



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Hassle Free Clinic

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hasslefreeclinic.org

Hassle Free Clinic

Annual Report Contact:

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Produced by Elmer Bagares with many contributors

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Hassle Free Clinic's purpose has not changed in 44 years; providing sexual health treatment, testing and compassionate care to any and all who choose to walk through its doors. Our longevity and ability to provide services would not be possible without the generous support from numerous City, Provincial and Community funders.

As a non-profit organization that provides critical health services, this funding enables the Clinic to stay abreast of the newest treatment and testing methods and enable the Clinic to provide its patients with highly trained, qualified and experienced health care professionals. The average tenure of our 12 full time and 3 part time health care providers is over 14 years, and this longevity of service is a testament to the dedication, pride, and care they deliver to patients on a daily basis. It is because of them that the Clinic maintains a stellar reputation in the community, which it serves.

In the past 5 years, the Hassle Free Clinic has undergone an organizational re-structure. With the implementation, we now have two Clinic Directors whose responsibility is creating a long-term vision for the Clinic, while providing daily leadership to staff and volunteers. The new structure has created a work environment that fosters greater teamwork and the ability to make decisions quickly that effect the adoption of new STI treatments and other health care services.

We continue to experience larger volumes of patients who seek our services and we would like to extend our thanks to patients new and returning, who continue to trust us for their sexual health care and treatment.

In closing, thank you to the many volunteers who welcome the patients to the clinic, making them feel comfortable and that the service they will receive while in the Clinic will be compassionate, hassle free, and professional.

Regards,

Warren M. Ross

Board of Directors

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Hemant Gohil
Nicole Greenspan
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MANY THANKS
TO THE
HASSLE FREE CLINIC
BOARD MEMBERS
VOLUNTEERS &
PHYSICIANS OF 2017!

Connor Lewicki
Hayley Lipworth
Matt Logue
Samer Mansour
Pingki Mazumder
Elizabeth Mens
Abhijith Nair
Christine Nelson
Tamara Pavlovic
Marcus Peterson
Zizi Putra
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Quinn Fenton
Sarah Ionson
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Physicians - Men's/Trans' Clinic

Michael Bartucci (Medical Director)
Jason Booy
Pinella Buongiorno
Arlene Chan
Charlie Guiang
Caroline Jeon
David Knox
Karen Ko
Edward Lee
Leila Makhani
Iulia Molnar
Narges Nassirinejad
Meera Nathwani
Cinntha Srikanthan
Kevin Woodward

Physicians - Women/Trans Clinic

Nina Malayil (Medical Director)
Duarte Adegbite
Arlene Chan
Kirsten Dixon
Erin Johnston
Jane Kiraly
Sarah Mahmoud
Malika Sharma
Brigit Swenson
Ashley Vander Morris
Sheila Wijayasinghe
Laura Winer
Neshmi Zaman

HASSLE FREE CLINIC SERVICES:

- Confidential Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) counselling testing and treatment
- Rapid Point-of-Care (POC) and standard Anonymous HIV antibody testing with pre- and post-testing counselling
- Safer sex counselling
- Birth control methods & information
- Pregnancy testing, decision counselling, abortion referrals & follow-up
- HIV support for newly diagnosed individuals
- Health Promotion/Nursing Clinic for HIV+ women/Trans

Hassle Free Clinic is a community-based agency providing medical and counselling services in all areas of sexual health. We are one of the busiest sexual health clinics and the largest Anonymous HIV test site in Canada.

Hassle Free Clinic has separate hours for men and women at the same location. Transgender clients can attend during the hours they feel most comfortable. The Men/Trans Clinic provides Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing/treatment and HIV testing, counselling and support. The Women/Trans Clinic provides the same STI/HIV services as well as birth control, pregnancy testing, abortion referrals and other services related to sexual and reproductive health. Each clinic is staffed by doctors, clinicians, counsellors and volunteers. City of Toronto Public Health Nurses are assigned to assist the Men/Trans Clinic. The majority of STI testing is done at the Ministry of Health Laboratory and through a private lab. The Ministry provides treatments for most STIs free of charge. POC HIV testing is done on site.

The Clinic has always promoted an integrated, comprehensive approach to service delivery. A full spectrum of sexual health issues – HIV, STI, birth control and pregnancy – may be dealt with at the same time, rather than dividing sexual health care into separate services.

Most importantly, we ensure that service delivery is informed by a non-judgmental, supportive attitude towards all sexual health concerns. We believe active client involvement in health care decision making is paramount. Therefore, we provide appropriate counselling and education to help clients make well-informed decisions.

The Clinic is incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization with a nine-member community Board of Directors. The Board takes responsibility for overall financial and policy direction while allowing staff to make program and policy decisions.

The Clinic is core-funded by the City of Toronto Public Health Division with additional funding from the AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. The clinic also accesses the provincial STI billing program, a part of OHIP that does not require health cards.

We would particularly like to acknowledge and thank the many individual donors we have, primarily grateful clients. The amounts can be large or small, but we appreciate all of these donations, many of which are made anonymously.

WE ALSO PROVIDE:

- Bathhouse & community outreach testing
- Hepatitis A, B & C screen
- Vaccinations for HPV and Hepatitis A and B
- Presentations to community groups, agencies, organizations and at conferences
- Referrals to HIV specialists, gynecologists, midwives, therapists, counsellors, AIDS service organizations (ASOs), and health and social services
- Services are provided in several different languages.

OVER 44 YEARS OF HISTORY!

LOOKING BACK...

- Starting from grassroots initiatives and growing while maintaining its community-based approach to sexual health care, Hassle Free Clinic celebrates its 44 years of operation!
- Hassle Free Clinic's location has changed several times to meet the needs of our perpetually growing and ever changing population. Our present location is wheelchair accessible.

The main inspiration for Hassle Free came in part from the staff at the Rochdale Free Clinic. Hassle Free officially began operating in February 1973, when counsellors from Rochdale opened a 24-hour, 7 days a week street clinic on Yonge Street. The clinic was funded by a grant from the federal government's Local Initiatives Project, and offered drug crisis counselling and treatment in a discreet and non-judgmental manner as our name suggests.

By 1975, the drug-oriented street scene had largely disappeared. Meanwhile, the clinic had built a reputation for providing "hassle-free" medical care, particularly STI and birth control services. A small but significant step was taken in 1977 when the clinic's global budget was covered by a shared cost grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health and the City of Toronto Board of Health. The grant came as a dramatic last-minute intervention, when the clinic had exhausted its funds and was faced with imminent closure.

In January 1980, when Hassle Free Clinic moved to our previous location at 556 Church Street, it was reorganized into separate men's and women's hours. The separation was the result of increasing numbers of male (mostly gay) clients and limited space, making it difficult to serve men and women at the same time. By the early 1980s, the reputation of the Men's clinic as a safe place for gay men to obtain sexual health services was well established, although in fact we have always served large numbers of heterosexual men. The majority of women seeking services are heterosexual. From the early days, staff had also identified some of the unique sexual health needs of transgender and gender fluid clients. This has now been translated into a comprehensive program of trans inclusivity.

Following the first wave of the AIDS crisis in 1983-84, the clinic began offering HIV education and prevention counselling. When HIV testing became available in 1985, the clinic immediately offered testing on an anonymous basis. At this time “anonymous” testing was illegal in Ontario. The number of male clients testing positive for HIV increased each year, reaching a peak of 230 in 1990. The seropositive rate in the Women’s Clinic was low and remained stable during this period. In the late 1980s, the clinic introduced HIV positive support group programs for women and men which were well received by clients, and highly regarded by other health providers.

In 1989 the Clinic mounted a campaign to legalize anonymous testing. Under pressure from community organizations, Toronto City Council and the Board of Health publicly endorsed the program. The Ontario Ministry of Health, however, refused to support the program until January 1992, when the NDP government legalized anonymous testing. Having offered anonymous HIV testing for the previous seven years, HFC was relied on to develop Ontario’s Anonymous Testing Guidelines and train staff in designated sites across the province.

In 2001, Hassle Free became the first clinic in Canada to offer rapid point-of-care (POC) HIV testing on site, which was halted due to questions about the accuracy of the device. In May 2006, HFC once again became the first clinic in Canada to offer such testing with a newly approved device. This device has proven to provide consistently accurate results since that time. It is 99.5% accurate, similar to standard laboratory testing. Results are ready in a few minutes as opposed to waiting a week or more with the standard method. Individuals still have the choice of choosing either testing method but the vast majority of individuals choose rapid POC testing. Based on our experience with POC

... LEADING THE WAY

- Did you know Hassle Free Clinic was one of the early responders at the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic?
- Did you know Hassle Free Clinic was the first in Ontario to offer anonymous HIV testing?
- Did you know Hassle Free Clinic was the first clinic in Canada to offer rapid point-of-care HIV testing?
- Hassle Free Clinic often provides training and support to other agencies interested in providing rapid point-of-care HIV testing

testing and our lobbying efforts, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announced in 2007 that it would be making POC tests available at designated sites across Ontario.

Another focus has been trans inclusivity at the clinic. With this goal in mind, we redesigned our intake sheets, client service brochures, hour slips, data collection systems, STI information sheets, and website. Physician, staff and volunteer training about trans care is an ongoing process.

Since the beginning, Hassle Free Clinic has played an important front-line role in identifying and serving the sexual health needs of a large and diverse at-risk population. We are increasingly called upon as consultants in developing health policy and educational programming. Without compromising our front-line status, we are now firmly established as a partner in Toronto Public Health's sexual health program, as well as the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's HIV testing program.

After 44 years of providing medical care to high-risk clients in a non-traditional setting, we are proud to be one of Canada's largest and most influential sexual health clinics!



**IN MEMORY OF ROBERT TROW
NOVEMBER 23, 1948 – OCTOBER 21, 2002**

Robert Trow will always be remembered as one of the pioneer advocates of anonymous HIV testing, a leader within the AIDS movement and for his important role within Hassle Free Clinic's history.

“Thank you so much for helping me when I needed some help. I greatly appreciate it. I know I am not your usual target group – so please put this donation to good use so I won't feel bad about taking your resources”

“Thank you for your kindness and consideration through a very difficult time. I can't express how much I appreciate the caring and understanding you showed me”

– Quotes from
Hassle Free Clinic clients

Hassle Free Clinic Philosophy

Hassle Free Clinic places great importance on maintaining equitable staff-client relationships and non-judgmental attitudes to sexually related health concerns. The Clinic is committed to maintaining the following values and principles in the provision of sexual health care:



Research Studies

Hassle Free Clinic is often invited to be involved in research related to sexual health. Some researchers want access to our patients to assess knowledge and attitudes on various sexual health matters. Staff members often sit on steering committees developing research protocols for studies conducted at other agencies or institutions. In addition, due to our volume, the Clinic is often recruited as a site for development of new testing technologies.

Aside from practical considerations, we have two main criteria when assessing proposals. The first is that the research has real potential to benefit the people being researched. Secondly, we want to know there will be collaboration, rather than competition, between researchers in order to move it forward.

This year, the Clinic wrapped up a study done with a private company working in product development. We also had staff sit on steering committees for a national Piloting HIV POC study, an HIV Self-Test study, and a Community rollout of PrEP study.

The most significant study we participated in this year was with Public Health Ontario. We were one of two sites that conducted parallel NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test) validation testing for gonorrhea and chlamydia from throat and rectal sites. During this time, our positivity rate for these infections skyrocketed due to the increased sensitivity of the new tests. This led to the decision to implement NAAT testing province-wide in the spring of 2018.



Student Placement & Training

Clinical health education is an important part of our commitment to community learning. The Clinic supervises residents and medical students from various institutions; sometimes for block placements and sometimes for single days.

Most commonly, however, are the nursing student placements both the Men/Trans and Women/Trans clinics accept every year. The students are generally here two days per week for eight months. Another annual placement is a one-month block placement from the Midwifery Education Program at Ryerson University. This provides midwifery students an opportunity to have a placement with a broader sexual health perspective.

In addition, we have staff from various agencies attend the clinic for observation and training for various time periods. These requests often relate to HIV POC counselling and testing.

Did you know?

- Ontario positivity rate at Anonymous Test Sites is approximately 3 times greater than in other forms of testing (Nominal or Non-nominal).
- Ontario has one of the highest pre-natal testing rates in Canada based on a client-centred, express consent policy
- 1 in 120 adults in Toronto are HIV positive
- Women represent 1 in 5 new HIV diagnoses in Ontario

Anonymous HIV Testing Program

Anonymous POC HIV testing continues to be the Clinic's best-known program. Counselling focuses on HIV transmission, willingness and ability to practice safer sex, identifying barriers to safer sex practices, and a rational understanding of relative risk. The impact of testing positive and dealing with an HIV positive result are discussed. As in all sexual health counselling, STI, birth control, pregnancy, assault and abuse issues are dealt with as appropriate.

Usually, HIV testing is conducted by appointment only. This is to ensure that adequate time is allotted for a potential positive result, as well as to ensure proper consent, counselling, and referrals. However, the clinic continues to offer walk-in HIV POC tests for individuals where appropriate. The Men/Trans Clinic offers immediate POC tests for all suspected and confirmed syphilis cases. This continues to be a challenge given the on-going high rates of syphilis.

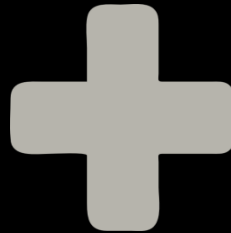
The *total overall* number of HIV visits for the year was 8,572 as compared to last year's total of 8,971. The *total number of in-clinic* HIV visits for the year reached 8,572: this includes 1,370 in the Women/Trans Clinic and 2,925 in the Men/Trans Clinic.

The total number of HIV positive results in 2017 was 73. There were 6 women that tested positive. There were a total of 67 positive HIV results from the Men/Trans Clinic. This number includes 34 from the Enhanced Testing Program and 33 from in-clinic testing.

HIV ANONYMOUS HIV TESTING – 2017

SITE	TOTAL VISITS	TOTAL POC TESTS		TOTAL P24Ag TESTS		CONFIRMATORY TESTS		STANDARD TESTS	
		NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS
W/T	1370	NEG	1250	NEG	53	NEG	0	NEG	46
		POS	6	POS	0	POS	2	POS	0
		TOTAL	1253	TOTAL	53	TOTAL	2	TOTAL	46
M/T	2925	NEG	2826	NEG	153	NEG	7	NEG	1
		POS	33	POS	4	POS	34	POS	0
		TOTAL	2859	TOTAL	157	TOTAL	41	TOTAL	1
ET	3121	NEG	3085	NEG	110	NEG	10	NEG	2
		POS	34	POS	2	POS	32	POS	0
		TOTAL	3121	TOTAL	112	TOTAL	33	TOTAL	2
BATHS	1156	NEG	379	NEG	3	NEG	0	NEG	0
		POS	0	POS	0	POS	0	POS	0
		TOTAL	379	TOTAL	3	TOTAL	0	TOTAL	0

**TOTAL NUMBER OF HIV
POSITIVE RESULTS IN 2017
(ALL SITES)**



73

**TOTAL NUMBER OF HIV
VISITS IN 2017 (ALL SITES)**



8,572

**TOTAL NUMBER OF HIV
TESTS IN 2017 (ALL SITES)**



8,062



Enhanced Testing Program

The Enhanced Testing (ET) Program is our satellite HIV testing program for Gay/Bi/MSM across the city. This initiative is fully funded by the AIDS Bureau.

There were two main motivations behind the establishment of the ET Program. One was to have wider geographical coverage and the second was to provide concentrated education on seroconversion illness, the relationship between HIV infection and STIs, etc. A website (come-on-in.ca) with education and testing information was developed and is still being used. We have completed some updates specific to Trans health, PEP/PrEP. and the increase in rectal infections.

Rapid anonymous HIV testing clinics are held twice monthly at St. Stephen's Community House in Toronto's west end and South Riverdale Community Health Centre in the east. We are also at the 519 Church St. Community Centre twice weekly, including Sundays, which has generated many tests and a high positivity rate. Our twice weekly presence at the 519 also provides a resource for the Clinic overflow. These clinics have been well attended and well received.



Health Promotion & Nursing Clinic Program

- In 2017, the number of women and trans women attending the group was consistent throughout the year; averaging 20 to 25 people per session.
- The ages range from 30 to 62 with the majority in their 40's from diverse nationalities and backgrounds
- There were 85 individual nursing consultations

Popular group discussion topics included:

- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Immigration
- Gender-based violence
- HIV stigma and discrimination
- Criminalization of HIV non-disclosure

Some sessions were occasionally facilitated by group members. Participants are very eager to share their experiences and expertise when they get the opportunity.

The Health Promotion/ Nursing Clinic experienced consistent above-average attendance of more than 20 people in every session this year. This successful program, which is funded by the AIDS Bureau, has collaborated with PWA and Casey House since inception in 2011. PWA provides space to run the group, and has recently opened up their boardroom in order to accommodate the large numbers of participants. In addition, PWA has been a major referral source for new attendees to the group. This partnership also works well with the nurses from Casey House, who are equally important in the group and are always present. Besides the duties of nursing consultations with the women, they make themselves available as the need arises.

The continued success can be attributed to the 2016 program evaluation, which has been a useful guide in the day to day running of the group. Regardless of it being a drop-in, attendees to the group are always enthusiastic and respond very well to all the presenters and presentations. In recognition of MIPA (Meaningful involvement of people living with HIV), and as an acknowledgement of people's backgrounds in skills and knowledge, women who have been trained are given the opportunity to do presentations for the group. In most cases however, volunteer presenters come from different agencies and health facilities. In the advent of the changing of climate of services for HIV positive people in Ontario, information sessions to keep the group updated have been invaluable.

During 2017, it has been noted that almost half of attendees are new to the group, as other women move on to concentrate on different activities in their lives. In every session, 2-3 first time participants join the group. The participants' ages range from the 26-35 to the 66-75 ages groups.

The topics presented at the group are general and they more or less suit everyone regardless of age, background, sexual orientation, gender identification etc. Examples of such topics are on HIV medication side effects, nutrition, disclosure etc.



Links Statistics

- 162 individuals accessed the Links Program in 2017 relatively the same as last year (169 clients in 2016)
- There were 401 clinical encounters both in-person/over the phone counseling sessions (349 in 2016)
- Nearly half (45%) of clients described difficulties with maintaining consistent condom use
- Half of the clients (50%) described on-going dependency issues with hook-up apps
- Average number times a client accessed the HIV Prevention counselling program was 2
- Average number of times a client accessed the HIV Aftercare program was 6 times

Making the Links Program

The “Links” Program, as it has come to be known, is a free, in-house, short-term counselling program for Gay, Bi and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM). It has been funded in part by a Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF) Purchase of Service Agreement, with the rest being funded by the Clinic. In 2017, we offered the program 25 hours per week.

The Program has two distinct components; *HIV Prevention* and *HIV Aftercare*. The former intervention aims to explore underlying factors that impact the ability of GBMSM to use various prevention methods and stay HIV negative. For those newly diagnosed, the Aftercare Program provides immediate referrals to medical care and case management services to address other service needs.

HIV Prevention Program

Referrals to our Program Manager/Counsellor come mainly from Clinic physicians, clinicians and counsellors. When seeing a patient for STI or HIV concerns, if at-risk behaviour is a concern, the provider can offer Links’ services.

Some of the common themes in the Prevention Counselling Program include the prevalence of condomless sex and the use of hook-up apps. Clients have expressed frustration at feeling addicted to these apps, and sometimes feel the apps fuel compulsive behaviour that puts them at risk. There is a strong correlation between high risk behaviours and issues like low self-esteem, anxiety/stress, social isolation, depression, guilt/shame, racism and a history of childhood trauma. The goals of the program are to explore those issues with clients and help develop coping mechanisms. Many clients have expressed their appreciation for the ways this service has helped them to reduce HIV risks.

HIV Aftercare Program

This Program is offered to all clients who receive an HIV diagnosis at the Clinic, or from outside providers who know of our Program. Hassle Free staff have always conducted post-test counselling and arranged referrals for aftercare, but this program has expanded and formalized the process. It involves addressing internal and external barriers a client might be experiencing when navigating HIV health and social service systems.

In addition to counselling, the Program Manager offers referrals to HIV primary care as well as case management. Depending on needs, appropriate community referrals are made for issues like housing, immigration, income/employment, drug coverage, social supports, substance use and mental health issues.

Our Program Manager has been involved in some exciting developments this year in linkage to care issues. One is the formation, with the leadership of the OHTN, of a group of stakeholders specifically to look at barriers to care. This looks like it is leading to a staff position hired by the OHTN, working with Toronto Public Health and Hassle Free, to have a Links worker connected with Immigration Clinics and Hospital ERs. Another is an initiative led by Dr. Alan Li, who is a long-time provider and advocate for services for the uninsured. He is conducting research gathering evidence of the experiences and outcomes for international students.

Another major development is the expansion of this Program. With great support from Herbert Co, Manager of TUHF at Toronto Public Health, our Links Program is going full-time in January of 2018. This Program aligns perfectly with the Ontario HIV/AIDS Strategy, which articulates the continuum from prevention to diagnosis to treatment, care and support, which all contribute to the ultimate goal of fewer diagnoses and ongoing viral suppression.

Testimonial from Making the Links Program client:

“Making the Links has and continues to play a huge role not only in my acceptance of my HIV diagnosis; but my overall mental health and attitude towards life. The program has empowered me with the community resources, tools, confidence & positive outlook, which have been important in this new chapter of my life. I am currently seeing an HIV specialist, sober and have a better outlook and thought process all thanks to the program and [my counsellor]. Without her assistance & guidance I would be continuing my old habits of having impulsive sex on an array of drugs, resulting not only in possibly infecting others but putting my own life at risk.”

Bath Stats for 2017

Total number of HIV tests conducted at the baths 379: 368 were done in 2016

Total number of HIV Positive results: 0
3 Positive result in 2016

Total number of STI tests done (Syphilis & Hepatitis screening): 82
68 were done in 2016

Total number of clients seen during bathhouse outreach: 1,156
Compared to 1,104 in 2016

Peter Bochove Bathhouse Outreach Program

Since 1975, the Clinic has provided anonymous STI testing and information at local baths for men who have sex with men (MSM). The service began as a routine STI testing clinic, with an HIV counselling component added in 1983, anonymous testing in 1995 and rapid POC testing in 2010. Clinics usually run for 3-hour sessions in four Toronto bathhouses. We provide free condoms and lube (provided by Toronto Public Health), and testing for HIV, syphilis and hepatitis. Bath management has always cooperated, offering space for testing, regular announcements and display areas for educational materials.

The program is aimed at all bathhouse patrons, but in particular at men who otherwise might not attend a clinic or their doctor for STI and HIV concerns. While many patrons are self-identified gay men who have no difficulty accessing services, others fall into a variety of hard-to-reach communities. Bathhouses have always attracted closeted bisexual and men who have sex with men (MSM). These individuals require the anonymity of this setting, as they may be unwilling to access sexual health services in their communities. The Clinic has been actively cooperating with other agencies offering community-specific outreach services. The bath program offers an ideal opportunity for staff to provide information and testing to specialized groups within the MSM community. It is noteworthy that the number of HIV tests has more than doubled since we began offering rapid POC HIV testing at the baths. This year, there were no HIV positive results from bath program.

The Clinic regularly collaborates with the M2M network partners for several regular special-event Bathhouse testing nights. In the past, we have partnered with Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS), Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention (ASAAP), Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP) and Centre for Spanish Speaking People (CSSP).

Sexual Health Program

With each passing year the Clinic keeps getting busier. In 2017 the Clinic had once again more client visits than the previous year. The total overall number of sexual health and HIV in-clinic visits rose in both the Women/Trans and Men/Trans Clinics to 32,578 compared to 29,070 in 2016. The number of sexual health visits (not including HIV) for each clinic has steadily increased. STI positivity rates also appear to be on the rise.

Reasons for sexual health visits to the Women/Trans Clinic include contraception, pregnancy testing, abortion referrals, sexual assault and other miscellaneous gynecological concerns. There were fewer Pap smear tests this year as a consequence of the 2012 Ontario Cervical Screening Guidelines. These guidelines raised the age of first Pap to 21, and changed the normal screening interval from 1 to 3 years.

The total number of sexual health visits to the Men/Trans Clinic showed a slight increase from 16,221 in 2016 to 16,952 in 2017. Almost all non-HIV visits to the Men/Trans Clinic are for STIs and/or STI related concerns. We saw a growing number of individuals wanting information and/or accessing PEP and PrEP. There were 143 medical referrals made for PrEP (however this does not take into consideration clients who we have connected with primary care or other channels). As well, the clinic has seen an increase in the number of syphilis infections and rectal gonorrhea, chlamydia and LGV infections.

OVERALL SEXUAL HEALTH & HIV IN-CLINIC VISITS FOR 2017:

Women/Trans Clinic **9,595**

Men/Trans Clinic **22,983**

TOTAL 32,578

TOTAL SEXUAL HEALTH VISITS (NOT INCLUDING HIV):

Women/Trans Clinic **8,225**

Men/ Trans Clinic **16,952**

TOTAL 25,177

Interested in volunteering?

- Volunteer duties are mostly administrative such as filing, booking appointments and other tasks as needed
- Prospective volunteers are interviewed, must sign a confidentiality agreement and go through an orientation and training process provided by staff and other volunteers
- On-going training and support is provided
- Please note that volunteer applicants will be contacted on an as needed basis

APPLY IN PERSON

- Volunteer application forms are available at the front desk

APPLY ONLINE

- Volunteer application forms are also available online at: www.hasslefreeclinic.org/VolunteerForm.php

Volunteer Program

Hassle Free is extremely thankful to have a very committed team of volunteers. There were over 70 active volunteers in 2017, contributing well over 8,000 hours of service. They form an integral part of our perpetually busy clinic. From greeting people at the reception counter to booking appointments, they are in many ways the face of Hassle Free – the first voice and face with whom clients come in contact. This can be very challenging, as clients often are in crisis when they call or attend the clinic. We rely on volunteers to also assist with research, collating data, and the day-to-day maintenance of the clinic.

Many of our volunteers take initiative and go above and beyond the call of duty with regard to hours, added duties and responding to last minute requests. Our volunteers take great pride in their work and many have been extremely loyal for years.

Periodically the clinic facilitates Volunteer training to train new recruits and sharpen the skills of our more veteran volunteers. Front desk volunteers are trained to do appropriate screening when booking appointments. Even though this can involve complicated assessments of a variety of situations, it is working extremely well. Our volunteers have a strong knowledge base, but ensure staff are consulted when appropriate.

Hassle Free also works with a very solid and committed group of “behind the scenes” volunteers. Our nine-member, community-based Board of Directors continues to lend a wealth of expertise, skill and guidance to our overall operations. The staff is particularly grateful for the Board’s unwavering support.

Hassle Free Clinic

Outside Activities

Hassle Free provides community and professional education on request as staffing permits. We strongly believe in knowledge transfer and exchange, and provide our staff at no cost to agencies requesting education. We also stay involved in coalitions and networking groups. These are essential to service coordination and information exchange.

Professional Education/Community Education

- BlackCap – STI 101
- CATIE Forum – Self Testing
- Centre-Medico – AT/POC Training
- East York Alternative School – Sexual Health and Youth
- Health Promotion/Nursing Clinic for W/T Living with HIV – STI 101
- London Community Health Centre – AT/ POC Training
- London Intercommunity Health Centre – AT/POC Training
- Nellie’s Shelter for Women/Trans Women – STI 101
- Ryerson School of Midwifery – HIV and STI
- Toronto Public Health – HIV 101
- Women/Trans and HIV Conf – Women/Trans Women and HIV Testing
- Women’s Health in Women’s Hands – HIV Testing

Networks, Working Groups & Consultation

- Beyond Piloting – POC Working Group
- M2M Network
- National STBBI Working Group
- OHTN -- Linkage to Care Working Group
- Sexual Health Network of Ontario
- St. Michael’s Hospital – PEP and PrEP Working Group
- Toronto HIV/AIDS Network
- Toronto HIV/AIDS Network Diversity Committee
- Women’s Health in Women’s Hands – Consultation; Centre for Women & HIV

Professional Development

- Compassionate Interviewing
- Gyne Day – Mt. Sinai Hospital
- HIV and Mental Health
- HPV – Merck Sponsored

External Testing

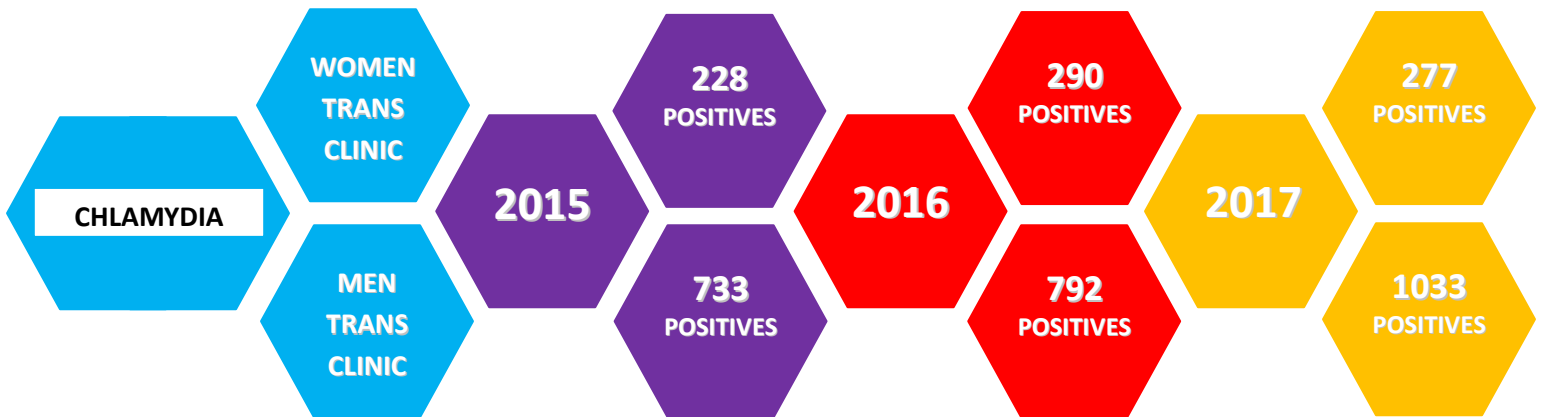
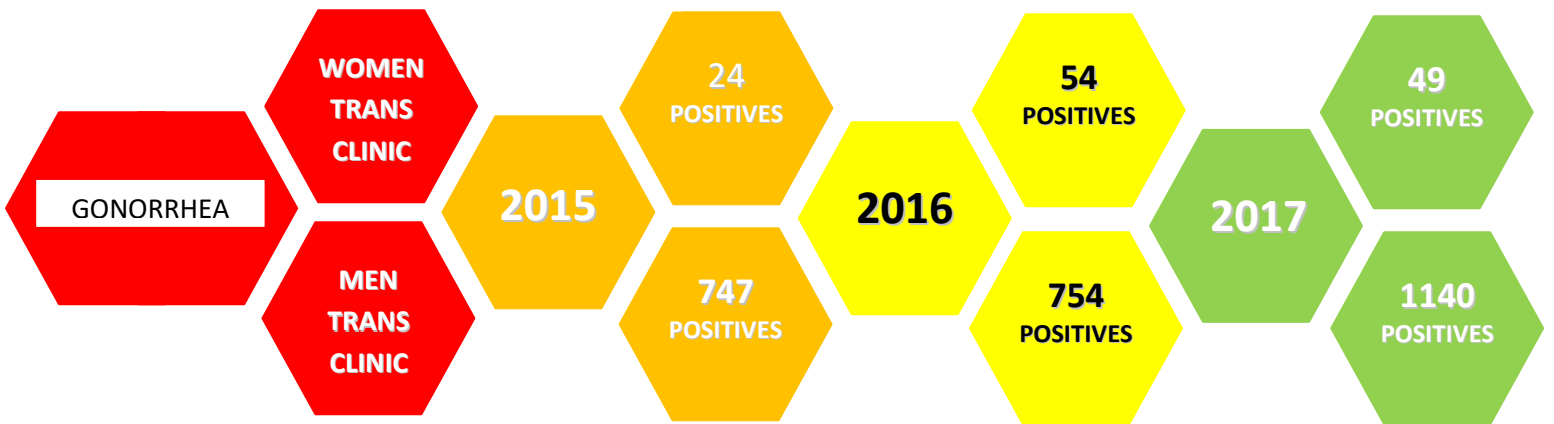
- 2 Spirited People of the 1st Nations
- 519 Community Centre (Enhance Testing Program)
- Black Creek CHC
- Central Spa (TUHF Program)
- OASIS Aqualounge
- Sistering (Street involved women/trans women)
- South Riverdale Community Health Centre (Enhance Testing Program)
- Spa XS (TUHF)
- St. Stephen's Community Centre (Enhance Testing Program)
- Steamworks (TUHF)
- The Cellar (TUHF)
- York University

Research Studies

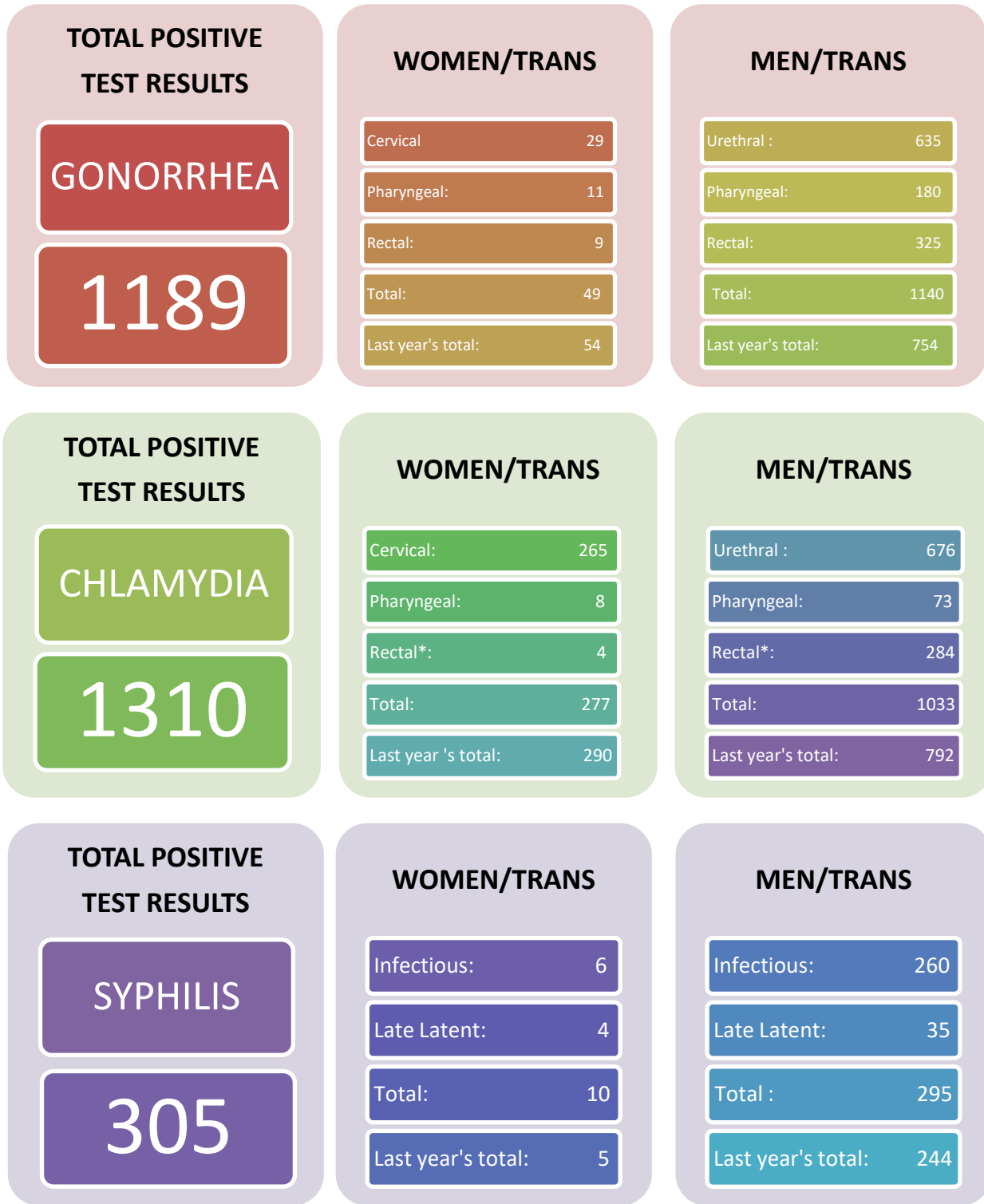
- EVE Study – Self collection GC/CT Validation Study
- NAAT Validation Study – Pharyngeal and Rectal GC/CT



POSITIVE TEST RESULTS YEARLY COMPARISON



POSITIVE TEST RESULTS



* All Rectal Chlamydia is processed for LGV

POSITIVE TEST RESULTS

