



Cedar Project: HCV Free Narratives among Indigenous Peoples who use(d) drugs in British Columbia, Canada

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For the Cedar Project Partnership

Acknowledgments



Traditional & ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil Waututh & the Lheidli T'enneh Peoples

Elders & leaders who govern & guide this work

Participants & their communities who have given so much

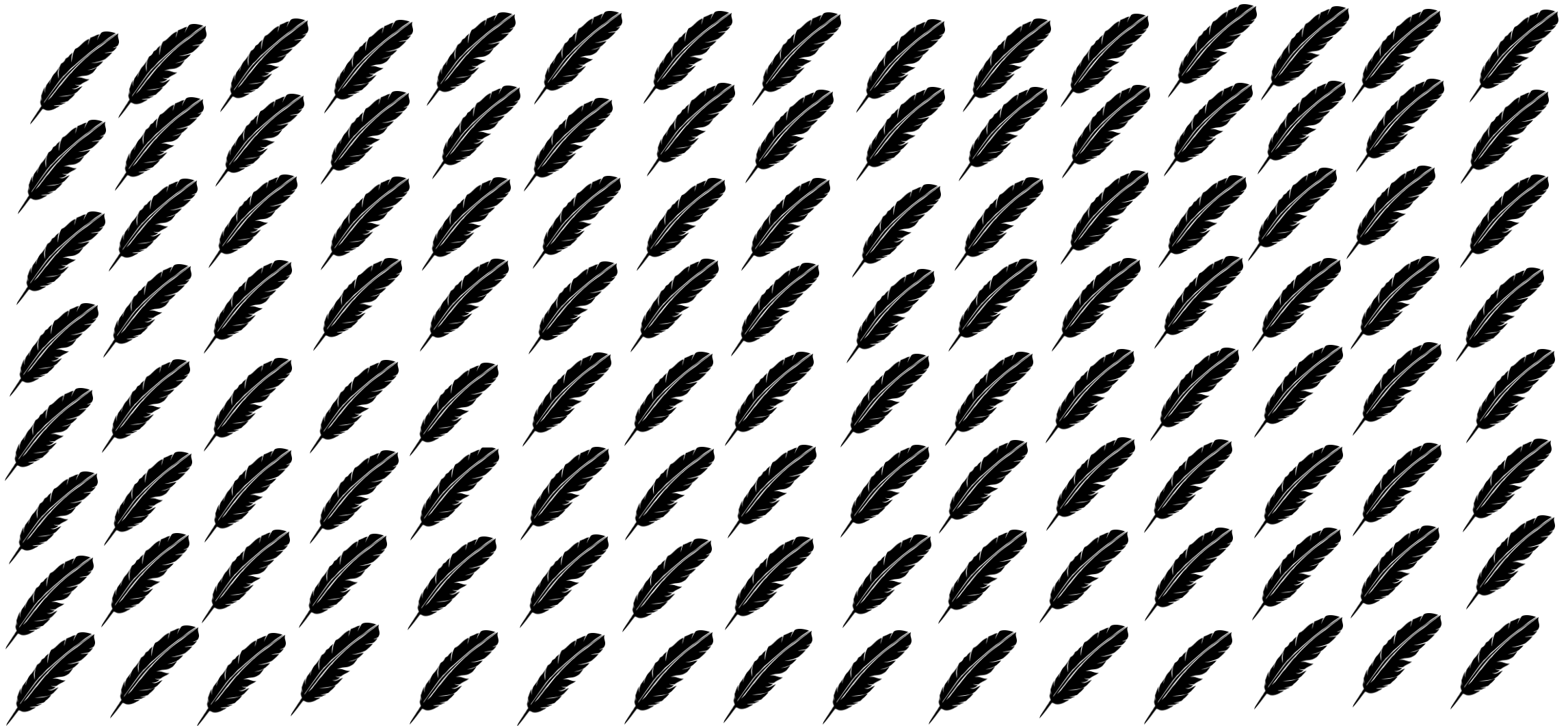
Staff who work so hard to make Cedar a safe & welcoming space

Participants who have passed away, & their loved ones

Honouring participants who have passed away

“These deaths are not statistics; they are our relations.”

- Kukpi7 Wayne Christian, Co-Principal Investigator, The Cedar Project



Disclosure of interest:
Nothing to declare



Indigenous governed cohort study since inception (2003)

- 738+ participants

Cedar Blanket Program addressing barriers to HIV care

- Developed by Indigenous Elders and social service experts
- Wholistic and relational care, participant-led & buffering colonial harms
- Recent evidence supporting virial suppression

Adapted to support new HCV treatment

- Why? 98% of participants in HCV Blanket Program experience Indigenous-specific racism

Cedar HCV Blanket Program Study

- 60 participants enrolled in Blanket Program between 2017-2019
- 92% cleared HCV with 91% participants remaining HCV-free 9 months + after treatment
- Interviewed 30 participants on impact of being HCV-free using interpretative descriptive method





HCV-free Narratives: Participant interviews on impact of HCV cure

Physical Health

“Honest to god I feel like I’m 20 again”

- Restoring energy
- Appetite sleep & immunity



None

“Not really, cause we're still homeless...”

- No prior symptoms
- Colonial harms constricting health & wellbeing



Mental Wellbeing

“Treatment was part of my healing journey”

- Relief from shame & distress
- Decrease in overthinking & brain fog
- Pride



Upholding Health & Wellbeing

“I just want to keep going, I don’t want to stop!”

- Keeping safe & slowing down
- Seeking opportunities/wanting more

Emotional Connection

“I feel like I can be human again”

- Able to be close to others



HCV-free Narratives

Participant interviews on impact of HCV cure

Care Recommendations: Wholistic care during & after HCV cure

Ongoing culturally-safe care attending to:

- Side effects & reinfections concerns
- Health concerns beyond HCV
- Advocacy including calls for Indigenous-led harm reduction and decriminalization approaches



Thank you for listening!

Feel free to reach out:

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