Workbook

BUILDING DIGITAL TESTING SERVICES

A How-To Guide for Implementing Digital Testing Services for Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBI)

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We developed this workbook as a team based on the traditional and unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We recognize their traditional territories with gratitude and give thanks for their stewardship of these lands.

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Duddy J, et al. Workbook, Building Digital Testing Services: A How-To Guide for Implementing Digital Testing Services for Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBI). Vancouver, BC: Digital & Sexual Health Initiative; 2025.

Overview

We designed this workbook to support digital health innovators and organizations that want to implement digital sexually transmitted and bloodborne infection (STBBI) testing services. Our hope is that this workbook will help you think about all the pieces you will need to plan for developing your program.

This workbook has questions corresponding to each of the components we have identified in the accompanying guide for building a digital STBBI program. These components apply both initially in developing a program and at all stages of implementation and scale-up. In the guide, we also offer practical recommendations and examples for each component.

The guide and this workbook draw from lessons learned in implementing GetCheckedOnline, an award-winning digital STBBI testing service in British Columbia (BC), Canada. Our decade of experience has taught us that program implementation is a dynamic, ongoing process. Implementation activities and decisions continually build off on what came before. Being proactive in planning, adaptable and collaborative are important to overcome challenges and maximize benefits for both users and healthcare providers.

While we created the guide and this workbook specifically for digital STBBI testing services implementation, it may also be helpful in other digital sexual health innovation contexts.

Visit dishiresearch.ca to read the guide *Building Digital Testing Services: A How-To Guide for Implementing Digital Testing Services for Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBI)* before reviewing the questions in this workbook.

About GetCheckedOnline

GetCheckedOnline is a digital testing program in BC that allows people to test for STBBI without seeing a healthcare provider first. GetCheckedOnline has been around for over ten years since 2014. It is now available in nine communities across all health regions of BC including large urban, small urban and rural communities. With more than 3,000 test visits a month, there is continued interest from both public and community partners to continue to scale-up GetCheckedOnline across BC.

To learn more the outcomes of GetCheckedOnline, check out: Gilbert M, et al. Ten years later: The impacts of GetCheckedOnline. Vancouver, BC: Digital & Sexual Health Initiative; 2024. Link.

Recommendation 1 Questions

Identify Health Equity Gaps and Priority Populations
- Define the problem
- Assess health equity impact

What is the goal of the program?

What specific issues will your program (or project, initiative, etc.) address?

Who will your program address those issues for?

What are the top factors that contribute to testing inequity in your context?

What are some ways you can specifically address, reduce or completely remove these factors?

Recommendation 2 Questions

Are there similar or relevant STBBI testing programs in your context? Try to think about various contexts like smaller municipality-based programs to regional ones.

Identify Teams, Implementation Partners and Skill Sets
- Learn from others
- Map expertise and skills you will need
- Communicate with partners early in the process

What kinds of research evidence will help inform your program?

What are some tools and resources you can refer to for the research evidence you need?

Who are team members you can rely on for some of the skills you've identified in the first question?

Who are team members you can rely on for some of the skills you've identified in the first question?

Who are the partners you will need to consult with to build your program?

Recommendation 3 Questions

What measurable outcomes can help you monitor progress and effectiveness of your program?

Build in Evaluation and Cost Assessment Mechanisms
- Define goals and metrics
- Build budget metrics
- Evaluate regularly and track costs
- Build relationships with researchers

What budget metrics can help you monitor and project costs of your program?

What methods and measures will you use to evaluate and track?

Who are researchers or evaluators that you could partner with to help you answer specific questions about your program?
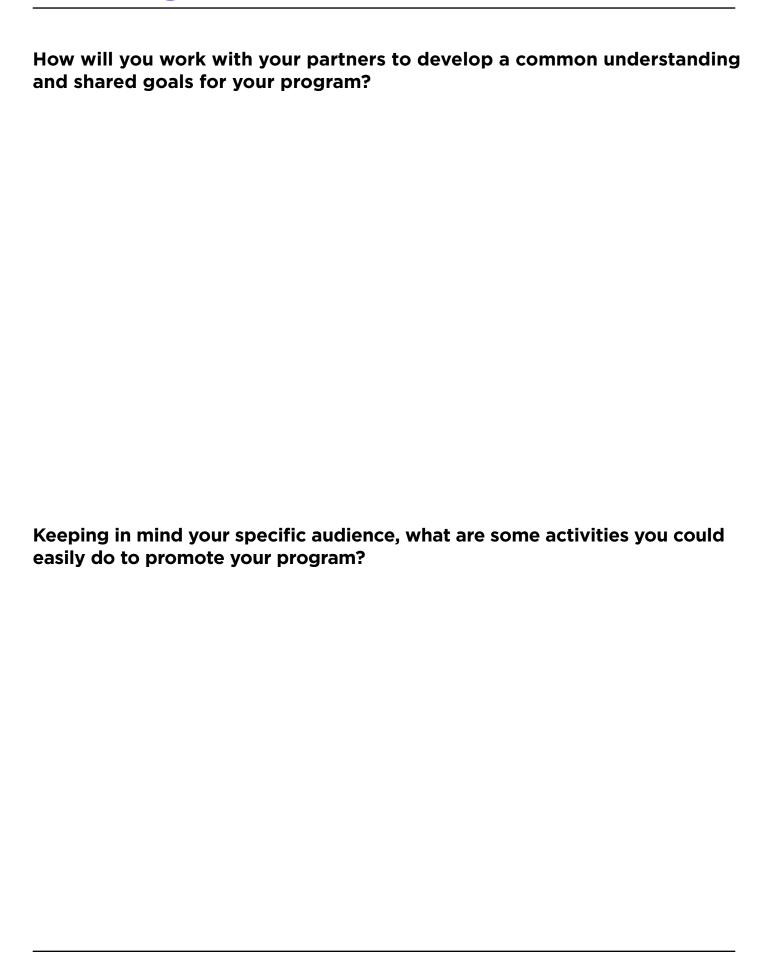
Recommendation 1 Questions

Who will develop and maintain relationships with partners?

Build Trust and Create a Shared Vision
- Invest in relationship-building skills
- Understand the technology environment
- Develop common understanding and shared goals
- Establish open communication

In your organization, are there any requirements or standards you need to meet when developing a digital program?

How will you work with your partners to develop a common understanding and shared goals for your program?

Keeping in mind your specific audience, what are some activities you could easily do to promote your program?

What are some activities you could aim for in the future?

Who are some of your existing partners you can collaborate with to promote your program?

What kind of resources/skills do you have for promotion?

Recommendation 2 Questions

Show the Service's Value
- Highlight evidence-based benefits
- Tailor messages

What evidence do you need to build support for your program?

What are some ways you can inform and engage with partners throughout the program implementation?

How can you make sure your program remains aligned with institutional priorities and public health strategies over time?

Recommendation 3 Questions

Address Concerns and Barriers
- Spot concerns early
- Offer custom solutions

Think about the different components of the program you want to develop and what is required. Are there specific approval or documentation processes for these within your organization?

How can you make sure your program addresses partners' needs?

Recommendation 1 Questions

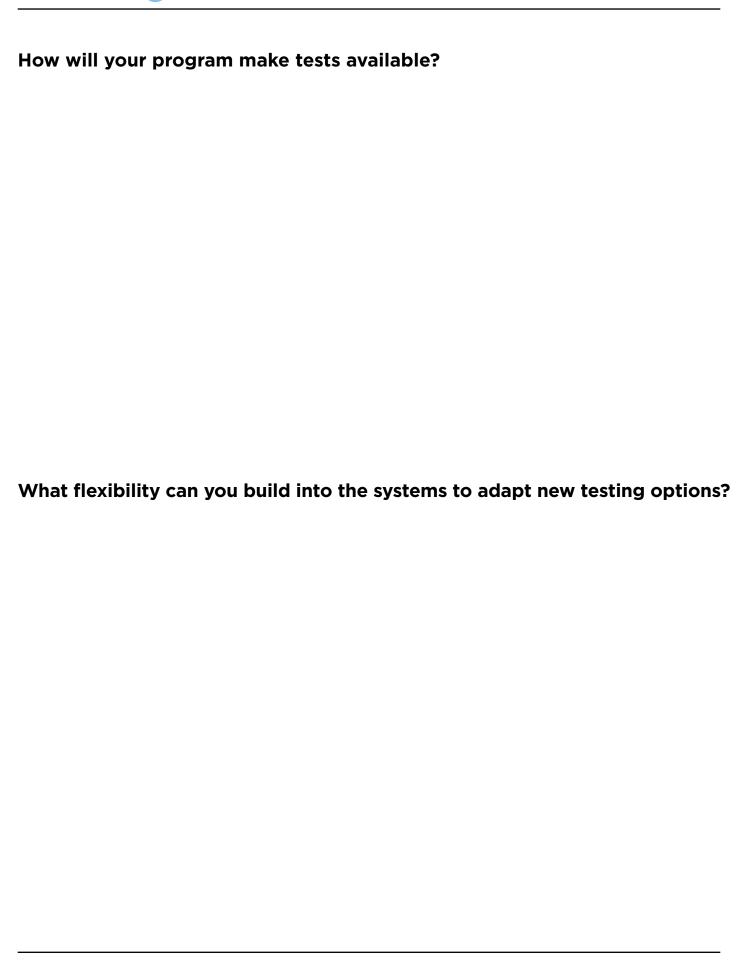**What communities does your program aim to serve?**

Focus on Community and Clinical Needs

- Be clear about what you need
- Apply user-centred design approaches
- Design digital programs that are easy to use and safe
- Train frontline providers
- Offer different ways to give specimens

How do you know what the communities want and other requirements your program needs to meet?

How can you design your program to meet these requirements?

At which points would you consult users?

What training will healthcare providers need?

What is the best way to train frontline providers?

How will your program make tests available?

What flexibility can you build into the systems to adapt new testing options?

Recommendation 2 Questions

What can you put in place to make sure you are adapting your program to changing needs over time?

Build and Improve in Steps
- Build flexibility into the design
- Test before you launch
- Use real-time data to keep adapting
- Plan for growth

What would a phased roll-out look like for your program?

What metrics will you use to monitor program performance?

What methods can you use to collect feedback from users for the program?

Recommendation 3 Questions

**Think about all the steps of your program.
What are all the different healthcare systems that your program will be connected to when you launch or expand?**

Are there partners already working within these systems that you can work with?

What existing infrastructures, procedures and data pipelines can you use for your program?

Recommendation 4 Questions

What will you need to make changes to your program in the future?

Design for Long-Term Success
- Plan ahead for growth
- Follow privacy and IT policies
- Balance automation and manual processes

How will you know when you will need to make changes?

Does your organization have privacy and security requirements for digital programs? If not, what are the standards that are relevant for your program to be successful?

How will you meet these requirements?

Recommendation 1 Questions

Are there teams, organizations or departments you have built good relationships with?

Strengthen Cross-Sector Collaborations
- Maintain partnerships and build formal collaborations
- Create clear agreements and management structures
- Be transparent and build trust

What kinds of procedures would you need to create a formal collaboration?

How can you stay in regular contact with partners?
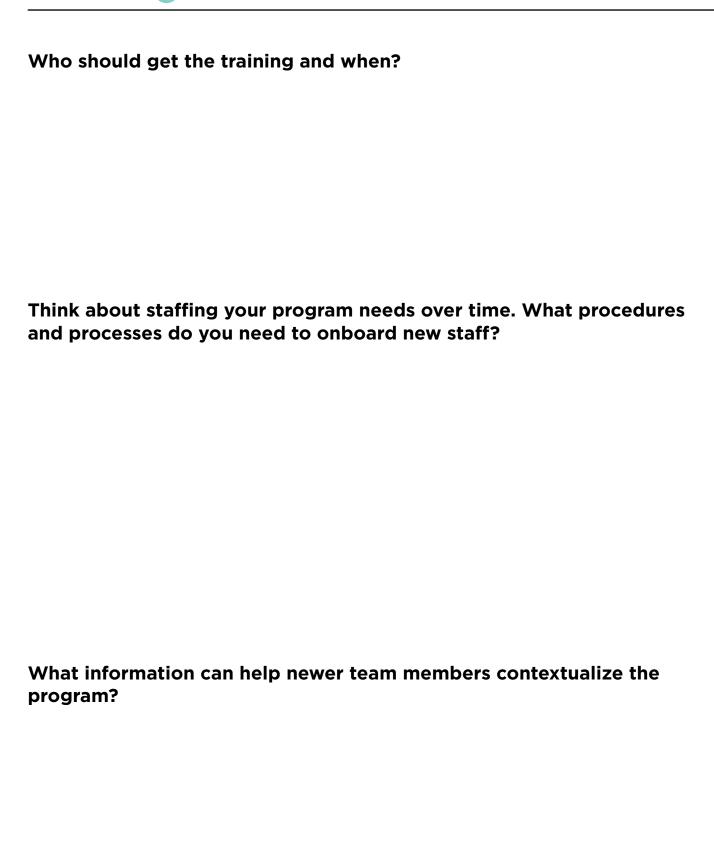
Recommendation 2 Questions

What skills would you need to maintain your program? Think about both technical and soft skills.

Have Dedicated Long-Term Staff and Teams

- Assess and plan for staffing needs
- Have dedicated staff
- Train and build capacity
- Make long-term staffing plans

What resourced positions do you need to maintain the program?

What procedures should training cover?

Who should get the training and when?

Think about staffing your program needs over time. What procedures and processes do you need to onboard new staff?

What information can help newer team members contextualize the program?

Recommendation 3 Questions

How long do you plan to pilot your program?

Create a long-term strategy for funding
- Clearly define phases
- Advocate to include the program into existing healthcare budgets
- Explore multiple funding streams
- Measure cost savings and impact

If the pilot is successful, what is your plan to secure resources needed for full implementation or scale-up?

How can you position your program within the health system and advocate for support from existing healthcare budgets?

What could the funding model look like for your program?

How can you show the economic impacts of your program?

Recommendation 4 Questions

What health policies and guidelines does your program need to align with?

Integrate with Existing Systems and Policies

- Align with health policies and strategies
- Plan for growing infrastructure
- Make the program compatible with healthcare infrastructure
- Adapt to changing priorities

What technical and administrative aspects does your program need to fit into your organization and the larger health system?

How can you make your program flexible so it can adjust when health priorities or policies change?