnipeg Sex Positive Culture.

We would like to thank the organizations that provided external nursing support: The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and the Public Health Unit Indigenous Services Canada First Nations Inuit Health Branch.

We are also thankful to the support from the Public Health Agency of Canada National HIV Reference Lab, including Dr. John Kim and Dr. Christine Mesa.



**THIS IS THE SECOND EDITION.  
VISIT [CINETWORK.CA](https://cinetwork.ca) OR  
[MHRN.CA/TESTING-TOOLKIT](https://mhrn.ca/testing-toolkit) TO  
DOWNLOAD THE LATEST VERSION.**

We would like to thank the Advisory Committee of this study, who provided valuable guidance and insights for this project, including Dr. Elder Albert McLeod, Dr. John Kim, Dr. Rusty Souleymanov, Ken Bristow, Lisa Patrick, Laurie Ringaert (Project Lead), Mike Payne, Dr. Linda Larcombe, and Ella Rockar (Project Coordinator).

We would like to acknowledge our funders for this project CIHR REACH Nexus and CANFAR Strategic Initiative as well as the Public Agency of Canada: Community Action Fund.

We acknowledge that the MB HIV-STBBI Collective Impact Network is based on the original lands of Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe), Ininiwak (Cree), Anishininiwag (Oji-Cree), Dakota/Lakota, Inuit, and Dene Peoples and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We are humbly working together toward the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls for Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry's Calls for Justice through our research, events, and projects of the MB HIV-STBBI Collective Impact Network.



# WELCOME TO THE MANITOBA COMMUNITY EVENT-BASED STBBI TESTING TOOLKIT!

This guide is for community-based organizations, peer groups, and event organizers who are not healthcare professionals but want to increase access to STBBI\* testing in their communities. If you're a healthcare provider who wants to partner with the community this guide has lots to offer you, too! This toolkit can be used to plan any sized event, big or small, with its own budget or just the resources you have on hand and in-kind support from partners.

We've seen the effectiveness of doing testing in the community and have drawn on the experience and input of community-based event organizers, healthcare providers, and most importantly, the groups of participants who have planned, attended, and gotten tested at these events to put together this guide.

\* SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED AND BLOOD-BORNE INFECTION

# WHY DO COMMUNITY EVENT-BASED TESTING?

Testing at community-based events is an effective way of doing outreach to members of the community who are already engaged with your organization and their friends, families, and extended social networks.

Testing days and access events have seen high rates of testing, connection and facilitated contact to local resources. There are many people who don't get regularly tested for STBBIs and others who never get tested at all, for a wide variety of reasons.

Providing STBBI testing in a community-based setting can be an excellent way to reach people who might not otherwise get tested and to start a conversation about testing in your community. Bringing testing out of a clinical setting and into the community meets people where they're at and can be an effective way to address barriers, as well as link people to primary care and other health and social services.

The positive impact of testing at an event can reach far beyond just those who choose to get tested at your event, and beyond the day of your event, increasing access to care and ensuring everyone in our communities have access to the best care possible.

## STBBIS IN MANITOBA

All STBBI have been steadily increasing in Manitoba since 2017, and STBBIs are found in all health regions in the province. Testing is essential in addressing rising numbers, and in

2020 we saw a decrease in testing in response to the pandemic.

For a detailed overview of STBBI data in Manitoba check out the Manitoba HIV Program Report, Manitoba Epidemiology and Surveillance reports, or talk to your local public health nurse to get a more up to date picture of what's happening in your community.

The bottom line is that STBBIs are in Manitoba and impact all of our communities, and community based testing provides community members with resources to meet their sexual health needs.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**The case count for infectious syphilis in 2019 was 1,955 - the highest number in more than 50 years.** Testing for infectious syphilis decreased in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic but has since returned to pre-pandemic levels. That said, the test positivity in 2021 was more than double the test positivity in 2018 which means it is likely there are undiagnosed syphilis cases within the province.

Since 2020, Manitoba has had the second highest crude rate of HIV in Canada. Between 2018 and 2021, there was a 52% increase in the total number of HIV cases.

**In 2019 (the most recent national data available), Manitoba had the highest crude rate of new hepatitis C diagnoses in Canada.**



“I TRUST YOU,  
I'D NEVER GO  
IN TO REQUEST  
THIS KIND OF  
TESTING BEFORE.”

- PINE FALLS PEER ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER

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The Powerview-Pine Falls-Sagkeeng Harm Reduction Network, Pine Falls Peer Advisory Council, and IERHA Public Health nurse partnered to organize a mobile testing event in September of 2020. The participant-led model and strong relationship between participants and service providers created a space where people felt comfortable enough to get tested for the first time.

# THINKING ABOUT REASONS FOR TESTING

## Why DO people get tested?

People may choose to get tested; as part of their routine healthcare; when they start a new relationship; when they have a possible exposure; when they've been identified through contact tracing; when they have symptoms.

If someone is ambivalent about testing or they don't consider it a high priority at the moment, making it really easy, fast, accessible, comfortable, and convenient, (plus pairing it up with other incentives) may motivate them to get tested now, instead of maybe someday later.

Consider the personal and social reasons why people may choose to get tested or to take other actions in their life:

- It feels valuable, important, rewarding, or empowering to me
- To feel safe
- I'm thinking about my future
- To take care of my needs
- To feel in control of my life
- It was recommended by someone I trust
- Someone I love asked me to
- To feel accepted
- Because of social conventions and expectations

By considering all of the different things that might motivate people, we can factor these into our event planning and communication, and do our best to meet people's needs.

## Why people DON'T get tested?

There are many barriers to getting tested! Some are very significant and systemic, but even seemingly small barriers can be significant to an individual or group, and barriers add up.

People don't get tested when the risks, costs, or challenges to getting tested feel like they outweigh the benefits. The risks, costs, and challenges can feel very certain and immediate and the benefits can feel distant or uncertain.

How can you address some of these barriers when planning your event?

**MORE  
ON WHAT CAN  
MAKE TESTING  
HARD TO  
ACCESS**





## SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

Our healthcare system was not designed to be accessible, safe, and welcoming for everyone. While there are many healthcare providers who work hard to be kind, compassionate, and fair to everyone; racism, colonization, and other forms of discrimination are built into the healthcare system - into all of our systems, in fact.

This results in policies, professional norms, and assumptions that erode dignity, are coercive, and result in inappropriate or insufficient care or even abuse when people try to access healthcare.

Our systems also create circumstances that make it difficult or impossible for people to access the care they want and need, such as poverty; communities with no public transportation, no clinic, or only one healthcare provider; limited service hours; or inflexible ID requirements.

## STIGMA

Individual, social, cultural and religious attitudes about sex, drug use, and disease impact people's decisions around testing. They may not get tested to avoid shame and judgement, or out of fear that their privacy will be violated.

Healthcare providers may avoid talking about sexual health or offering STBBI testing, or downplay the importance of it, because of their own discomfort or their assumptions about what kind of people have sex, use drugs, or are at risk for STBBIs.

## MISINFORMATION

Stigma makes it difficult to talk about STBBIs, ask questions, share information, or even think about STBBIs.

This creates an environment where it's very easy for myths, assumptions, and misinformation to spread, and difficult for people to access accurate and up to date information. Some people may be basing their decisions around testing on misinformation and make different choices with new information.

"LAST TIME THE NURSE WAS RACIST TO ME"

"THEY NEVER TAKE ME SERIOUSLY THERE"

"NO ONE WHO WORKS THERE SPEAKS MY LANGUAGE"

"DOCTORS CAN'T BE TRUSTED, THEY CALLED CFS ON MY COUSIN FOR NO REASON."

"MY GENDER ISN'T REPRESENTED ON THE INTAKE FORM"

"THEY CALLED THE POLICE ON ME WHEN I COMPLAINED ABOUT HOW I WAS BEING TREATED"

"THEY ASSUME I'M STRAIGHT, ASK THE WRONG QUESTIONS AND GIVE ME BAD ADVICE"

"I WORK TWO MINIMUM WAGE JOBS, WHEN WOULD I HAVE THE ENERGY?"

"I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE TIME OFF WORK"

"I NEED TO ARRANGE CHILD CARE"

"I HAVE NO WAY TO GET TO THE CLINIC"

"I LOST MY HEALTH CARD SO THEY WON'T SEE ME"

"THE ONLY NURSE IS MY AUNT"

"SOMEONE MIGHT SEE ME THERE AND GOSSIP"

"THEY MADE ME FEEL DIRTY, SO I'M NOT GOING BACK"

"IF I HAVE HIV EVERYONE WILL SHUN ME, IT'S BETTER TO NOT KNOW"

"MY DOCTOR SEES MY WHOLE FAMILY"

"I DON'T WANT ANOTHER LECTURE ABOUT CONDOMS"

"MY DOCTOR TOLD ME I DIDN'T NEED TO BE TESTED"

"PEOPLE LIKE ME DON'T GET STBBIS"

"THERE'S NO CURE SO WHAT'S THE POINT?"

"I HAVEN'T HAD VERY MANY PARTNERS"

"I'M IN A MONOGAMOUS RELATIONSHIP"

"WE ONLY HAD ORAL SEX SO THERE'S NO RISK"

"I CLEANED MY NEEDLE WITH BLEACH SO IT'S SAFE TO SHARE"

"I ONLY SHARE MY COOKERS, NOT MY NEEDLES SO IT'S OKAY"

"I DON'T HAVE SYMPTOMS AND I WOULD KNOW IF I HAD AN INFECTION"

"I ALREADY HAD HEP C AND GOT CURED, SO I DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IT AGAIN"

# PRIORITY POPULATION VS GENERAL PUBLIC

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*Throughout this guide we will be referring to the general population and priority populations.*

*Priority populations are specific groups of people who your organization may work with or who may disproportionately experience barriers to accessing services and getting tested. In this guide priority populations are whoever you are working with or want to reach through your event.*

## **PRIORITY POPULATIONS IN PUBLIC HEALTH**

When it comes to STBBIs in Canada, these groups are typically considered priority populations by public health. These groups are considered more at risk for STBBIs due to the social and structural determinants of health, such as discrimination, colonization, and lack of access to healthcare.

- Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples)
- Gay, bisexual, two-spirit, and other MSM (men who have sex with men)
- People who use substances, including injection drugs
- People who are or have been in prison
- Youth at risk
- Women at risk
- People from African, Caribbean, Black (ACB), and other countries where HIV is endemic, including newcomers
- People who are living with HIV/AIDS
- Other population groups, such as those without legal status in Canada or without health insurance and people without a family doctor

## **YOUR EVENT**

Depending on the priorities of your organization, the nature of your event, and other factors, you may decide to focus on reaching the general population or a priority population.

We know that for the general population STBBI testing rates are much lower than recommended. Testing guidelines recommend that everyone age 12-70 get tested for HIV every five years, but only a small percentage of the population has ever received an HIV test. It is estimated that up to 25% of people living with HIV in Canada are unaware of their infection. And from the general population, people who are sexually active, even in long term relationships, should be getting routinely tested for STBBIs once a year, but most don't.

However, in our experience, events that have focused on reaching a priority population have had much higher positivity rates and a more meaningful positive impact than those that target the general population. You can use this guide to plan an event for a priority population or the general public, but we'll be focusing more on planning with priority populations.

# A TESTING EVENT? OR AN EVENT WITH TESTING?

You can plan an event with STBBI testing at its centre, or bring STBBI testing to an event with a different focus.



You may partner with an event organizer to bring a testing booth to a bigger event, like a street party, health or wellness fair, sporting event, cultural festival, or music festival. It doesn't have to be a big event either; you could bring testing to a bar night or bingo. Or testing can be added on to an activity like delivering holiday hampers or other regular outreach. If something is already being planned, you may be able to partner up and offer STBBI testing.



You may also plan an event that centres testing and then build other services, activities, and incentives around that.

**When planning a testing event with a priority population there are a broader range of considerations to take into account:**

- Which format is more likely to make participants feel safe and comfortable?
- What type of event will participants show up to?
- What type of event better reduces barriers created by stigma and fears around confidentiality?
- What kind of marketing or outreach is needed for each format?
- Which format will not only get people to show up but also to meaningfully engage and get tested?

When putting on a testing event for a priority population, you'll be able to answer these questions, make good choices, and plan a successful event by making sure that the participants are equal partners in the planning process from the early ideas stage, right through running the event, and then debriefing and evaluating.

**When deciding which direction to go, first consider who you want to reach:**

For connecting with the general population it may be more effective to bring testing to a bigger event where people are already going to be - much like testing in a clinical setting, enticing people to come to an event focused on STBBI testing through passive marketing can be a hard sell.

NOTHING  
ABOUT US  
WITHOUT US

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This slogan was popularized in English by disability activists and has been adopted by many other marginalized groups since.

# BY US + FOR US

## PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT IN PLANNING

The best events create connections between service providers, community members, elders, and others who are trusted by the priority population and community you are planning with. Brainstorm with the participants about what kind of event they are interested in. You can share ideas from this guide to get started!

Participants may identify an upcoming or existing event that they want to partner with, or may want to plan an event focused on testing.

### **BUILDING AN ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

If you're planning your own event, have participants identify who they want to come help and what they could offer. Then invite all those folks to join your organizing committee! The organizing committee should consult regularly with the wider community to build the kind of event that they want to attend.

The other way people will be engaged is through service provision and tables or booths.

The organizer will contact services requested by the community.



For communities that may have difficulty accessing services or transportation, there is great value in bringing together a variety of resources in a one-stop-shop. This may include offering services and/or information and referrals to service such as:

- Primary health
- Pap tests
- Prenatal care
- Women's Health
- Men's health
- Trans health
- Diabetes and glucose testing
- Nutrition
- Dentist
- Vaccinations & flu clinics
- Drug checking
- Harm reduction supplies
- Naloxone distribution
- Forms and support for getting identification/applying for programs
- Food banks
- Veterinary services

This isn't just an opportunity for a one-off interaction, but a chance to start a relationship and link people to health services including primary care in a space they feel safe and comfortable. Healthcare providers and service providers who participate in an event can provide a safe connection to services that some folks might never otherwise connect with.

### **PARTICIPANT-LED MODEL**

A participant-led model is an effective way to have successful events. In a participant-led event participants plan the event, help run the event, and also bring their friends, family and other members of their community to the event.

Populations that experience discrimination and barriers to services often have good reasons to distrust service providers, particularly when it comes to sensitive and stigmatized topics like STBBIs. The best way you can get people to your event and have them feel safe participating is for the event to be by and for the community.

When participants are part of planning and do outreach and spread the word, the relationships, trust, and credibility they have in their communities and social circles will bring people out in a way that an invitation from a service provider or community organization, a poster, or a social media ad can not.

A participant-led model allows the community to decide how to design outreach materials, how to best reach and engage attendees, and it helps to destigmatize the event. Using a participant-led model can help reduce stigma within the community and help assure a feeling of safety at the event.

## **AFTER THE EVENT: HOW WILL PEOPLE GET THEIR RESULTS?**

Some of the barriers that prevent people from getting tested will also prevent them from getting their results and connecting with treatment.

### **PLAN A FOLLOW UP EVENT**

Plan an event two to three weeks after your testing event, where participants can connect with a nurse about their results or ask questions in the same location and welcoming environment where they got tested.

### **TAKE MESSAGES**

Participants may not have a phone number where public health can reach them, but might come into your organization or be reachable through other channels like social media. Consider offering to take messages at your organization with the consent of the participant.

Make it clear to the participant that the message will not contain any personal health information or mention of STBBI testing, and will simply be a message asking them to call back.

# WORKING WELL WITH PARTICIPANTS

Is a participant-led model new to you or your organization? Here are some tips on how to start a participant-led process:

- Invite people from the community that you hope will attend your event to be a part of the organizing committee. It is best to invite people who you already have trust and rapport with. Lack of previous rapport can make engaging hard, especially with groups of people who have experiences of tokenism and distrust in organizations. There can also be hesitance due to fear of stigma and discrimination. You often have to build relationships and trust long before you ask someone to be on an organizing committee.
- Make sure to compensate your planning committee, especially the valuable expertise of people from your community and people with lived experience. Remember that participants may be doing this work outside of paid hours. Their work in planning, doing outreach, and participating at the event should be fairly compensated.
- Have food at your meetings. Incorporate foods that are culturally appropriate for the group you are bringing together.
- Consider transportation needs and ask your organizing committee if they need bus or cab fare to attend meetings and the event.
- Start planning well in advance of the event and have several planning meetings prior to the event.
- Start early with sharing ideas about what kinds of resources you already have (in-kind resources) and who might be potential partners for your event to help build up resources and connections.
- Make sure participants involved with planning understand their responsibilities leading up to the event and at the event.
- Continue the relationships you make through the organizing work. Ongoing engagement with your community will help connect you to more people, become more trusted and integrated into the community, and help spread information about STBBI testing.
- After running your first participant-led event, you may find that your second event is even more successful because relationships and trust have started growing. Providing testing events routinely can help build a sense of trust and stability within the community.
- If participants are not showing up for planning meetings or for the event, explore the challenges with the organizing group. What can you do better together to make the organizing work more accessible and inviting?
- The Manitoba Harm Reduction Network are experts in participant-led planning and community event-based testing. The Manitoba Harm Reduction Network has satellite sites throughout Manitoba. You can find contact information for their staff team at [mhrn.ca/staff](http://mhrn.ca/staff)

# PLANNING A WELCOMING EVENT

## SAFE, FUN, AND RELEVANT

*Event-based testing needs to feel safe for participants. In line with the principles of harm reduction, this means it needs to meet people where they are at, free of judgement, and talk openly about risk factors, current trends, and sex and substance use in a destigmatizing way.*

### WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

There are a multitude of things that can contribute to a welcoming environment, your organizing committee should decide what this means to them and put those ideas into practice! At a minimum the space should include:

- Food and drinks (snacks are good, meals are better)
- Comfortable places to wait and socialize
- Bathrooms
- Harm reduction supplies including condoms and safer drug use supplies
- A private place to be tested or talk

### FUN

Having fun activities at your event can increase engagement and encourage more people to attend and get tested. If you're offering testing at a larger event making your booth fun will help attract attention and get people curious. At an event not focused on sexual health and harm reduction, attendees may not be expecting to be offered

testing or may not be thinking testing is for them. Fun activities are a good way to start a meaningful interaction and make people comfortable enough to stick around and learn more.

At a testing-focused event, providing fun activities will encourage people to stick around, bring their friends, and can be important for giving people things to do while they're waiting for or are deciding on a test. Family, children, or friends may also need something to do while waiting for the person they came with to get tested.

### WELCOMING SIGNALS

Coming to an event for the first time can take courage for people who are used to experiencing discrimination in healthcare. They should feel welcome before they even talk to anyone.

You can do this through visuals like signs or t-shirts with welcoming messages, or decorating with recognizable symbols, colours, or cultural images. Volunteers at Manitoba Harm Reduction Network events wear I <3 Someone Who Uses Drugs t-shirts. You could decorate with rainbows to welcome LGBTQ+ folks or red umbrellas to welcome sex workers.

**DON'T JUST LIMIT IT TO VISUALS! SOUNDS LIKE MUSIC OR DRUMMING, OR SMELLS LIKE TRADITIONAL FOODS OR SMUDGE CAN TELL PEOPLE THAT THIS SPACE IS FOR THEM.**





**Check out these ideas or think of your own!**

- Workshops on STBBI transmission, relationships, consent, naloxone
- Tables from community partners
- Carnival or sexual health games
- Cards and cribbage boards
- Prizes!
- Collaborative art projects
- Crafting table
- Make it look like a party with music and decorations

Make sure to include space for folks to sit, relax, and socialize - having a good time is as much about connection as activities.

## SEX, DRUGS & BINGO

is available to anyone looking to raise awareness about sexual health and syphilis among adults who are sexually active and/or inject drugs. This ready-to-go package contains bingo cards with accessible harm reduction messages to boost syphilis awareness and encourage testing and treatment. If you know how to facilitate bingo, this package is all you need! No clinical knowledge or extensive facilitation experience required.



**TO DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE PACKAGE VISIT:**  
[NINECIRCLES.CA/PROGRAMS-SERVICES/COMMUNITY-EDUCATION/](https://ninecircles.ca/programs-services/community-education/)

### WELCOMING PARENTS AND PREGNANT PEOPLE

It's easy and common for event planners to overlook the needs of parents and pregnant people, or make it an afterthought. Anyone who has had small kids knows there are extra challenges to attending events, and if there's any question about accessibility it can be easier and safer to just not go.

Congenital syphilis has made it more important than ever to make testing available to parents and pregnant people.

You can offer specific services, activities, and accommodations to make your event more welcoming. And don't forget to say that kids are welcome when advertising your event!

### Childcare

It's hard to get blood drawn and watch your kids at the same time! Organizations that work with families in your community may be able to provide childcare at your event or refer you to trained child minders.

### Activities for children

When planning activities to make your event fun, make sure to include some that are kid friendly. If kids aren't engaged parents probably won't stick around. Make sure you have kid-friendly food options too.


## WHAT IS CONGENITAL SYPHILIS?

If you've never heard of congenital syphilis, it's probably because until very recently it was so rare that healthcare providers could go decades without seeing a case.

When a pregnant person has syphilis that isn't treated, they can pass it on to their baby.

**IN 2015, MANITOBA HAD THE FIRST CONFIRMED CASE OF CONGENITAL SYPHILIS IN 38 YEARS. CASES HAVE BEEN RAPIDLY INCREASING SINCE THEN, WITH 64 BABIES BORN WITH SYPHILIS IN 2020.**

Congenital syphilis is serious - pregnant people should be tested and treated while pregnant to prevent miscarriage, stillbirth or severe health problems for the baby



**WITH TREATMENT,  
A PERSON LIVING WITH  
HIV CAN GIVE BIRTH TO AN  
HIV-NEGATIVE BABY!**

### **Prenatal Care**

STBBI testing is part of routine prenatal care, but many of the barriers that prevent people from getting STBBI testing also result in people not accessing prenatal care. It's particularly important for pregnant people to be treated for any STBBIs they might have, as some infections can be serious in infants. Timely treatment during pregnancy can prevent transmission to the baby.

Try to connect with a service provider in your community who can attend your event to support people in accessing prenatal care and prenatal services. Have information at your event on available prenatal programs in your community, family and baby service organizations, and how to apply for benefits such as the Manitoba Prenatal Benefit.

### **Supplies**

Is there a service provider you can partner with to provide formula or free diapers for participants to take home? What about donations from a manufacturer or local store? If not, consider having a small amount of supplies at your event to address any immediate needs that might arise.

### **Private spaces for physical needs**

Make sure that the physical needs of parents and babies are met. Do your bathrooms have baby change tables? Is there a private space where people can nurse or pump?

## **WELCOMING PEOPLE WITH ANIMALS**

People may need to keep their animals with them for a variety of reasons. They may not have a safe home to leave their pets, they may be travelling, or need an emotional support animal. Spaces that don't allow pets can be a big barrier to accessing services.

Pets can be an important source of meaning, support, and stability for people. Yet the value of these relationships is often dismissed and people with limited financial resources or options for housing are often pressured to give up their pets or are judged as irresponsible for keeping them. Welcoming animals can provide dignity to their owners.

### **Pet friendly space**

Does your venue allow pets inside? If many of your participants keep their animals with them, look for a pet-friendly space or plan an outdoor event. If your event welcomes pets don't forget to put out water.

### **Vet Care**

There are few opportunities to access free vet care, so offering it at your event can be a big draw and make a meaningful difference for participants.

In Winnipeg: Community Veterinary Outreach is a non-profit that partners with healthcare and social service providers on pet and health fairs.

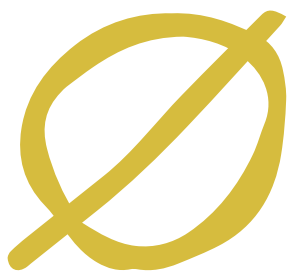
Outside of Winnipeg: Reach out to your local vet or animal shelter and see if they will partner with your event.

### **Pet supplies**

Pet food and supplies like cat litter can be costly, and people may go without to make sure their pet is cared for. Is there a service provider that distributes pet supplies or can you get donations to give out?

**SERVICE ANIMALS AREN'T PETS AND PEOPLE WHO USE SERVICE ANIMALS ARE PROTECTED FROM DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE MANITOBA HUMAN RIGHTS CODE.**

# COMMUNICATING ABOUT STBBIS



**“JUST SAY NO”**  
**“CLEAN” TO REFER TO  
 A NEGATIVE STBBI TEST  
 OR NOT USING DRUGS**  
**CLOSE UP  
 PHOTOS OF INFECTIONS**  
**BLAMING LANGUAGE**  
**STEREOTYPES**

How we talk about STBBIs, sex and substance use, and what we focus on matters. When we reduce stigma we reduce barriers. Your event is a great opportunity to share information through presentations, printed resources, or educational activities, like sexual health pictiography or harm reduction bingo.

When talking about STBBIs keep the focus on activities that can result in transmission and how to prevent transmission. Focusing on activities provides information that is useful to participants who are deciding whether or not they want to get tested, and it is less stigmatizing.

Think about what information you’re sharing in your presentations, resources and activities. Avoid resources and sharing information in a way that is scary or makes people feel ashamed.

And remember, you don’t have to share everything you know about STBBIs in this one interaction! Pick a few key messages, make other information available for folks who want

it, and focus on building relationships. If people feel safe and comfortable you’ll have more opportunities to share information in the future.

**TEENTALK HAS A FACILITATION GUIDE WITH DOZENS OF ACTIVITIES, WHICH ARE DESIGNED FOR YOUTH BUT CAN BE ADAPTED TO OTHER AUDIENCES. [HTTPS://TEENTALK.CA/SERVICE-PROVIDERS/TOOLS-AND-ACTIVITIES/](https://teentalk.ca/service-providers/tools-and-activities/)**

Bring printed and interactive resources to your event that participants can take away to review later or share with others. Great resources can also be a good way to start conversations at your event. Choose resources that are relevant to your audience and will be age and culturally appropriate.



**You can order information resources about STBBIs and harm reduction in a variety of languages from orders.catie.ca – resources are shipped and provided completely free of charge!**

**These are some of our favorites:**

Flip book: <https://orders.catie.ca/book/put-on-something-sexy-condom-flipbook/>

HIV foldable chatterbox: <https://orders.catie.ca/book/hiv-chatterbox/>

Safer Sex Guide booklet: <https://orders.catie.ca/book/safer-sex-guide/>

# LOGISTICS

## PICKING A DATE

The date and time you choose can make or break an event. It's important to choose a date and time that works well for the folks you want there.

Many services keep regular business hours and are not available when people need them. You may need to plan your event on an evening or weekend even if it means adjusting your own schedule.

Other factors that might impact the date and time:

- Holidays and cultural events
- Childcare
- Work or school hours

## VENUE AND PHYSICAL SPACE

Choosing your venue and setting up your physical space are an important factor in a successful event.

### *Will participants go there?*

A spot might seem like the perfect space - a nice layout, easy to get to, affordable to use, great amenities - but some spaces that look great on paper may not be a place that your priority population is willing or able to go. The participants on your planning committee will know if the experiences and perceptions about a place make it a bad choice.

- Not enough privacy
- Bad experiences:
  - Rude staff
  - Discrimination

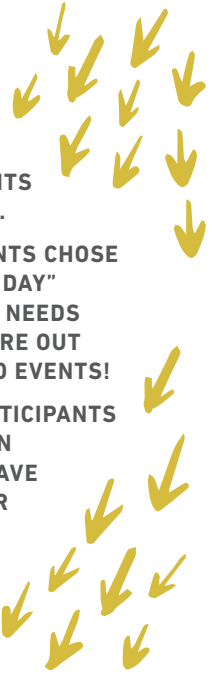
- "If I'm seen going there people will assume I have HIV/use drugs"
- Restrictions on who can enter
  - Quick to ban individuals for past behaviour
  - Probation or parole restrictions

**WE PLANNED TESTING EVENTS FOR THE SAME PRIORITY POPULATION BUT IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES. MANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS ARE ON EIA, SO IT WAS IMPORTANT TO THINK ABOUT WHEN EIA PAYMENTS ARE MADE WHEN CHOOSING A DATE.**

**IN ONE COMMUNITY THE PARTICIPANTS CHOSE TO PLAN THEIR EVENT ON "CHEQUE DAY" BECAUSE FOLKS HAVE THEIR BASIC NEEDS MET, THEY'RE FEELING GOOD AND ARE OUT AND ABOUT. THEY'RE INTO GOING TO EVENTS!**

**IN THE OTHER COMMUNITY THE PARTICIPANTS AVOIDED PLANNING THEIR EVENT ON "CHEQUE DAY", BECAUSE PEOPLE HAVE MONEY AND ARE BUSY DOING OTHER THINGS, SO NO ONE WILL SHOW UP.**

**THE SAME FACTORS CAN MEAN VERY DIFFERENT THINGS!**



**Physical Accessibility**

Keep accessibility in mind when choosing a venue. Does your venue have stairs and no elevator? Is there a wheelchair accessible washroom? Do you have to walk long distances or over uneven surfaces to get there? Are there gender neutral washrooms or can you negotiate with the facility to put up gender neutral signs for your event?

**Geography**

Transportation is one of the most significant barriers to getting tested and accessing services in general. Know your participants and choose a location that is convenient for them - ideally one that is walkable.

If your community has public transportation choose a location that's close to major routes and offer bus tokens to participants. Partner with neighbouring communities to arrange transportation to your event via medical transport.

**SETTING UP YOUR TESTING AREA**

Your testing area should be clean, organized, and set up to provide some privacy. The specifics of your testing area will vary depending on what types of testing you're doing. For all types of testing you'll need an area set up to do consultation and intake, and deal with personal health information and paperwork.

- Table
- Two chairs
- Secure storage for documents with personal health information
- Pens
- Blank forms
- Hand sanitizer
- Privacy screen (optional)
- Laptop (optional)

**Urine tests:**

- Bathroom access
- Storage for samples
- Provide paper bags for participants to place their samples in and a drop off area.

**Blood Draws:** If you're doing blood draws and have multiple healthcare providers you might need a second, separate area with:

- Gloves, tourniquets, needles, and other sample collection materials
- Sharps containers
- Garbage bins

Your healthcare provider partner who will be doing the testing will be responsible for bringing supplies for collecting personal health information and samples. Others on the organizing committee should plan to be responsible for other items like chairs or garbage bins, and manage set up and clean up.

## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS OR ROUTINE PRACTICES

Doing testing for STBBIs means possible exposure to blood and bodily fluids. UP/ RP are practices that help prevent the spread of infection between service providers and clients.

This includes things like handwashing, wearing gloves, cleaning surface, and proper disposal of sharps.

Your healthcare provider partner will be well versed in these practices. Have them take the lead on ensuring that these practices are followed in your testing area.





# LEARNING FROM THE PANDEMIC

Our COVID-19 experience has taught us a lot about how to ensure safety in gatherings and groups. As we go forward, these lessons can be applied to creating a space that is comfortable for participants who may not feel comfortable in group events, and in working to ensure group events are designed with prevention in mind for future cold and flu seasons. Finally, considering these lessons learned will help you to adapt activities should new challenges and barriers emerge.

## STBBI TESTING IN A COMMUNITY SETTING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.

### FOCUS ON “COMMUNITY-BASED” MORE THAN “EVENT”

Get creative with ways to bring testing into the community. Think of ways you can bring testing to folks and provide additional benefits outside of what is regularly available in your community.

-  • A day of home visits for testing
-  • Offer testing with your regular outreach activities
-  • Schedule drop in slots to keep groups small throughout the day
-  • Partner with key participants to plan very small events in their homes

### PLAN FOR CHANGE

Things can change quickly and planning events in advance can be challenging. When possible, build in backup plans to accommodate increased restrictions, people changing their minds about what feels safe, and event organizers getting sick or having to quarantine. Sometimes you might just need to cancel completely - healthcare staff may be redeployed suddenly and you may have no one who can do testing.

Have a plan for communicating changes to folks who might attend, and make it clear how and where they can get up to date information about your event. Social media is an effective way to reach many people, but in communities with poor access to the internet communicating changes might be done by word of mouth.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Provide masks
- Hand washing/sanitizing stations
- Plan outdoor events when possible
- Individually packaged food and drinks instead of serving from shared dishes
- Disposable or individual items like pens, eating utensils
- Try to keep things fun. Laughter is medicine.
- Fun activities while physical distancing
- Screening for symptoms and exposure at the door

# OUTREACH AND MARKETING YOUR EVENT

Encourage your organizing committee and participants at your organization to promote the event to their friends and networks - word of mouth and recommendations from trusted individuals are the most powerful way to bring people out.

Support your word of mouth advertising with flyers or handbills that participants can give out to the people they invite with all the important event information.

Think about who you want to reach and where you might connect with them. Some other marketing ideas:

- Flyers, handbills or posters at partnering organizations
- Posters in public spaces
- Radio ads
- Newspaper ads
- Bar or festival advertising
- Social media posts
- Targeted social media ads (some social media platforms may conflate sexual health and harm reduction ads with adult content. Keep this in mind if social media ads are an important part of your marketing strategy)

If you're hoping to reach a wide audience and connect with the general public, consider planning your event around a regional, national or global day or event. These events have broad reach and many of them will use their websites or social media accounts to advertise local events that are planned around the same theme.

## HAVE GOOD TIMING

**GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT YOUR EVENT WITH THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF ADVANCED NOTICE, SO THAT PEOPLE SHOW UP.**

**THINK ABOUT WHO YOUR PARTICIPANTS ARE AND WHAT TYPES OF OUTREACH AND MARKETING YOU'RE DOING.**

Some priority populations may have busy schedules or need to plan transportation/childcare. They may need lots of advanced notice to attend.

Some priority populations may have schedules and circumstances that change rapidly. They may prefer to invite their friends and networks closer to the event date.

You can post on social media far in advance and share many times leading up to your event.

Flyers or handbills may be discarded and forgotten about if they're distributed too early.

Paid advertising should be timed strategically to make the most out of your budget.

**SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK - MID FEBRUARY**

**NATIONAL TESTING DAY - JUNE 27**

**WORLD HEPATITIS DAY - JULY 28**

**WORLD AIDS DAY - DECEMBER 1**

**ABORIGINAL AIDS AWARENESS WEEK - DECEMBER 1-5**



# TYPES OF TESTS

In Manitoba, routine STBBI testing is available for HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis. There are other STBBIs that are not part of routine testing, some of which can be tested for when there are symptoms present.

We won't go in-depth about each STBBI in this guide, but you can find information about symptoms, transmission, and treatment by talking to a public health nurse in your area, or from these trusted websites:

- <https://serc.mb.ca/>
- <https://ninecircles.ca/>
- <https://www.catie.ca/>

There are a variety of different types of tests that can be used to diagnose STBBIs. The types of tests you offer at your event will depend on a variety of factors, from the facilities available at your venue, to which tests are available, to what type of staff are working your event.

IT CAN BE  
**HARD**  
TO REMEMBER  
SO, WE MADE YOU  
A CHART

CHECK IT OUT ON THE  
NEXT PAGE



If you are able to offer Pap tests or swabs, consider including testing for:

## HPV (HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS)

HPV is the virus that causes warts and some cancers. HPV is not routinely tested for directly but may be diagnosed when there are symptoms or an abnormal Pap result.

If your event venue has appropriate private space and you have enough nursing staff, consider offering Pap tests, too!

## HERPES (HERPES SIMPLEX VIRUS)

The herpes virus causes cold sores commonly found around the mouth and face, as well as genital herpes.

Routine testing for herpes is not recommended and not offered in Manitoba. Herpes infections are diagnosed when someone has symptoms, by swabbing the lesion/sore.

## TRICHOMONIASIS

This is a common STI but not part of routine testing. It can be added to the lab requisition for a vaginal swab.

## BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS AND YEAST

These are not considered sexually transmitted infections, but can be added to the lab requisition if you are offering swab tests at your event.



# LAB TESTS

# RAPID TESTS

BLOOD	SWABS	URINE	HIV
<p><b>BLOOD DRAW</b></p> <p><b>How does it work?</b> This is your standard blood test. Using a needle blood is drawn from the arm and into vials, then it is sent to the lab for testing.</p> <p><b>Who can do it?</b> Nurse Phlebotomist Individuals who do regular intravenous injections at home may prefer to insert the needle themselves, but a health care provider is still required to collect the blood and send it to the lab.</p> <p><b>What does it test for?</b> HIV Hep B Hep C Syphilis</p>	<p><b>DRIED BLOOD SPOT</b></p> <p><b>How does it work?</b> A blood sample is collected on a piece of special filter paper. This only requires a finger poke, not drawing blood from a vein.</p> <p><b>Who can do it?</b> DBS can be done by a healthcare provider, trained volunteer or by the person being tested.</p> <p><b>What does it test for?</b> HIV Hep C Syphilis</p>	<p><b>How does it work?</b> The individual being tested urinates into a sample collection cup then tightly closes the lid</p> <p><b>What does it test for?</b> Gonorrhea Chlamydia (These infections can also live in the throat or anus, and a urine test will not detect them!)</p> <p><b>What do I need?</b> Access to a bathroom</p>	<p><b>How does it work?</b> This test uses a few drops of blood collected from a finger poke.</p> <p><b>POINT OF CARE TEST</b></p> <p><b>Who can do it?</b> Nurse Trained volunteer</p> <p><b>What do I need?</b> When doing rapid testing at an event it's important to be prepared to provide information, emotional support, and a plan for confirmatory lab testing and connecting that person to care should someone receive a positive result.</p> <p><b>How do I offer this test?</b> These tests are not widely available through the health authorities, though some sites may have regular access to them. Talk to your local public health office or community health clinic to see if they have access and can offer rapid testing at your event. National organizations may provide free tests for specific events. The Canadian AIDS Society distributed free tests to organizations for National Testing Day in previous years. These tests can also be purchased directly from the manufacturer. You can find out more about the HIV rapid test here: <a href="https://www.insti.com/how-to-use/">https://www.insti.com/how-to-use/</a></p>
			<p><b>SELF TEST</b></p> <p><b>Who can do it?</b> This test is done by the individual being tested. It can be distributed by volunteers for people to take home.</p> <p><b>What do I need?</b> Just the tests and information to share! This should include how to get support and a confirmatory test if their home test is reactive (positive).</p> <p><b>How do I offer this test?</b> The HIV self-test was approved for use in Canada in November 2020. You can order tests for free by contacting <a href="mailto:reachnexus@unityhealth.to">reachnexus@unityhealth.to</a></p>

You'll need a registered healthcare professional at your event to provide lab tests, for doing requisitions and handling personal health information, and ensuring that samples are properly handled and delivered to the lab.

A rapid test for Hepatitis C is approved for use in Canada but is not available in Manitoba.

# TESTING CONSIDERATIONS

## USING DRIED BLOOD SPOT COLLECTION

Is Dried Blood Spot (DBS) collection a good fit for your event and population?

Would people in your priority population typically be able and willing to get a regular blood draw done? If the answer is yes, they should have a blood draw done rather than DBS. If the answer is no, then DBS may be a good fit! Some people may not want a blood draw for a variety of reasons: their veins may be difficult to draw from, they may have previous feelings of stigma or discrimination in the healthcare system, or they may not be comfortable with getting a healthcare professional to do a blood draw.

You will need to partner with a healthcare provider to offer DBS at your event. Make sure to discuss your plans in detail with your healthcare provider and ensure that DBS collection is within their scope of practice. There are more details on how to connect with healthcare providers in the next section.



## USING SELF TESTS

HIV Insti Self Tests are available for free through the I AM initiative. You can access tests by emailing [reachnexus@unityhealth.to](mailto:reachnexus@unityhealth.to) and indicating your interest in holding a testing event. Information on the I AM initiative is available at [www.i-am.health](http://www.i-am.health)

The I AM initiative is very accessible. Tests and shipping are free. You will be provided with information on how to order tests, how to provide the necessary evaluation data to the I AM initiative, training on how to use the tests, and information on how to counsel and refer someone who tests positive on a self test.

Self tests need to be stored in a secure and temperature controlled space, between 2°C. to 30°C, and should be used at room temperature. If it is very cold outside, and people are taking the tests to go, tell them to put the test inside their jacket, close to their body, and to use the test inside. If it is very hot, keep the tests cool and dry during the event, and tell people who take them to use the test inside.

Rapid tests can be intimidating as the result is... rapid (the result is right there). It is recommended that people take the tests home or to a safe indoor place to do the testing. Having some time to process the potential results can help people to be more comfortable being tested. Also, they don't have to get a result immediately at the event, which they may be attending with friends or family.

If you are providing self tests at your event, we recommend having resources available for people to help them process a potential positive result and to help them connect to care. Have a look at the training materials and documents provided by I AM. You can also have resources shipped to you for free from CATIE at [orders.catie.ca](http://orders.catie.ca) or the Manitoba HIV Program at [mbhiv.ca](http://mbhiv.ca)

**ALTHOUGH  
HIV SELF TESTS  
ARE VERY RELIABLE  
THEY ARE NOT  
A DIAGNOSIS FOR HIV.**

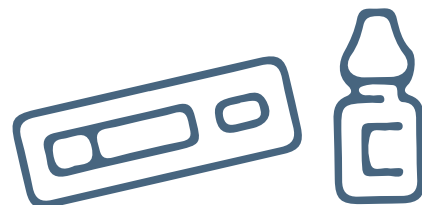
### PEOPLE WHO TEST POSITIVE WILL NEED TO HAVE A CONFIRMATORY BLOOD DRAW TEST DONE.

Referrals for blood tests can be done at any doctor's clinic. If someone does not have a family doctor or would like to access testing elsewhere:

- A list of testing locations province-wide is available at: [streetconnections.ca/locations](http://streetconnections.ca/locations)
- A list of Public Health offices in Manitoba is available at: [gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/offices](http://gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/offices)
- The individual can self-refer to the Manitoba HIV Program by calling 1-866-449-0165

### WHEN TALKING TO A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER FOR FOLLOW-UP CARE, THE FOLLOWING WORDING IS HELPFUL:

**"I DID A HIV SELF TEST AND IT CAME BACK POSITIVE. I NEED TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH A PROVIDER TO CONFIRM A NEW HIV DIAGNOSIS."**



# PARTNERING WITH HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

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In most cases, you will need to partner with a healthcare provider, usually a nurse, to offer testing at your event. Your healthcare provider partner will be responsible for handling patient care and personal health information, collecting samples and getting them to the lab, and notifying participants of their test results.

Your local public health office, community health office, health centre, or nursing station is a great place to start when finding a healthcare provider to partner with. If you plan to test a priority population, see if there is a clinic that works specifically with the population. Clinics working with your community can be good resources since they are already working with the population you are hoping to test. Other organizations that work directly with priority populations, sexual health, or harm reduction, and have nurses on staff, may also be good partners in your event.

Participating in a testing event can be an effective way for a nurse to build relationships with the participants, and also build a reputation as a safe provider with the participants' extended networks of friends and family. Clinics that partner on testing events may see an increase in testing and an influx of new patients after an event as participants refer others there.



**Remember that many clinics and nurses face high client demands. Working at your event may mean that a nurse has to decrease services at their clinic for existing clients and services. Resources are limited and demand is high, so healthcare providers have to work hard to allocate resources. Try to connect with clinics and nurses as far in advance of your event as possible. Some nurses may need a few months' notice to adjust their schedule, and some may simply not have the available time or resources.**

Nurses function as part of a healthcare team and may need a doctor or medical director to perform testing and treatment. When you talk to a clinic, ask what is within the nurse's scope of practice. It is important to discuss your plans and expectations with potential healthcare partners to ensure a successful testing event. Here are some useful items to discuss:

- Describe your event, the layout of the site, the type of testing you would like done, the community you plan to test, and any other care you would like incorporated, in as much detail as possible.
- Do you/your staff have the capacity to conduct testing at this event? If not, do you have any suggestions for other providers who might be interested in providing support for this event?
- Do you have nurses that can order diagnostics tests on their own?
- Do you have nurses that can provide treatments if required?
- What is the standard of care for follow-ups and after care?
- Thinking about the type of testing and care we are intending to provide, how long will one appointment take approximately? How many people can we reasonable expect to test during the event?

## OFF-RESERVE:

YOU CAN FIND THE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE AT [HTTPS://WWW.GOV.MB.CA/HEALTH/PUBLICHEALTH/OFFICES.HTML](https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/offices.html)

## ON RESERVE:

YOU CAN FIND THE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR NURSING STATION OR HEALTH CENTRE AT [HTTPS://WWW.GOV.MB.CA/HEALTH/PUBLICHEALTH/DOCS/FIRSTNATIONSOFFICES.PDF](https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/docs/firstnationsoffices.pdf)

## OTHER RESOURCES:

FOR MORE TESTING CLINICS AND HARM REDUCTION SERVICE LOCATIONS PROVINCE-WIDE, VISIT STREET CONNECTIONS AT [WWW.STREETCONNECTIONS.CA/LOCATIONS](http://WWW.STREETCONNECTIONS.CA/LOCATIONS)



# JURISDICTIONAL AND TECHNICAL ISSUES

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Jurisdictional issues can create significant barriers to people getting tested. When putting on your event you may have participants from a variety of different jurisdictions. By being aware of jurisdictional issues ahead of time you can ensure that you don't turn away anyone who wants to get tested at your event.

## **OUT OF PROVINCE HEALTH CARD**

In Manitoba anyone with a health card from any Canadian province or territory can get tested. The person's test results will be sent to the testing nurse as the care provider no matter where their health card is from for follow up and to review the results with the client. If they are positive for any reportable infection the result will also be sent to their home province by the province's surveillance system.

## **NO HEALTH CARD**

In many primary care settings an individual is required to show their health card to access care. Many people attending your event may not have a physical copy of their health card with them or at all. Don't turn them away! Using their birthday and full name it's usually easy to find an individual's information. Even if it's not possible to look up the individual's information at your event their sample should be held and every effort should be made to look up their information if they've ever had a Manitoba Health card.

## **BORDER COMMUNITIES**

If you are planning an event in a border community be mindful of where the event is located - nurses can only provide one-on-one care in the province they're licensed in.

The person's test results will still come to the healthcare provider who did the testing no matter where their health card is from so that the results can be reviewed with the client. If they are positive for any reportable infection the result will also be sent to their home province by the province's surveillance system.

## **ON AND OFF RESERVE**

If you're planning an event that is off reserve, think about how to engage with neighbouring Indigenous communities. This may include recruiting their nurse or wellness coordinator to the organizing committee or inviting them to bring folks to the event via the medical van.

# PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

People often cite concerns about privacy and confidentiality as reasons for why they don't get tested for STBBIs.

## PHOTOS AT EVENTS

Be sure to get written consent from any individuals who participate in your testing event or visit your testing booth at a bigger event before taking photos. Even if you're providing STBBI information in a public space it's important to err on the side of caution - asking permission is important for making individuals safe and building trust with your community.

If you want to take photos of your event consider doing so once setup is complete but before people arrive, and stick to only having staff and volunteers in your photos. This eliminates the risk of using a participant's image in a way that they're not okay with and you can use your event photos on social media, in reports, or promotional materials without concern.

## PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

By partnering with a healthcare provider for events, you, your organizing committee and volunteers can avoid handling personal health information entirely. Personal health information for participants should be handled with care and only seen by those who need to see it.

You should be aware of regulations governing personal health information and your responsibilities around personal health information, particularly the Personal Health

Information Act (PHIA). You can access free training on PHIA here: <https://trainingtodo.com/mbhealth/secure/index.asp>

## GETTING TEST RESULTS

Anyone who gets tested at your event will be contacted directly by the Regional Health Authority if their test comes back positive or any other follow up is needed. As organizers you should not be asking for or receiving test results for individuals, as this is confidential information.

You may need to support healthcare providers with connecting with the event participants after the event but this should never involve results or personal health information being shared with you. Think about planning a post testing event and offering to take messages for participants who don't have a phone.

## REPORTABLE INFECTIONS

Under the Public Health Act, when these infections are diagnosed the healthcare provider must notify the chief public health officer. Reporting infections helps with keeping accurate statistics, making good public health decisions, and contact tracing. STBBIs including HIV, syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and hepatitis B and C are reportable, but so are many other infections, like influenza, rabies, and tetanus.

Having a reportable infection doesn't reduce your right to privacy and confidentiality!

# TRACKING AND EVALUATION

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## EVALUATION

Have people evaluate the event and track statistics. Talk with your organizing committee about this before the event and make a plan! We've included a sample evaluation form in this guide, but a paper evaluation may not be a good fit for the nature of your event or your participants.

Other evaluation tools you may use could include having a poster where participants can write comments during the event or having a focus group with participants after the event is over.

Evaluation is important to organizers and funders but may not be a priority for participants. Consider providing an incentive for participating in the evaluation process, such as a prize draw or honorarium for people who complete a paper evaluation, or an honorarium and food for joining a focus group.

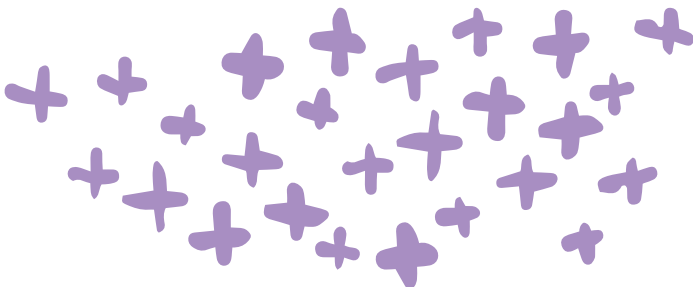
After the event, bring together the organizing committee to do a thorough review of stats collected, what went well, and what challenges were encountered. All this great info can be used next time!

## USING TESTING CODES TO COLLECT STATS

If you decide to offer ongoing testing events in your community, you may be interested in creating a testing code. A testing code is added to a lab requisition form, which is then sent to Cadham Provincial Laboratory, along with a blood, urine, or swab sample for testing. Using a testing code makes it easy for the event organizers to know how many tests were performed and the positivity rate. Testing codes are only used to aggregate data - they won't reveal confidential test results for any of the individuals who were tested at your event.

The total number of tests and the positivity rate can be valuable data for evaluating events and requesting funding to put on additional events. Having this data in a timely manner will also support your community in identifying and responding to any outbreaks or trends that are identified through testing at your event. Having a testing code is not necessary, but it can be useful for organizations that are heavily involved in routine STBBI testing. Results will still be processed and individuals will still get their results without a testing code!

If you are interested in creating a testing code for your events, you can contact David Alexander at Cadham Provincial Laboratory to discuss your plans and the possibility of creating and using a testing code:  
[David.Alexander@gov.mb.ca](mailto:David.Alexander@gov.mb.ca)





# SAMPLE MATERIALS

## TESTING EVENT EVALUATION

Date of event: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

This event was (circle the ones you agree with or write in your own)

Fun      Informative      Comfortable      Safe      Welcoming      Well organized

- I got tested today
- I got tested for the first time
- I didn't get tested but I plan to soon
- I didn't need to get tested today

Something you learned today that you would share with a friend

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---

Something you enjoyed about today

---

---

Something you would change about today

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Something I would like to learn more about

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- Y / N I would come to another event
- Y / N I like the location
- Y / N The time was convenient for me

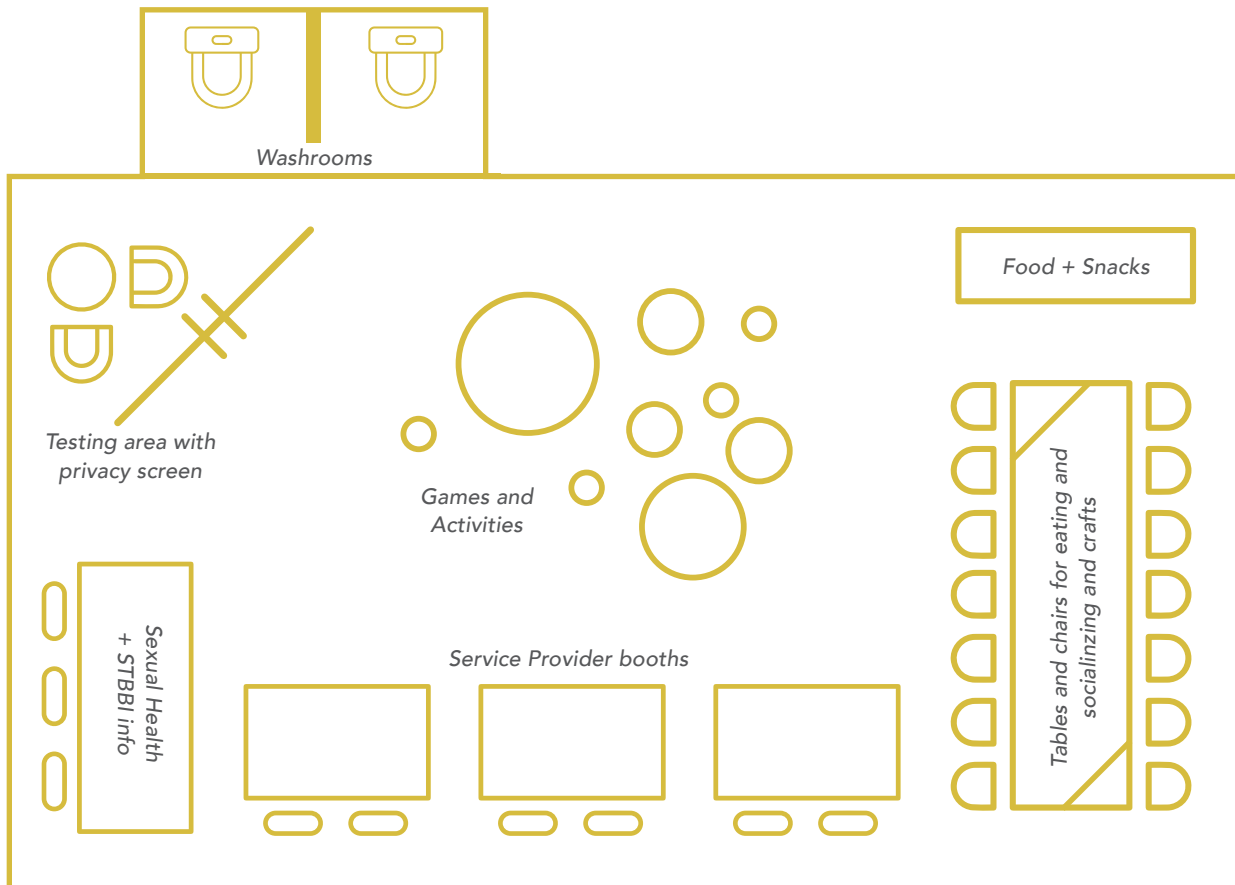
How did you hear about this event?

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# SAMPLE MATERIALS

## FLOORPLAN



# QUESTIONS? FEEDBACK? GET IN TOUCH!

REALLY REALLY  
WE REALLY  
MEAN IT  
\* FOR REAL

Do you need additional support in planning your event? Tell us about your plans and where you're located. We can connect you with one of our partners with community-based testing experience, or connect you to local resources.

Do you have questions or feedback about the toolkit? Did you use this toolkit to plan an event? We'd love to hear from you and incorporate your feedback into the next version of this living document.

[cinetwork.ca](http://cinetwork.ca)



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**THIS IS THE SECOND EDITION.  
VISIT [CINETWORK.CA](http://CINETWORK.CA) OR [MHRN.CA/TESTING-TOOLKIT](http://MHRN.CA/TESTING-TOOLKIT)  
TO DOWNLOAD THE LATEST VERSION.**

