

# Exploring the Impact of a Novel Virtual PrEP Care Model in Canada Among Gender and Sexual Minority Communities

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*CAHR 2021 – Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research*



# Background

- Gender and sexual minority communities, at large, have less access to STBBI education, testing, and treatment
- Clinical settings will often expose LGBTQ2S+<sup>1</sup> people to stigma, sex negativity, and outdated views on STBBIs, including prevention
- In Canada, HIV PrEP has not been accessed widespread among gender and sexual minority populations, as well as other communities at higher HIV risk
- Although PrEP use has increased, it remains far below guidelines recommendations in Ontario, Canada's province with biggest PrEP uptake<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> LGBTQ2S+: Acronym referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual, and other identities

<sup>2</sup> Tan, D.H.S., Dashwood, T.M., Wilton, J. *et al.* Trends in HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis uptake in Ontario, Canada, and impact of policy changes: a population-based analysis of projected pharmacy data (2015–2018). *Can J Public Health* 112, 89–96 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-020-00332-3>



# Freddie PrEP Model

## Easy and Convenient

Simple and streamlined risk assessment form and consultation scheduling

PrEP delivered to door or pharmacy of choice



## Inclusive



Affirming providers with training on LGBTQ2S+ health; PrEP

Providers understand PrEP considerations for different communities

## Accessible

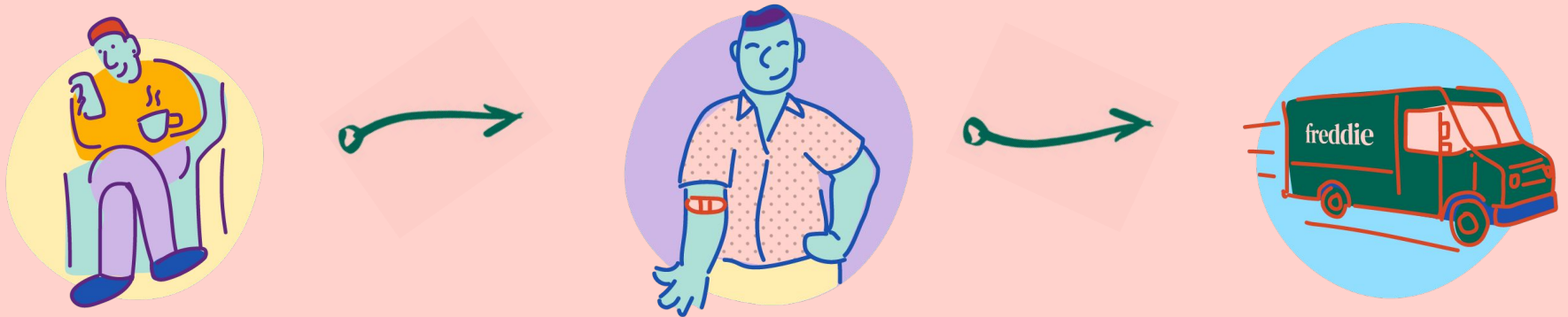
Financial assistance programs allow over 90% of Freddie patients to pay zero dollars for PrEP

Care coordinators provide one-on-one support through lab testing reminders, individualized care



# Discussion

- Over **1,500** patients served from June – Dec 2020 ( $32.3 \pm 9.5$  years)
- **91%** are new PrEP patients having never taken PrEP before
- **6.6%** of Freddie's patients do not identify as cis-gendered
- **77%** of Freddie's PrEP prescriptions get renewed after 1-month follow-up
- **86%** of Freddie's PrEP prescriptions get renewed after 3-month follow-up



# Conclusions

- There is a **high proportion of PrEP initiations** in Freddie's novel PrEP service model
- **Over 1,500 PrEP users** were served in the initial 7 month period (June–Dec 2020)
- Similar proportion of non-cis-gendered patients; comparable to published literature (6.6% v 9.6%)\*
- Similar or higher rates of patient retention at initial (77% vs 77%)<sup>1</sup> and ongoing (86% vs 77%)<sup>2</sup> follow-up visits, compared to published literature

***An accessible and affirming virtual care model can rapidly scale up and provide care to sexual and gender minority groups***

*Additional facilitators and barriers to care access and patient retention will need to be explored through patient-specific feedback and through acquisition of additional data*

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<sup>1</sup>Caponi, M et al. "Demographic characteristics associated with the use of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in an urban, community health center." Preventive medicine reports vol. 15 100889. 14 May. 2019, doi:10.1016/j.pmedr.2019.100889.

<sup>2</sup>Cochrane, E and Knapper, C. "Audit of Patient Retention in Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Services in an Integrated Sexual Reproductive Health Service Setting." International Journal of STD & AIDS, vol. 30, no. 14, Dec. 2019, pp. 1432–1435, doi:10.1177/0956462419879618.