



Findings from Nelson

GetCheckedOnline (GCO) is a common place where people in Nelson get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). 40% of people we surveyed knew about GCO, 25% have used it, and 30% have recommended it to others.



GCO is one of the most common places to test

- 17% of people had never had an STI test (vs. 15-29% in other regions surveyed).
- Among people who had an STI test, most common places to get tested were:
 - A doctor or nurse practitioner's office (31%),
 - An STI or sexual health clinic (20%),
 - A walk-in clinic (13%), and,
 - GCO (12%).

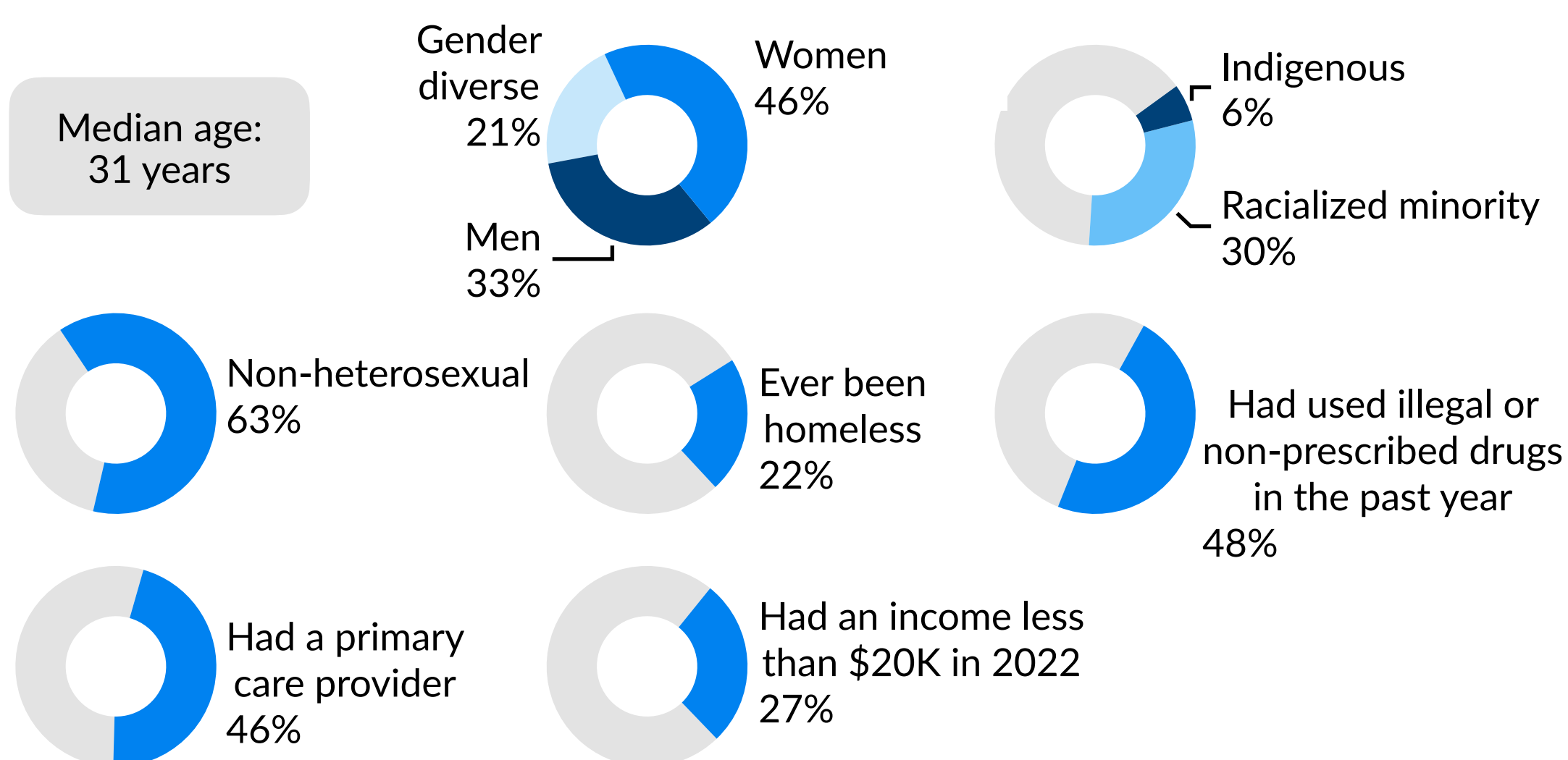
Almost half of people were aware of GCO

- 42% of people knew about GCO (vs. 43% and 42% in Kamloops and Victoria, respectively; GCO was implemented in these three communities in the same year)
- Among those aware of GCO:
 - 65% had used it,
 - 71% had recommended it to others.
- Most people heard of GCO through social media, word of mouth (e.g., from someone at a community organization, a healthcare provider or a friend) and ads on a website or phone app,
- Among those who did not know about GCO, 53% were very likely or likely to use it in the future.

Almost everyone saw a benefit of using GCO

- 94% people saw at least one benefit of using GCO. The most common benefits were:
 - Getting test results online,
 - Testing without waiting for an appointment,
 - Easier to go to a lab than a clinic, and,
 - Saving time.
- Most commonly reported barriers to provider-based STI testing in Nelson were barriers GCO can help overcome, which included:
 - The need to book an appointment (25% of those experiencing barriers),
 - Too long waiting times (24%),
 - Not knowing where to access testing (18%),
 - Concerns about privacy (18%), and,
 - Inconvenient clinic hours (16%).

About the survey participants in Nelson (total: 233)



Only people aged 16 years or older were eligible for the survey.

Census 2021 data for Nelson:

- Median age was 45.2 years,
- 5% identified as Indigenous,
- 7% identified as a visible minority,
- 50% were women+, and 50% were men+,
- 12% had an income ≤ \$20K in 2020.

STI testing services in Nelson

Nelson has a couple of specialized, low-barrier services for STI testing, including Options for Sexual Health Clinic and GCO. Currently, there is one GCO-participating LifeLabs location in Nelson, which has seen over 400 STI testing events in the past year.

GetCheckedOnline

GetCheckedOnline (GCO) is an online STI testing service available in select BC communities. GCO allows people to get tested for STIs without seeing a health care provider. To get tested, people create an account on the GCO website, generate a lab requisition form without seeing a healthcare provider, and bring a printed or electronic copy to a participating lab location to provide their specimens.

Experiences with testing

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and Health Authority partners conducted the Community STI Testing Survey in June-September 2022 to understand local communities' experience with STI testing services including GCO. The survey was open to anyone who fit the inclusion criteria and our in-person recruitment focused on groups facing more barriers to STI testing. We recruited a total of 1658 participants in-person and online in 5 communities across BC where GCO is available (Victoria, Maple Ridge, Kamloops, Kimberley, and Nelson).

233 people surveyed in Nelson

In Nelson we recruited 233 survey participants through a survey booth at local events and venues (Pride events, markets, colleges), community champions sharing the survey link, and social media posts.

