

HIV Testing in BC – New and Innovative Approaches

Mid to North Vancouver Island Regional Training

March 24, 2022



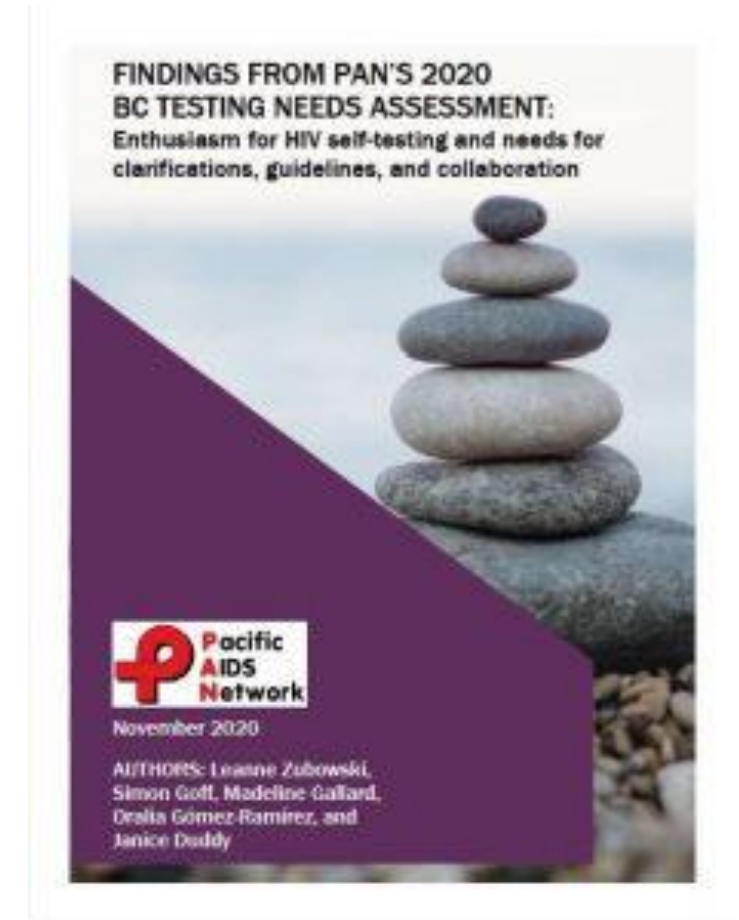
*Strengthening BC's collective action on HIV,
hepatitis C, and harm reduction.*

New and Innovative Approaches to HIV Testing in BC

- HIV self-testing – research-based initiatives
 - REACH's I'm Ready
 - CBRC Studies
- Working towards approval for new HIV self-test – oral fluid test
- Dried-Blood Spot Testing

PAN's work on STBBI Testing

- Partnership with REACH Nexus
- Supporting community-based testing needs – 2020 BC Testing Needs Assessment
- Working in partnership with other researchers and health partners to move new testing models forward



<https://paninbc.ca/2020/12/02/check-out-the-findings-from-pans-2020-bc-testing-needs-assessment/>

What did the needs assessment tell us?



Enthusiasm about new testing technologies, including HIV self-testing, dried blood spot (DBS) multiplex testing for HIV and STBBIs, and self-testing for hepatitis C.

ASO and CBO stakeholders think that it is important and beneficial to **expand testing opportunities**.



Pathway for access to HIV confirmatory testing and linkage to prevention and treatment care, must be in place and clearly presented for those using HIVST, especially in communities with fewer services.

Legal, surveillance, and public health reporting requirements concerning positive HIVST results must be clear for CBOs and ASOs.



ASO and CBO stakeholders **call for guidelines and role clarity** of different stakeholders involved, including the anticipated role of peer support workers in HIVST.

Collaboration between ASOs/CBOs, healthcare providers, and health authorities is perceived as critical as HIVST is rolled out in the province.

REACH Nexus supporting innovative testing work in Canada

- REACH Nexus is an ambitious national research group working on how to address HIV, Hepatitis C and other STBBIs in Canada.
- Focused on:
 - Reaching the undiagnosed
 - Implementing and scaling up new testing options,
 - Strengthening connections to care, improving access to options for prevention (PrEP and PEP)
 - Ending HIV stigma.

Part of [MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions](#) at St. Michael's Hospital, Unity Health Toronto, and is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

REACH's research secured the approval for Canada's first HIV self-test

- On November 3, 2020 Health Canada provided approval of the first HIV self-test in Canada
- On June 2, 2021, just after 7 months later, we launched Canada's first major national HIV self-testing distribution program to support all regions and key populations.

Canada approves first HIV self-test as it moves to increase access to screening

ADINA BRESCE
THE CANADIAN PRESS
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Dr. Sean Rourke of the Centre for Urban Health Solutions at St. Michael's Hospital was the principal investigator of a clinical trial that helped clear the way for approval of a one-minute HIV blood test.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Federal regulators have approved the first HIV self-test in Canada in a long-awaited move that experts say is critical to diagnosing people who don't know they have the virus.

Health Canada granted a medical device licence on Monday to a one-minute, finger-prick blood test manufactured by Richmond, B.C.-based bioLytical Laboratories.

What is I'm Ready **to Know?**

Democratizing HIV self-test in Canada

"I'M READY" IS A **NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM** THAT AIMS TO GIVE PEOPLE IN CANADA, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE UNDIAGNOSED AND PART OF KEY POPULATIONS:

- Approximately 50,000 free HIV self-tests;
- choice of delivery (home or other address); and
- connections to care for prevention or treatment through online and mobile options.

I'M READY IS FOR EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU LIVE.

reach**nexus**

MAP



choice, access, testing, care

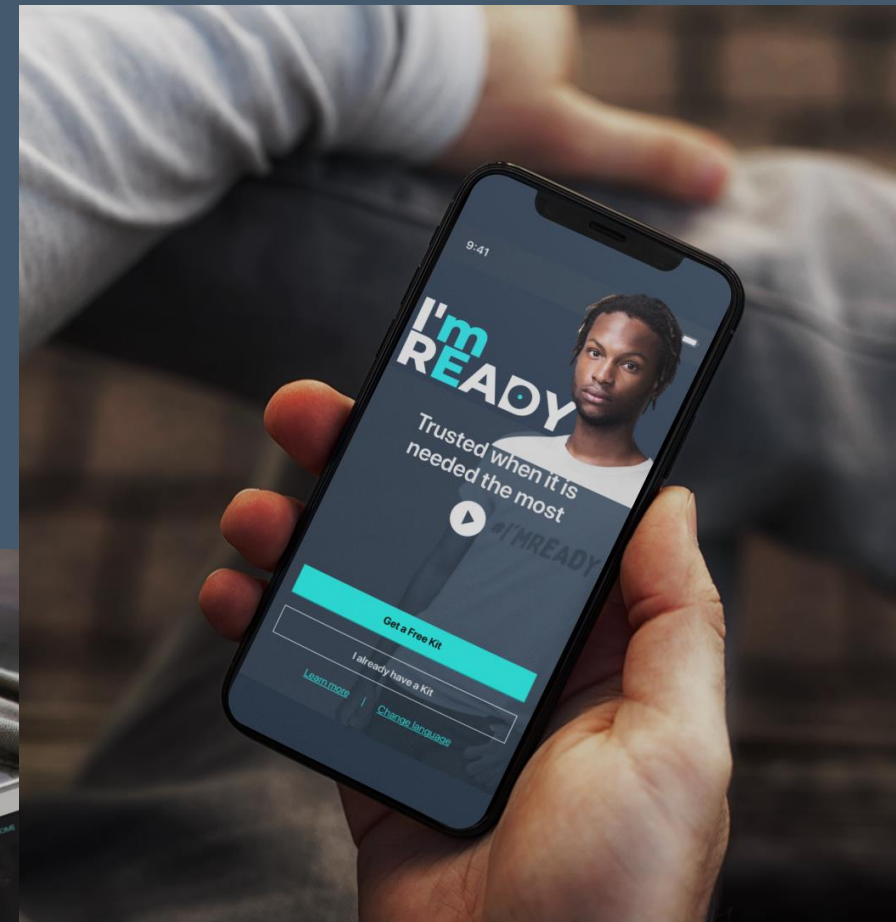
The technology

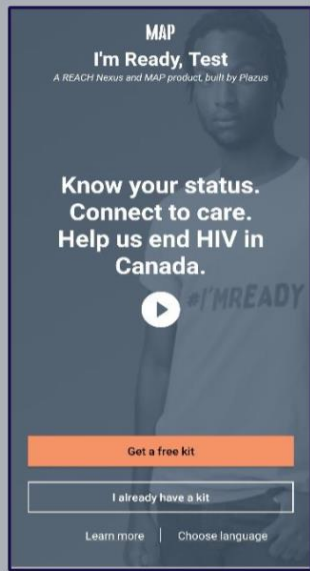
APP: *I'm Ready, Test*

- Download the app on any major app store
- Set up a secure profile with PIN
- Order a test, take the test, share results and answer surveys
- Connect to support anytime before, during or after you take the test

Website: *I'm Ready to Know*

- Comprehensive program information; pickup locations
- Includes pathways to care by province; knowledge base of FAQs
- Connection point for all services and resources associated with I'm Ready



The 'Create Profile' screen. It shows a back arrow, the title 'Create Profile', and a privacy notice: 'All information here will be kept only on your device and encrypted for privacy'. There are dropdown menus for 'Year of birth' and 'Province'. A note states 'This profile helps us create your unique ID'. At the bottom is a 'Create a profile' button.The 'Pre-test survey' screen. It shows a progress bar from 0% to 100%. The question is 'Have you ever been tested for HIV?'. There are three radio button options: 'Yes', 'No', and 'Unsure', plus a 'Prefer no to answer' option. Navigation arrows are at the bottom. It is 'Powered by Qualtrics'.The post-survey screen. It shows a user profile 'Person, 21' from 'Nova Scotia, Canada'. It says 'Congratulations on taking control of your health' and explains that HIV testing is the only way to know status. There is a 'Read More' button. Below, it says 'Please read more before activating the test kit.' and 'Point your phone camera to the QR code sticker on the front of your kit package to scan the code.' with a 'Start' button. At the bottom are links for 'Learn more' and 'Talk to a peer navigator'. A 'User ID' is displayed.

Get a free kit

status. If you want to talk to someone there are resources available to support you and answer your questions.

To speak to someone about self-testing, you can call the information lines in the HIV self-test kit package insert or visit the [I'm Ready website](#) or [HIV411.ca](#) to find help. You can also visit our I'm Ready, Connect app to make an appointment with a peer navigator.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) can help within 72 hours of exposure

If you are concerned about a recent exposure to HIV within the last 72 hours, you can go to a hospital emergency department to ask about HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). This is a 4-week course of medications that you can take if you are HIV negative and think you have been recently exposed. PEP can prevent HIV infection and is more effective the earlier it is started.

Delivery a kit to my home or another address

See where I can pick up a kit

Close

User ID: 0gbv8bja46kk

- **Download** the I'm Ready, Test app
- **Consent** to join the research program
- **Create a profile**
- **Complete survey** (pre-test survey)
- **Access up to 3 free kits: Mail or CBO Pick-up**

The *I'm Ready, Test* app



Accessing HIV self-testing kits

There are 2 ways to access HIV self-testing kits
Across Canada:

- 61% were delivered to an address (people ordered 2 kits on average)*
- 39% have been ordered for pickup at one of our 80 pickup locations

* end of Q1



Pickup sites across Canada



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CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

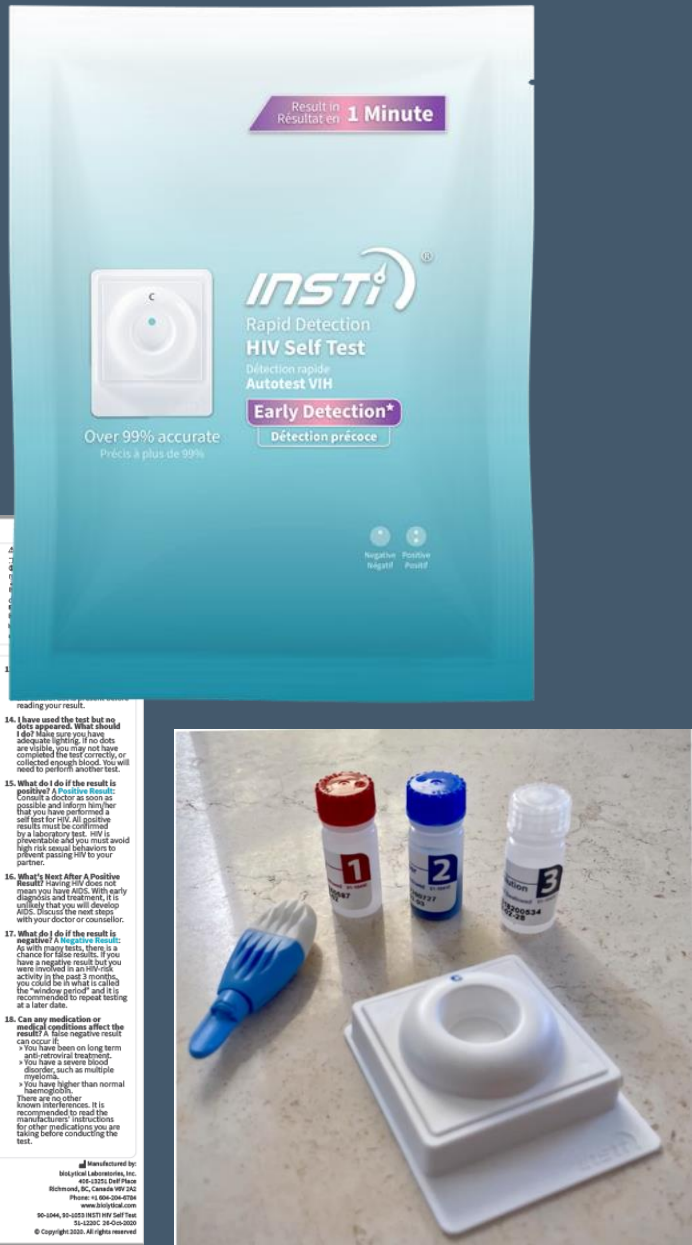
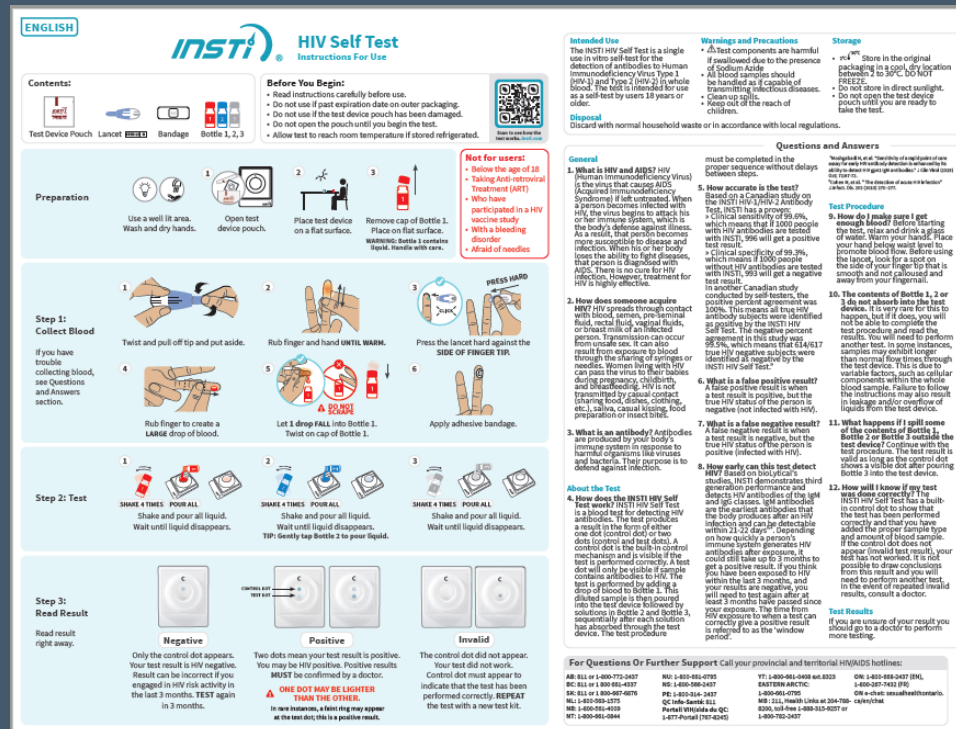

CANADIAN
FOUNDATION
FOR AIDS
RESEARCH

BC Pickup Locations

- 'Ksan Society, Terrace
- AIDS Vancouver
- ANKORS, Cranbrook
- ANKORS, Nelson
- ASK Wellness
- AVI – Campbell River
- AVI – Nanaimo
- AVI – Victoria
- Central Interior Native Health, Prince George
- Cool Aid Pharmacy, Victoria
- Fort St. John Women's Resource Society
- HIM on Davie
- HIM on the Drive
- Island Health, Mt Waddington Region | Harm Reduction Outreach, Port Hardy
- Living Positive Resource Centre, Kelowna
- Options for Sexual Health (various locations)
- Phoenix Society

What comes in a kit:

- Test Device Pouch (membrane)
- Lancet
- Bandage
- Bottle 1, 2, 3
- Package insert



On-Demand Peer Navigators

I'm Ready, Talk

ACCESS THE ONLINE CARE & SUPPORT "TELEHEALTH" SERVICE PLATFORM FROM THE WEBSITE OR APP.

PEER NAVIGATORS ARE THERE TO SUPPORT SERVICE USERS BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER THEY TAKE THE TEST.

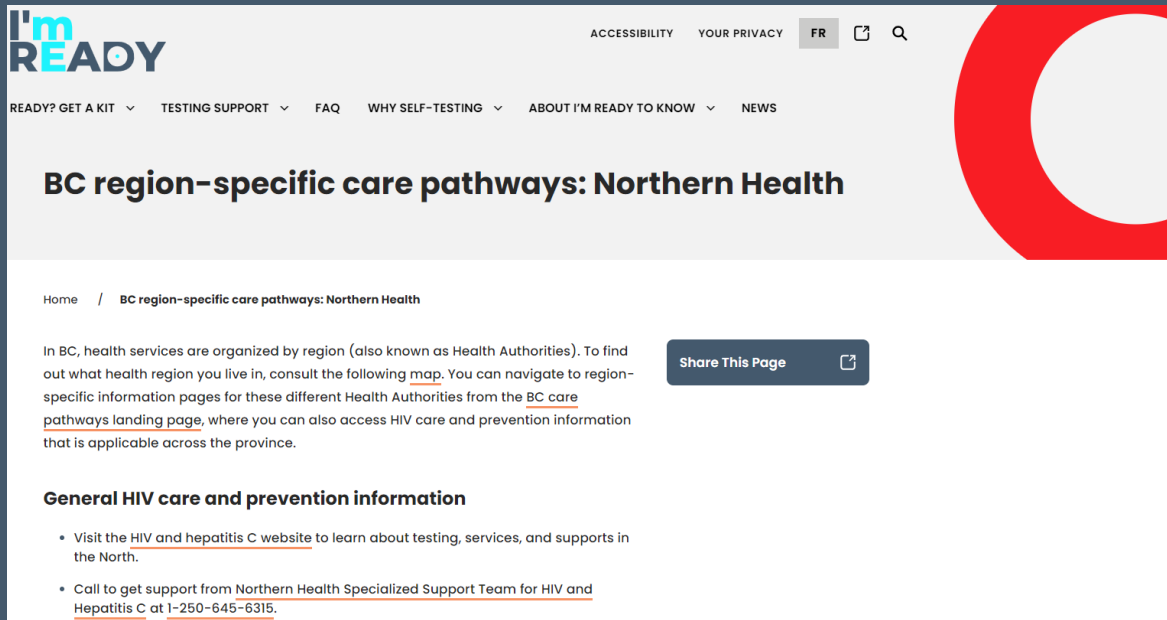
STAFFED BY INFORMED, TRAINED PEER NAVIGATORS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE.

SELF-TESTERS CAN CHOOSE A PEER(S) TO TALK TO ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN COMFORT LEVEL, BASED ON HOW THE PEER NAVIGATORS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES.

THIS IS AN OPTIONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL CONNECTION TO ON-DEMAND SUPPORT.

Prevention and Care Pathways

- Developed in partnership with each Regional Health Authority
- Updatable – I'm Ready Website
- Used by study participants or I'm Ready Peer Navigators



The screenshot shows the I'm Ready website interface. The header includes the I'm Ready logo, navigation links (READY? GET A KIT, TESTING SUPPORT, FAQ, WHY SELF-TESTING, ABOUT I'M READY TO KNOW, NEWS), and utility links (ACCESSIBILITY, YOUR PRIVACY, FR, a share icon, and a search icon). The main heading is "BC region-specific care pathways: Northern Health". Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads "Home / BC region-specific care pathways: Northern Health". The text explains that health services in BC are organized by region (Health Authorities) and provides a link to a map for region-specific information. A "Share This Page" button is visible. The section "General HIV care and prevention information" includes two bullet points: visiting the HIV and hepatitis C website for testing, services, and supports in the North, and calling for support from the Northern Health Specialized Support Team for HIV and Hepatitis C at 1-250-645-6315.

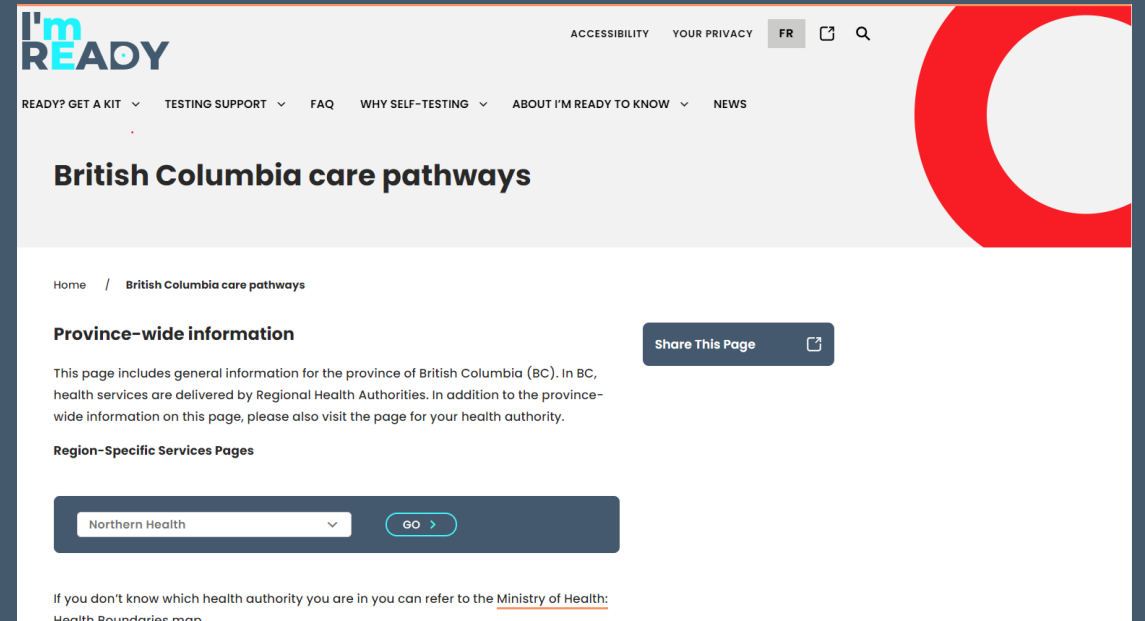
BC region-specific care pathways: Northern Health

Home / BC region-specific care pathways: Northern Health

In BC, health services are organized by region (also known as Health Authorities). To find out what health region you live in, consult the following [map](#). You can navigate to region-specific information pages for these different Health Authorities from the [BC care pathways landing page](#), where you can also access HIV care and prevention information that is applicable across the province.

General HIV care and prevention information

- Visit the [HIV and hepatitis C website](#) to learn about testing, services, and supports in the North.
- Call to get support from [Northern Health Specialized Support Team for HIV and Hepatitis C](#) at 1-250-645-6315.



The screenshot shows the I'm Ready website interface for British Columbia care pathways. The header is identical to the previous screenshot. The main heading is "British Columbia care pathways". Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads "Home / British Columbia care pathways". The section "Province-wide information" includes a "Share This Page" button and text stating that the page includes general information for the province of British Columbia (BC) and that health services are delivered by Regional Health Authorities. The section "Region-Specific Services Pages" features a dropdown menu with "Northern Health" selected and a "GO" button. At the bottom, a note directs users to the Ministry of Health's Health Boundaries map if they don't know their health authority.

British Columbia care pathways

Home / British Columbia care pathways

Province-wide information

This page includes general information for the province of British Columbia (BC). In BC, health services are delivered by Regional Health Authorities. In addition to the province-wide information on this page, please also visit the page for your health authority.

Region-Specific Services Pages

Northern Health GO

If you don't know which health authority you are in you can refer to the [Ministry of Health: Health Boundaries map](#).

Other HIV Testing Studies – CBRC

- Test@Home Study – part of the Sex Now Study
- Test Now Buddies – virtual support for the Test@Home Study
- Get it Wet Program
- Medicine Bundle Pilot – for Two-Spirit, queer and trans Indigenous people

https://www.cbrc.net/test_now

New HIV Self-Test Kit – Oral Fluid

- Research underway to support Health Canada review and approval for oral fluid test:
 - Healthcare point-of-care
 - Self-testing

Dried-Blood Spot Testing



From: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-dry-blood-spot-testing-1.5024372>

- Currently – healthcare provider led testing
- Accessioned at BCCDC – sent to National Microbiology Lab in Manitoba for processing
- Results come back to ordering provider and reported back to patient

Dried-Blood Spot Testing – New Approaches

- Heath partners exploring new approaches test new implementation models for DBS
 - Self-collected DBS
 - Peer-based models
 - Outreach models

Thank you!

Question?!?



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hepatitis C, and harm reduction.*