

[Sign out](#)April 11, 2025 [INNOVATION & RESEARCH](#)

# Research team finds that self-collected, child-friendly virus testing tool improves patient experience

**DAN ENJO**

Communications officer

PHSA is pleased to announce that a team that received funding through the provincial Ministry of Health's [Innovation Pathway Program](#) has completed its project, "[Evaluation and Implementation of Self-Collected Sample Types for COVID-19, RSV, and Influenza](#)", based at BC Children's Hospital, with promising results for pediatric care.

## Project emerged from feedback from health-care workers

The project team came together organically through a related project with a more general focus.

"In 2022, I first started working with [research team lead] Dr. [David] Goldfarb on a qualitative project in collaboration with First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)," noted Hannah Nelson, research assistant at Pathology & Lab Medicine, BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre. "We explored barriers and facilitators to expanding their innovative community-based testing program."

An interest in potential self-collection methods for viral testing emerged from perspectives shared with the project team by health-care workers.

"This sparked our application for the Ministry Innovations Pathways program, and also my application to graduate studies at the University of British Columbia Experimental Medicine program, she reflected. "I initially had no plans to start a master's degree, but working with such a great team in the lab and finding a project I felt passionate about made it worth every second."



## Promising results

The new self-collection procedure helped improve patient experience by using less-invasive methods and self/caregiver-collected samples and, at the same time, improved the accuracy of diagnoses of several pediatric illnesses.

"We were fortunate to find the self-collected swabs were both more acceptable for families and had better performance for diagnosing treatable bacterial infections," noted Hannah.

The research team also found that parent and caregiver satisfaction was significantly higher for oropharyngeal/nasal swabs (nose-throat) versus nasopharyngeal (deep nose) swabs, further helping to avoid traumatic health-care visits—especially in the Emergency Department.

## Improvements for pediatric patient care

Implementation has started locally in the BC Children's Hospital Emergency Department, and partners at FNHA have expressed interest in implementing at community-based testing sites across B.C.

"Moving forward with the oropharyngeal/nasal swabs is simplified across settings because the same swab type is already used clinically," noted Hannah. "I'm privileged to be part of a project that has potential to make a positive impact on patient care."

## For more information

For more details, including a listing of past recipients, please visit the [Innovation Pathway Program Funding](#) page on POD.

Tags: [Across PHSA, BC Children's and BC Women's](#)

---

HOME NEWS

RESEARCH TEAM FINDS THAT SELF-COLLECTED, CHILD-FRIENDLY VIRUS TESTING TOOL IMPROVES PATIENT EXPERIENCE

We are grateful to all the First Nations who have cared for and nurtured the lands and waters around us for all time, including the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy<sup>ə</sup>m (Musqueam), S<sub>k</sub>w<sub>x</sub>wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səílwəta? (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) on whose unceded and ancestral territory our head office is located.

Our values: Compassion | Respect | Equity | Courage | Innovation

Coast Salish teachings: Thee eat “Truth” | Eyhh slaxin “Good Medicine” | Nuts a maht “We are one” | Whax hooks in shqwalowin “Open your hearts and your minds” | Kwum kwum stun shqwalowin “Make up your mind to be strong” | Tee ma thit “Do your best”

[www.phsa.ca](http://www.phsa.ca)

Copyright © 2023 PHSA. All rights reserved.