

Sexual and Gender Diversity in Cancer Care (SGDc) Program

Year End Report
January 2024 – April 2025



@PMChosenFamily
Sexual and Gender Diversity in Cancer Care



Visit our website:
<https://bit.ly/SGDc-PM>
or scan the QR code



Check us out on instagram
@PMChosenFamily

Table of Contents

Land Acknowledgment	3
Message from the Executive Team	4
Sexual and Gender Diversity (SGD)	5
Health Equity	5
Our Commitments	6
Community	7
Education	10
Clinical Work	13
Research	15

Land Acknowledgment

UHN acknowledges that it operates on the traditional territory of many nations. For tens of thousands of years this land has been taken care of by the Annishnaabe, the Haudeneshane, the Huron-Wendat, and the current Treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit River and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. Today, this meeting place we call Toronto (Tkaronto) is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are so grateful to have the opportunity to learn and work in community on this land. 2 spirit Indigenous people of Canada have a long history of gender fluidity and played a sacred and honoured role in their communities before colonization. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land, and by doing so, give our respect to its first inhabitants.



Message from the Executive Team

“Inclusion is not a strategy to help people fit into the systems and structures which exist in our societies. It is about transforming those systems and structures to make it better for everyone. Inclusion is about creating a better world for everyone.” – Diane Richler

The SGDc Program completed some important projects and milestones over the past 15 months, as outlined in this following annual report. Our work continues to maintain our commitment to our 4 operational pillars: clinical, research, education and community.

In this unprecedented time of change within the political and global climate of anti-trans hate, our work is more important than ever to the patients we serve. Many human rights and programs supporting diversity are vanishing around us. In Canada, there are significant concerns related to the impact of discrimination and erasure that is seeping across the border and the effect on accessing inclusive health care and cancer care. It will likely exacerbate the already existing cancer care disparities in SGD populations.

Now is an opportunity to stand together, to promote and incorporate principles of inclusive care into our individual actions and cancer care system. This is critical work which will transform healthcare and make it a better place for everyone. 2025 looks like it will be a return to the original roots of the movement; “Pride is a Protest”.

**With Pride, The SGDc Executive Team;
Christian, Margo, Jennifer & Sam**



Sexual and Gender Diversity (SGD)

Sexual and gender diversity is a term used to refer to people who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and (+) any gender identities or sexual orientations not included in this acronym).

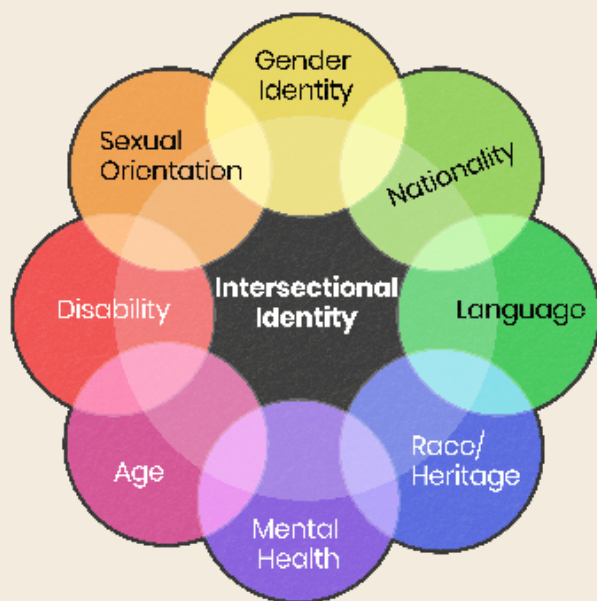
SGD is the term that our program has adopted to include all of the diverse expressions of gender identities and sexual orientations.

Health Equity

The SGDc program is committed to achieving health equity and to decrease cancer care disparities in SGDc communities. We are leaders in cancer care for 2SLGBTQIA+ patients and we collaboratively, develop innovative strategies and solutions to improve cancer care experiences for our communities.

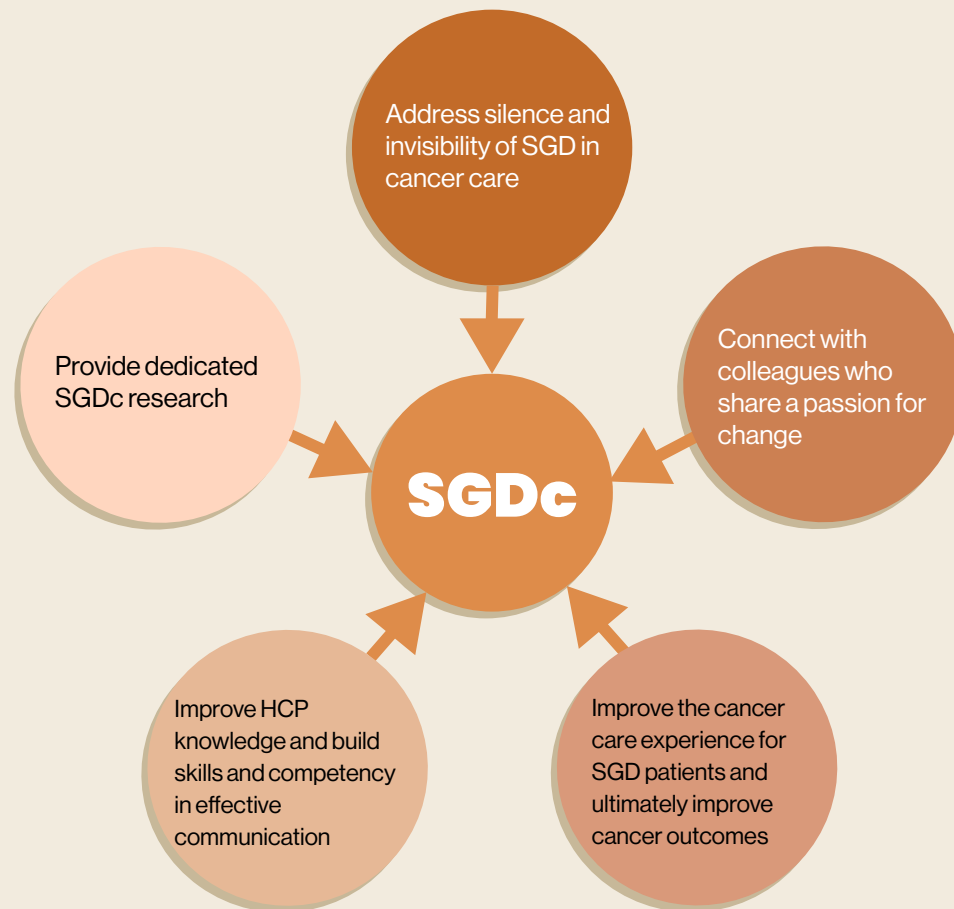
We aim to create an environment of inclusive care, where patients and chosen families feel welcome, valued, included, and respected. We recognise the diversity of our patient population and the systems that reinforce marginalization, as well as power and privilege. These factors shape individual experiences and access to care.

Our goal is to transform cancer care by delivering high quality care that is equitable for all patients regardless of their race, ethnicity, income, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation. We acknowledge the harm that healthcare systems have caused to SGDc communities and recognise our responsibility to make changes within the system and rebuild trust. To ensure the best quality of care for SGDc patients and their loved ones, we emphasize advocating for inclusion and access to the healthcare system.



Our Commitments

The commitments below continue to guide our collaborative work.



Unique challenges that are faced by SGD patients

Heteronormative practices of care

Limited inclusive cancer care support groups and tailored resources

Barriers to sharing sexual orientation & gender identity

Limited inclusion of a patient's chosen family

Impact of past experiences of discrimination in health care

Impact of healthcare providers varying knowledge and communication skills related to SGD

Community

Pride Events

June was a busy month for the SGDc and we hosted 3 Pride events. Pride Information Table: Along with the UHN 2SLGBTQIA+ Committee, we hosted a Pride Information Table in the Princess Margaret lobby on June 13 2024.

Patient Pride Event

On June 20, 2024 we held a patient pride event, with guest presenter Holly Roy who lead a workshop on making healing Indigenous medicine bags. It was a wonderful gathering and opportunity to connect and learn about traditional medicines.



Community

Pride Toronto Parade

The SGDc Program organized and lead the UHN contingent in the Pride Parade. We had a great staff turnout across many professional disciplines and staff came out from TGH, TWH, PM, Bickle Centre, and TRI. Colleagues from OIRA also joined our group for a fun-filled day of celebration.



Community

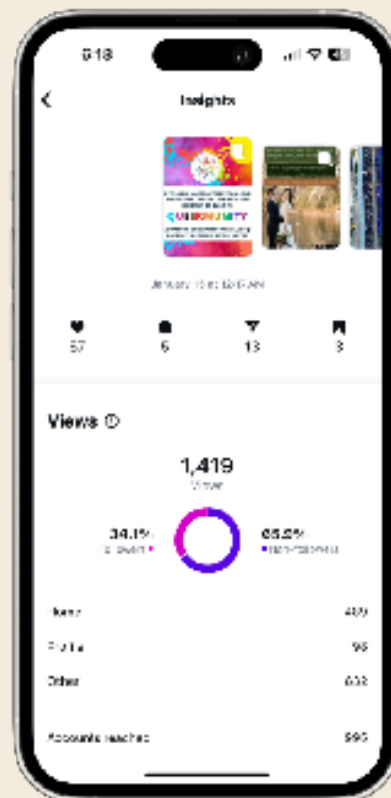
Social Media

We stepped up posting on our social media Instagram account and doubled the number of followers since last year. Extending a big thank you to our social media volunteer Karen Turner for assistance in managing and posting on our Instagram. Below are some quick stats of our social media impact:

of followers: 534

of posts since Jan 2024: 167 posts and reposts

Average views 5000+ in the last 3 months, up to 1419 views per post



Education

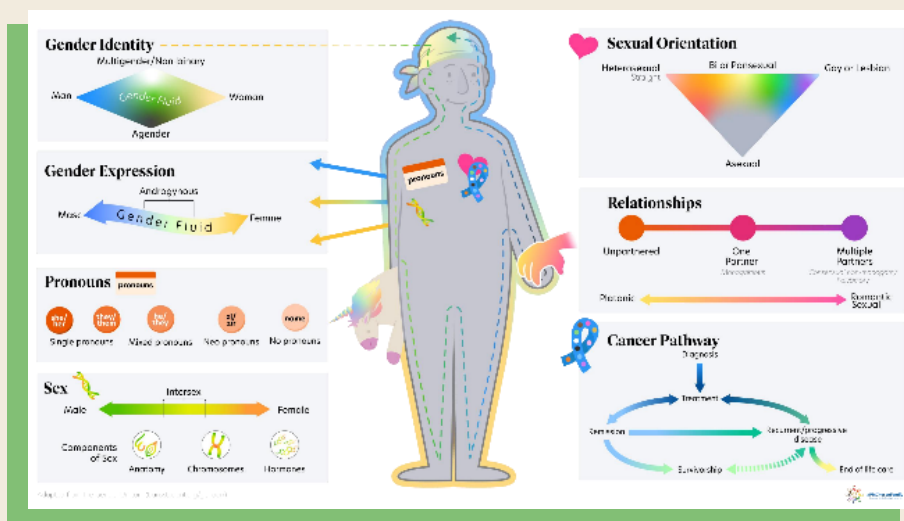
Students with the SGDC Program

From 2024 - 2025 The SGDC Program welcomed Kenny Chee and Gabrielle Smith, second-year social work students from U of T. They gained experience in counselling work with SGDC patients and co-facilitated the Queermunity Group. We are so grateful for their participation and wish them all the best in their future endeavours! We have 3 social work students coming on board with us in April 2025: Alphonse, Esme and Stephen. We are looking forward to working together.



Meet BOW

A new education resource was developed based on content from the e-learning module. This is a downloadable resource, available in a short or long version, walking through key components of pronouns, sexual orientation, gender identity, and relationship diversity, along with an example of ways each domain relates to cancer care. A big shout out to Sam, Emily and Erin from our working group, who lead this initiative. Resource featured on our website.



E-Learning Launch

We were thrilled to host the official launch of our SGDc Inclusive Cancer Care e-learning program. The launch took place on May 17, 2024, on the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia.

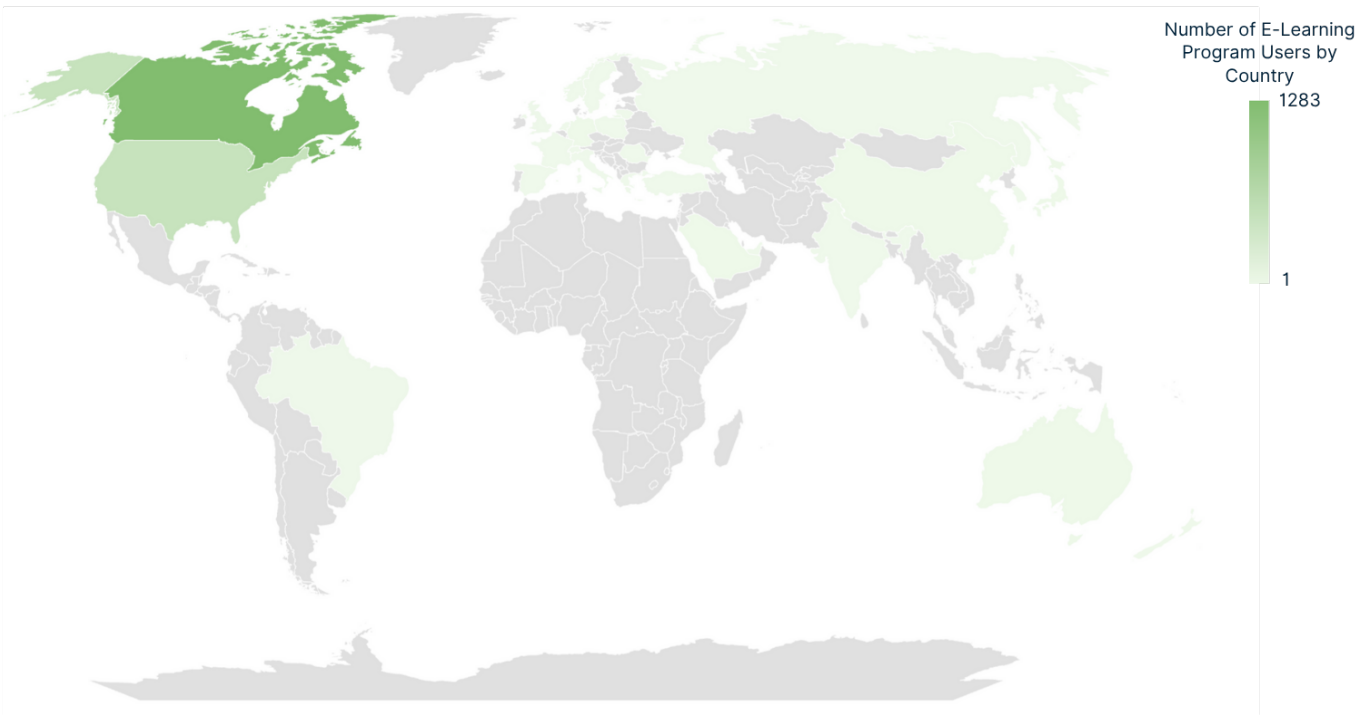
This interactive e- learning module is designed to provide healthcare providers with an opportunity to practice inclusive language when communicating with patients/caregivers — a crucial element in creating an inclusive environment. Despite the importance of this skill, there are few learning resources available specifically tailored to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in cancer care. To fill this educational gap, we have created a virtual learning tool that simulates conversations with SGDc patients using a gamification and interactive approach.

It was wonderful to bring together the many team members who contributed to this project; it was a true collaborative effort and celebratory event!

Below are some stats about who is using the e-learning program, the program’s reach and its impact. We are off to an impressive start!

The project is vsupported by the Young Leaders Cancer Experience Grand Challenge, Cancer Education and the Cancer Experience Program.

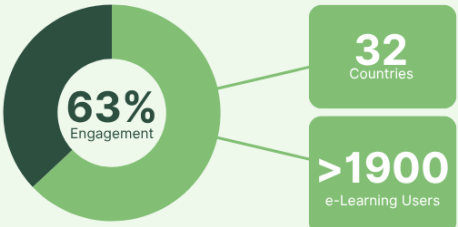
Global Reach of SGDc Inclusive Cancer Care e-Learning Program



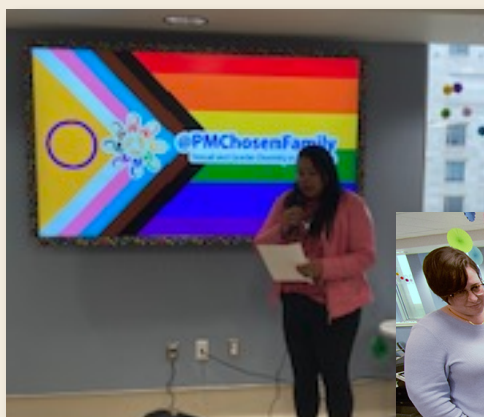
Top 5 Countries using the SGDc e-Learning Program

- 1. Canada, n=1283
- 2. United States, n=474
- 3. Brazil, n=16
- 4. United Kingdom, n=13
- 5. China, n=12

E-Learning Engagement



Photos from the eLearning Launch



Presentation and Conferences

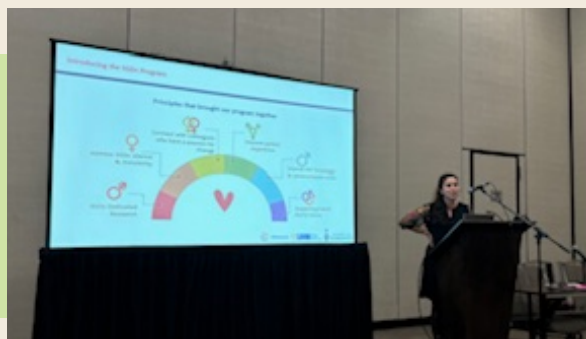
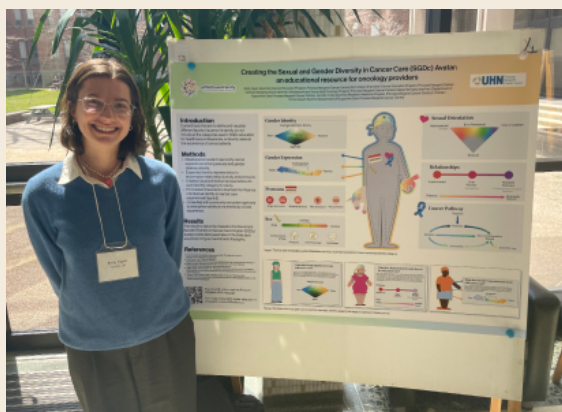
Educating and sharing knowledge with health care providers, presenting at workshops and conferences, remains an important part of our work. The past 15 months have involved presentations about our new education tool BOW, SGDC Practice-based research, Transgender considerations for cancer screening and treatment, and our e-Learning Program.

Some of the highlights included:

8 Presentations at The Princess Margaret Cancer Centre at rounds or to staff programs

Provincial Level Presentations: Hamilton Health Sciences, OCIR, ECHO Ontario Health, CANO

National Level Presentations: Sue McCrae Lecture, Cancer Patient Education Network, Creating Safe Spaces Conference, Department of Supportive Care Research Conference



Education Award

We were very honoured to receive the CAPO Education Excellence Award in Psychosocial Oncology. This award recognizes career contributions to education and training of psychosocial oncology in Canada. Christian and Margo received this award on behalf of the SGDc Committee and the many people who worked on and contributed to the e-learning program. Congrats team!

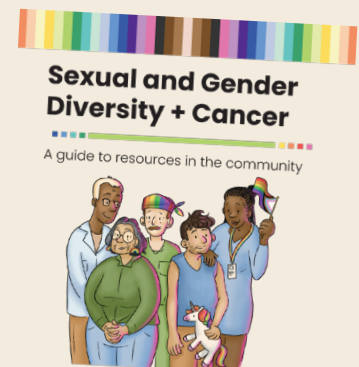
Clinical Work

Patient Counselling

The past 15 months have seen much growth in our SGDc individual counselling offered through the program. Over the past 15 months, we have connected with over 80 patients. Patients can self-refer or be referred by their health care team. Patients bring a wide range of issues and concerns related to their cancer experience, where SGD is often centred in the counselling sessions. Some of our patient contacts have been brief, one-time sessions; other patients may require more ongoing support, based on needs. Therapy provided is based on queer-informed theoretical models. Patients can also meet with Christian, an SGD-trained psychiatrist, who also provides care to patients, therapy and medication if appropriate.

Resource Guide Update

The SGDc Community Resource Guide has been updated and given a fresh look. This guide was created for patients, chosen families and staff to locate community resources that might be helpful. Some of the resources are cancer-specific, other resources are about issues that may come up while recovering from cancer treatment, such as income support programs, social groups, or caregiver resources. We have tried to include resources that are 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusive. The guide is available on our website. Over 60 new additions have been included, bringing the count to over 250 resources listed.



Clinical Work

Launch of the “Queermunity” Patient Support Group

January 23, 2025 was the launch of our Queermunity patient support group. The group provides an opportunity for patients to connect, bring their full selves to the group and explore themes related to their cancer experience along with coping strategies. It is a unique group which is incredibly inclusive and diverse across sexual orientation and gender identities, cancer sites, age, race, etc. So far, we have explored themes such as queer love, micro aggressions, the power of writing, staying grounded, resilience and minority stress. Queer identities are made central in the exploration of cancer related issues, rather than addressed from the periphery. This first phase has been a pilot that has proven to be very successful, providing a much-needed safe place to seek out and receive support. We have been deeply touched by the caring, support and unconditional acceptance which group members extend to one another. We look forward to continuing to offer the group and growing it further in the future.



Research

We are thrilled to be part of a joint project application for a Canadian Cancer Society Health Equity Research Grant. The application was successful and has been awarded \$450,000 over three years. The project “Addressing Inequities in Cancer Care for Transgender and Gender Diverse (TGD) People Affected by Gynecological Cancers” was a joint proposal submitted by Queering Cancer, Princess Margaret SGDC, and Praxus Health.

This 3-year project focuses on co-creating national best practices for inclusive, gender-affirming cancer care for transgender/gender diverse (TGD) individuals affected by gynecological cancer in Canada.

The principal investigator is our own Jennifer Croke, co-investigators include Margo & Christian, and Lauren and Nazlin are part of the project team.

The project aims to:

- Co-conduct strengths-based research with members or TGD communities affected by gynecological cancer, understand promotive and protective factors for inclusive and gender affirming cancer care.
- Co-create resources, policy recommendations and HCP tools which can be utilized nationally with a focus on reducing inequities in TGD care.
- Advocacy: To develop a community of practice, pooling academic, clinical and lived experience expertise to drive improvements in TGD cancer care.

We are looking forward to working collaboratively with a high-energy team from across Canada on this fantastic project!

