



The 2SLGBTQIA+ Liaison Nurse Project

# The 2S/LGBTQIA+ Liaison Nurse Role Toolkit and Informational Package



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# What is a 2S/LGBTIA+ Liaison Nurse Role?

The **2S/LGBTQIA+ Liaison Nurse (LN)**, is a unique role initiated at Island Health in Victoria, BC. Stemming from a grassroots initiative, the role is now formalized through an HEABC job description. The LN provides direct health care for members of the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community across hospital settings as well as systems-level advocacy, policy input and education. Services provided include specialized expertise pertaining to assessments, medication and treatment considerations, care planning, and referrals and discharge coordination with community services as needed. Crucially, the LN has lived experience as a member of the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community and thus facilitates a safe and affirming context for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people in the health system. Our research team conducted a mixed-methods feasibility study in 2024-2025 to investigate key populations served, and examine the central services, supports, and activities comprising the role.

## Who is supported by a 2S/LGBTQIA+ Liaison Nurse?

Nearly 80% of clients seen were trans or non-binary, and over 20% were Indigenous. Reasons for seeking care included mental health, exacerbation of a chronic medical condition, gender-affirming care, and acute illness or injury. Of note was that mental health challenges were the primary concern amongst clients.

## Why does it matter?

The LN provides direct care for the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community in the health system. It is well substantiated that having a health provider with lived experience has powerful implications for cultivating positive health care encounters. Given that experiences of stigma and discrimination are abundant in healthcare settings, addressing these issues with a direct care role has profound implications for improving health outcomes. Further, via advocacy, policy input and education, the Liaison Nurse catalyzes systems-level change to enhance equity for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people.

# Tailoring the Role to Your Institution

Most institutions have a vision that encompasses values of equity, or inclusive practice. Healthcare organizations, in particular, are increasingly endeavouring to ensure health services are spaces where people feel respected and safe. One of the most salient approaches to ensuring positive health care experiences is through equitable health care encounters. The 2S/LGBTQIA+ Liaison Nurse role explicitly operationalizes equity through supporting 2S/LGBTQIA+ people and can be tailored to a variety of healthcare settings.

## Strategies to Implement the Role

Through dialogue with our health system and 2S/LGBTQIA+ community partners, we have identified core strategies to implement this role across health settings:

1. Re-classify an existing nursing line (e.g. emergency, urgent care)
2. Conduct a 1-year pilot of the role to examine care provision and health outcome impacts (which our team can robustly research to provide essential data)
3. Reorganize a current nursing role to open up space for Liaison Nurse-specific tasks
4. Refer to the HEABC job description to guide implementation of the role in your specific setting
5. Consider the applicability of an advanced practice nursing role such as a Clinical Nurse Educator (CNE) or Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) based on institutional need.

## Tailoring to Your Institution's Needs

The Liaison Nurse role can be tailored to each institution's nuanced considerations, including specific populations and healthcare needs. For example, the role can be utilized to support families in a Labour and Delivery context, or to support youth with mental health challenges within a pediatric setting, in addition to offering nuanced understanding and experience to gender affirming care approaches across a variety of contexts from the emergency room to acute care.

# Researching the Role at Institutions in BC

Exploring a novel 2S/LGBTQIA+ Nurse Liaison role: A community-engaged mixed-methods investigation funded by CIHR

In 2025 we received a CIHR project grant to generate comprehensive knowledge of how the 2S/LGBTQIA+ role is conceptualized, practiced and experienced among diverse 2S/LGBTQIA+ people in varied healthcare contexts. With this funding we will support research pertaining to tailoring the role at institutions to facilitate scale up of the role across Canada and globally. Our research is the first to investigate this unique role, thus the grant enables us to further mobilize essential insights to guide health systems to ensure safe and equitable health care experiences for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people.

## How Our Team Supports

Our team will support researching the LN role once it is implemented in your institution. Research may comprise mixed-methods approaches to data collection including observations, interviews and daily workload measurement tools to capture the nature and impacts of the Liaison Nurse role. A foundational component of our approach is that it is community-engaged such that we maintain a community advisory in addition to relationships with key 2S/LGBTQIA+ community organizations. These relationships are embedded throughout the entirety of the research to ensure the LN role is reflective of community voice and needs. Further, we will organize and facilitate ongoing knowledge mobilization activities such as featuring content at Grand Rounds, distributing research reports, and hosting educational in-services for health providers.

