



Veterans Affairs Canada

2025 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans Forum

Summary Report

26-27 November 2025



Introduction

Content warning: This content involves potentially painful subject matter that explores the history of discrimination and harm suffered by 2SLGBTQI+ Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) service members. Some readers may be personally affected by this content. If this is the case, help is available.

If you are a Veteran, family member, or caregiver, the support of a mental health professional is available 24/7, 365 days a year, at no cost to you. Call 1-800-268-7708.

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) would like to recognize and thank all Veterans and their families, across Canada, for their service to the country.

From coast to coast to coast, we acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territories of the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people that call this land home. We acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past. We also reaffirm our commitment to improving relationships between nations and improving our own understanding of Indigenous peoples and their cultures. We all have a responsibility to consider how we can, in our own way, move forward in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

“We all carry it – the ones who fly, the ones who swim, the plants, the trees, the Earth. We all carry this gift of life. And when we share our light, not only do we feel better and the person we share it with feels better – but we are all stronger for it.” - Elder Monique Manatch

We recognize the service and sacrifices of 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans and acknowledge the injustices and harms endured through systemic discrimination. Your strength and perseverance inspire progress toward equity and inclusion. We remain committed to supporting your healing and ensuring dignity for all who serve.



The 2025 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans Forum was developed in partnership with the LGBT Purge Fund and Rainbow Veterans of Canada. Their advocacy bridges the gap between community members and the systems that serve them, ensuring the Forum and Veteran experiences with VAC reflect real needs and lived

experiences. Every element has been guided by a commitment to safety, dignity, and inclusion, and these organizations played a vital role in keeping this vision true. We thank them for their unwavering commitment and the impact they make every day.

Notes to the reader

The 2025 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans Forum will be referred to throughout the rest of the report as “the Forum.” All acronyms will be spelled out the first time that they are used.

Quotes featured throughout this report are anonymous and highlight open discussions that occurred throughout the event.

The open discussions provided Veterans the opportunity to share their lived experiences and provide feedback to VAC. This feedback has been documented and is

currently being reviewed internally. A “what we heard” document, summarizing feedback from the community, is to be published in the future.

Please see Appendix A to review important definitions of sex, gender, sexual orientation, and two-spirited.

The following terms are used throughout the report and in accordance with language used by the Government of Canada.

- **2SLGBTQI+** is an acronym that represents the following categories of lesbian, gay, bisexual (those who are attracted to both men and women), transgender, intersex, queer (a self-identifying term used in some gay communities), questioning, and two-spirit. There are many different acronyms like these that may combine sex, gender, and sexual orientation attributes into one. This combination may or may not be appropriate in all circumstances.
- **LGBT Purge** is a term used to describe specific historical acts of systemic discrimination against the 2SLGBTQI+ military and Veteran community at the hands of the Canadian Armed Forces and other governmental institutions. At the time that these injustices were brought to light through legal discourse, the more inclusive acronym of “2SLGBTQI+” had not yet replaced “LGBT.”

About the Forum



Participants

The Forum was held in collaboration with Rainbow Veterans of Canada and the LGBT Purge Fund. A diverse group of Veterans and community leaders attended the Forum, with 62 participating in-person and 57 joining virtually. This included presenters, still serving members of the CAF and RCMP, and VAC employees.

Structure

The Forum was a two-day event, with optional activities for in-person participants on 26 November 2025 and main event discussions on 27 November 2025.

Optional activities included: one-on-one meetings with VAC employees to discuss benefits and services, an Indigenous sharing circle, a workshop on storytelling, and a peer support activity.

The main event consisted of four sessions delivered to the entire group.

Topics covered

- **Optional activity:** Telling our stories
- **Optional activity:** How to be a supportive peer
- **Featured presentation:** 2SLGTQI+ Veterans milestones

- **Institutional updates:** Veterans Affairs Canada, Canadian Armed Forces, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police updates
- **Presentation:** Thriving in health: practical support for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans
- **Presentation:** Safety and solidarity: understanding the rise of hate incidences



Objectives

1. Create a collaborative space for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans and community leaders to share experiences, honour history, and discuss strategies for achieving equity for current and future generations.
2. Provide practical tools and resources to support healing, advocacy, and community engagement beyond the Forum.
3. Foster dialogue with institutions to address ongoing barriers and strengthen inclusive policies and practices.

Minister's welcome

“Our goal is that you leave today not only informed, but strengthened with practical tools to support your healing, your advocacy, and your communities.”

The Forum opened with remarks from The Honourable Jill McKnight, Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada and Associate Minister of National Defence, welcoming participants in-person and online. The Minister highlighted the significance of this event coinciding with the eighth anniversary of the Government of Canada's formal apology to the 2SLGBTQI+ community for systemic discrimination, including the criminalization of same-sex relationships and the LGBT Purge within the CAF, RCMP, and federal public service. The apology was a commitment to ensure such harms never happen again.



The Minister recognized the lived experiences of survivors and their families, emphasizing that healing is ongoing and that VAC must ensure care and resources are accessible, inclusive, and responsive. Two key objectives of the Forum were highlighted: to strengthen institutional support for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans

and employees through candid dialogue with CAF, RCMP, and VAC; and to equip participants with practical tools for healing, advocacy, and community engagement. Minister McKnight also referenced the Thunderhead monument, under construction nearby, as a symbol of resilience and remembrance.

Day 1: optional activities

VAC service room

The VAC service room provided in-person participants with the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a case manager or a Veterans service agent, in a private and confidential setting. These conversations focused on increasing understanding of available VAC programs and services. The format allowed for individualized discussions tailored to each participant's circumstances, supporting both those who are new to VAC and those seeking clarification on specific aspects of their file.



“[The case manager] was wonderful. She was helpful [and] kind.”

Indigenous sharing circle

“I felt I was in a safe place surrounded by people who understood the trauma of what happened to me. I felt safe and not judged but more understood of what I shared.”

The Indigenous sharing circle offered participants a grounded space for connection and healing. Guided by a local Elder, the sharing circle established a respectful tone for the day that followed. For many participants, the session provided an opportunity to connect with one another and enter the Forum discussions in a more positive and emotionally supported state.

Telling our stories

“I couldn’t say it, so I wrote it.”



This activity explored storytelling as both a personal and collective practice, emphasizing its role in healing and advocacy. Facilitators guided participants through reflections on why stories are shared, the many forms storytelling can take, and the importance of reclaiming authorship over one’s narrative. Central themes

included personal agency and the understanding that storytelling can be an act of healing that unfolds differently for each individual.



“It’s your story. It’s not the story of those who purged you.”

How to be a supportive peer

This workshop provided an interactive exploration of peer support within 2SLGBTQI+ Veteran and Purge Survivor communities. Facilitated through discussion and engaging activities, the session emphasized compassion and the importance of listening without

judgment. Participants were invited to reflect on how allyship is practiced through everyday actions and how peer support strengthens community resilience.



Day 2: main Forum

Featured presentation: 2SLGBTQI+ milestones

This session featured updates from the Rainbow Veterans of Canada and the LGBT Purge Fund Boards of Directors, and from Egale Canada.



Rainbow Veterans of Canada continues to grow and strengthen as an organization, increasing membership, partnerships, and confidence. Over the past year, they focused on education and advocacy, engaging audiences nationwide. Many were listening, and many have indicated that they want to hear more.

“[...] history is not just in the books. It’s in our families, our memories, and the legacy that we carry on forward.”

New initiatives include a Speaker’s Bureau with storytelling training, unveiling a new flag, and laying a wreath for the first time at the National Cemetery monument at Beechwood Cemetery. These steps symbolize the organization’s growth and resilience. Their message: “We are Rainbow Veterans of Canada. Our voices will never be silenced again.”

“[W]hat can we do to use our history to ensure that tomorrow is better? And today? Because that is our responsibility.”

The LGBT Purge Fund shared its history, from the *We Demand an Apology* campaign to current work centered on commemoration. Operating nationally and internationally, the

Fund serves as a model for LGBT Veterans seeking apologies. Updates included the *Love in a Dangerous Time* exhibit, archival projects, and progress on their final mandate – the Thunderhead monument, which participants had the opportunity to visit during the lunch break. Other commemorative efforts include screenings of *The Fruit Machine* on Air Canada flights and presentations across Canada. As the speaker noted: “we try to be everywhere, so people talk about us, so we are remembered.”

Egale Canada outlined two research projects in partnership with Rainbow Veterans of Canada. The first, *Where the Heart Is*, is a national qualitative study exploring experiences of unhoused and housing insecure 2SLGBTQI+ Canadian Veterans, aiming to identify needs and develop resources. Findings are expected to be published in mid-2026. The second, *Thank You For Your Service*, is a two-part project examining gaps in mental health and social services for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans, from Veterans’ perspectives and service providers’ viewpoints.

“[the] reality is that if you’re houseless, you don’t have access to spaces like this. You don’t have access to the organizations, and that might be because of shame or previous experience or whatever...”

Institutional updates: Veterans Affairs Canada, Canadian Armed Forces, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police



This session featured representatives of VAC, CAF, and the RCMP, who shared updates on initiatives to advance institutional equity for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans.

“[T]he most impactful update [for me] was the one provided by the

nurses as we were able to hear real time changes being made at the grassroots level.”

VAC highlighted ongoing efforts to support 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans and LGBT Purge Survivors through engagement, education, and policy updates. Recent initiatives include hosting national forums, strengthening partnerships, expanding commemorative projects, and funding research on health and well-being. VAC implemented system updates for chosen names and pronouns, delivered employee training on inclusive practices, and improved disability assessment guidelines, alongside outreach to 63,000 educators and targeted projects through the Veteran and Family Well-being Fund.



The speakers shared that VAC nurses continue to provide holistic care and collaborate across teams, while the National Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nursing launched a Health Equity pledge, integrated Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) into policy reviews, and implemented a Best Practice Guideline on 2SLGBTQI+ health equity.

CAF reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining programming, services, and training for the 2SLGBTQI+ serving community. Updates centered on the Positive Space Initiative and the Spectrum of Care. A review of Positive Space courses is planned for 2026 to ensure quality and relevance. Additionally, it was shared that the Spectrum of Care has included gender-affirming care such as hormonal therapy since 2018. Additional measures include finalizing a Defence Team instruction to ensure command teams understand transgender rights, as well as advancing sex and gender modernization by collecting



sex and gender data only when operationally, medically, or legally necessary, with displays defaulting to self-identified gender.

“The better we take care of folks while they [are] serving, the better they will be when they become Veterans.”

The RCMP reported progress in equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives through adopting the Positive Space program, promoting ambassador training, and developing toolkits. Additionally, there is a new mentor network to support transgender, non-binary, and two-spirit employees. The organization hosted its first equity, diversity, and inclusion conference and updated leadership competencies to include anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Further, the organization has introduced recruitment and retention programs such as Diverse and Inclusive Pre-Cadet Experience (DICE) and Diversity Retention and Employment Advancement Model (DREAM) to address barriers and foster belonging in the workplace. Ongoing efforts include awareness campaigns and participation in events and observances, reinforcing the RCMP’s commitment to meaningful, transformational change toward an organization that reflects the communities it serves.

Presentation: thriving in health

This session featured a presentation from a medical doctor on aging, health, and access to care for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans. The presentation emphasized that many 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans age with layered experiences of institutional trauma, including from military service, health-care discrimination, and gaps in 2SLGBTQI+ culturally competent care. These experiences contribute to a mistrust of health systems and can delay or prevent Veterans from seeking care as they age.



The doctor highlighted that 2SLGBTQI+ individuals experience higher rates of chronic illness, including cancer, diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and exposure to violence. Of note, the doctor highlighted that 22% of new HIV diagnoses in Canada occur in people over the age of 50, underscoring the need for inclusive, age-appropriate sexual health education and services for 2SLGBTQI+ seniors. The presentation noted the contrast between institutional settings that normalize resources, such as condom access in CAF workplaces, and the near absence of equivalent supports in long-term care and retirement environments, where many Veterans eventually reside.

Significant attention was given to systemic gaps in medical education. The doctor explained that Canadian medical training includes minimal instruction on 2SLGBTQI+ health issues, leaving many providers unprepared to meet the needs of this population, noting that this gap contributes to negative care experiences and avoidance of health services. The doctor highlighted that survey data revealed that 17% of transgender respondents would avoid seeking emergency care even in life-threatening situations, illustrating the lasting impact of previous health care system related trauma and discrimination.

“This statistic speaks to the potency of fear [that 2SLGBTQI+ people have] surrounding the health-care system.”

Housing and long-term care were identified as critical determinants of health for aging 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans. The doctor emphasized that long-term care environments often function as extensions of health care systems and may expose 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans to discrimination, misgendering, or pressure to conceal their identities. Advance care planning was identified as a key protective strategy, particularly for Veterans in queer relationships or with multiple partners, to ensure decision-making authority, visitation rights, and respectful care.



The presentation concluded by emphasizing the role institutions play in addressing these challenges through improved provider education, affirming housing options, and strengthened peer support. Sustained institutional commitment was identified as essential to improving health outcomes and quality of life for aging 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans.

“Medications matter – but community matters just as much.”

Presentation: safety and solidarity

This presentation examined hate incidences and hate crimes affecting 2SLGBTQI+ communities, providing guidance on how to report such incidences and stay safe. The presenting sergeant emphasized the importance of distinguishing between hate crimes, which are criminal offences motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate



towards an identifiable group, and hate incidences, which may not meet the criminal threshold but can still cause significant harm. He stressed that all such incidences should be reported to police, as documenting them is essential for identifying patterns, allocating resources, and informing prevention strategies.

“It’s important to distinguish between hate crimes and hate incidences; even if something isn’t criminal, it can still cause real harm and should be reported.”

Participants received an overview of relevant Criminal Code provisions, including public incitement of hatred, willful promotion of hatred, mischief to property, conversion therapy offences, and recent sentencing enhancements under section 718.2 for crimes motivated by hate. While not every hate-motivated behaviour leads to criminal charges, the sergeant explained that even non-criminal hate incidences, such as derogatory comments, online harassment, or graffiti, can have tangible impacts on victims and

communities. He illustrated how alternative legal tools, such as bylaw enforcement and civil litigation, can sometimes provide accountability when criminal thresholds are not met and highlighted a landmark defamation case targeting 2SLGBTQI+ individuals as “groomers” as an example of how civil action can be a tool to combat online hate.

“2SLGBTQI+ Veterans may face overlapping challenges of hate, trauma, homelessness, and mistrust of institutions.”



The sergeant highlighted that 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans may face overlapping challenges, including exposure to hate, trauma, homelessness, and mistrust of institutions.

Collaborative initiatives like the Military Veterans Wellness Program were presented as promising models for trauma-informed, Veteran-centric responses. This program, a partnership involving law enforcement, VAC, Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS), and the Royal Canadian Legion, supports homeless Veterans through early intervention and coordinated services. Officers

participating in the program receive specialized training to address the unique needs of Veterans, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), transition to life after service, and social isolation. One example demonstrated a Veteran being connected to temporary shelter within 72 hours of contact, transitioning into long-term supportive housing, gaining access to counselling and medications, and eventually returning to employment.

The presentation underscored that trust between 2SLGBTQI+ communities and police, along with visible representation of 2SLGBTQI+ professionals within law enforcement, is foundational to community safety and the effective reporting of hate crimes and incidences.

Plenary regroup and conclusion

“What a joy it would have been to talk about the old times in service.

But we didn’t have that...”

The Forum closed with a plenary regroup with representatives of Rainbow Veterans of Canada and the LGBT Purge Fund Board of Directors, and Veterans Affairs Canada.

An overview of the future Thunderhead monument was given, and reflections on the Forum and the importance of meeting as a community were shared.

Funded through the class-action settlement, the Thunderhead monument is a national landmark commemorating discrimination faced by 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canada, including the LGBT Purge. It stands as a gift from those who experienced the Purge to the broader community, with a vision to educate, memorialize, celebrate, and inspire. With a powerful, central location, and a vision created by an all-Canadian design team, the monument will symbolize strength, activism, and hope.

Reflections were given on both days of the Forum that underscore the importance of community. Old community, and new, emerging community. A community that has been united and continues to work alongside partners and organizations.



“Your truth, your strength, your leadership is going to continue to shape our work to improve services for you, remove barriers for you, and honour the Veterans with the dignity that they deserve. We can’t change the past, but we can change and choose how we respond to it.”

Finally, the Forum was closed with a thank you from the Deputy Minister to participants for their continued honesty, courage, and stories; they guide us.

Appendix A – Terminology

The following table has been reproduced from its original source – the Canadian Institute of Health Research

	Sex	Gender	Sexual Orientation	Two-Spirit
What is it?	Biological attributes, including physical features, chromosomes, gene expression, hormones, and anatomy	A composite of socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and/or attributes that a given society considers appropriate for members of a given sex	Description of emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction	Community organizing tool for Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island who embody diverse sexualities, gender identities, roles, and/or expressions
To whom does the term apply?	All people and animals	Non-Indigenous people and Indigenous people in the Western world	Non-Indigenous people and Indigenous people in the Western world	Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island with diverse sexualities and genders
Examples in Western terms	Male, female, intersex	Man, women, boy, girl, gender diverse, non-binary, transgender, queer	Heterosexual, gay, lesbian, pansexual, asexual, queer	Two-spirit challenges Western terms of gender and sexual orientation. It allows Indigenous Peoples to reconnect with their traditional languages, ways, and cultures within a pre-colonial setting

Appendix B – Agenda

2025 2SLGBTQI+ Forum Veterans Affairs Canada

Lord Elgin Hotel
100 Elgin Street
Ottawa, ON

Day 1 – November 26, 2025

Time	Description	Intent	Lead
Optional Activities for In-Person Participants			
09:30 – 11:30	Veterans Affairs Canada Service Room	VAC frontline staff will be available to meet with participants one-on-one to discuss individual files or assist with creating a MyVAC Account.	
12:45 – 14:45	Registration	Participants can register as they enter.	
13:00 – 15:00	Sharing Circle	Led by an Indigenous Elder, this session provides a space for participants to come together, share experiences, and listen to others in a supportive and respectful environment. Participants are invited to speak or listen as they feel comfortable.	Elder Monique Manatch
13:00 – 14:30	How to Be a Supportive Peer	A collaborative discussion on how to support fellow Purge Survivors and community members. Together, participants will explore what to say, what to avoid and when to step back.	Sandra Perron, Found and President, The Pepper Pod and Author of <i>Outstanding in the Field</i> Diane Pitre, Co-Chair, Board of Directors, Rainbow Veterans of Canada

14:30 – 14:45	Break		
14:45 – 15:45	Telling Our Stories: Writing for Reflection and Connection	<p>Join Purge Survivors who have shared their experiences through oral and written storytelling for a reflective session. They will speak about their creative process and the emotions that surfaced along the way.</p> <p>Whether you are interested in journaling, oral storytelling, or simply exploring personal reflection, this workshop will provide a supportive space to engage with the power of storytelling and the emotions that can emerge during and after the process.</p>	<p>France Bergeron, Director of Communications, Rainbow Veterans of Canada and Author of <i>Unwelcomed: Purged by the Church and the Canadian Armed Forces</i></p> <p>Steven DesChamps, Director at Large, Rainbow Veterans of Canada and Author of <i>My Purge Story</i></p> <p>Martine Roy, Co-Chair Board of Directors, LGBT Purge Fund</p>
18:00 – 23:00	Welcome Reception and Crest Painting Activity	<p>Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence Jill McKnight will host a welcome reception for forum participants featuring a meet-and-greet, followed by a Rainbow Veterans of Canada Crest painting activity that will begin at 19:00.</p>	<p>The Honourable Jill McKnight, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence</p> <p>Sherry Lundrigan, Treasurer, Rainbow Veterans of Canada</p>

**2025 2SLGBTQI+ Forum
Veterans Affairs Canada**

**Salon B
Library and Archives Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
Hybrid Event**

Day 2 – November 27, 2025

Time	Description	Intent	Lead
7:50 – 8:10	Shuttle Service:	A bus will transport participants from the Lord Elgin Hotel to the Library and Archives Canada Building. Please arrive early for boarding.	
8:30 – 9:00	Registration	Participants register as they enter. Coffee is served.	
9:00 – 9:30	Indigenous Welcome	In the spirit of reconciliation, Elder Manatch will offer a ceremonial welcome to participants, in accordance with the traditions of the Algonquin Anishinaabe People.	Elder Monique Manatch
9:30 – 9:35	Introductions	Land Acknowledgement	Christine McDowell, Deputy Minister, Commemoration and Public Affairs, Veterans Affairs Canada
9:35 – 9:45	Minister's Welcome	Welcome remarks	The Honourable Jill McKnight , Minister of Veterans Affairs and

			Associate Minister of National Defence.
9:45 – 10:45	Featured Presentation: 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans Milestones	Led by members of Rainbow Veterans of Canada and the LGBT Purge Fund Boards of Directors, this session encourages 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans and allies to unite around efforts in commemoration, research, and recognition. It will feature a discussion on the Love in a Dangerous Time Exhibit, an update on the Thunderhead Monument and current research areas of interest – highlighting the momentum of progress and the importance of honouring lived experiences.	Diane Pitre, Co-Chair, Board of Directors, Rainbow Veterans of Canada Martine Roy, Co-Chair, Board of Directors, LGBT Purge Fund Gazel Manuel, Research Officer, Egale Canada Moderator: Dr. Cyd Courchesne, OMM, CD, MD, CHE Chief Medical Officer, Director General Health Professionals, Veterans Affairs Canada
10:45 – 11:00	Break		
11:00 – 12:00	Institutional Updates: Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)	VAC, CAF, and RCMP share updates in recognition and support to the 2SLGBTQI+ Veteran community.	Moussa Dramé, Director General, Community Engagement, Commemoration and Public Affairs, Veterans Affairs Canada

			<p>Kim Williams, RN and Allison Parfitt, Field Nursing Services, Veterans Affairs Canada</p> <p>Rear Admiral Jacques Olivier, Director General Culture, Chief Professional Conduct and Culture, CAF</p> <p>Renée Scantlebury, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Analyst, RCMP</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Cyd Courchesne, OMM, CD, MD, CHE Chief Medical Officer, Director General Health Professionals, Veterans Affairs Canada</p>
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch		
13:00 – 14:00	Thriving in Health: Practical Support for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans	This session explores key aspects of physical health for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans, with a focus on aging well and accessing inclusive healthcare. Participants will discover practical ways to support their physical health and explore approaches to accessing respectful,	<p>Dr. Laura Machefske, MD, The Doctress' Office</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Cyd Courchesne, OMM, CD, MD, CHE Chief Medical Officer, Director General Health</p>

		affirming care within the healthcare system.	Professionals, Veterans Affairs Canada
14:00 – 14:15	Break		
14:15 – 15:15	Safety and Solidarity: Understanding the Rise in Hate Incidences	This session addresses the rise in hate incidences targeting 2SLGBTQI+ communities, viewed through the lens of Veteran experiences. The discussion will explore safety strategies, community advocacy, and navigating law enforcement strategies with confidence and care. Participants will gain insight into protecting themselves and others while fostering resilience and solidarity.	Sergeant Bryan Watson , Vancouver Police Department and Vice President of Out on Patrol Vancouver Moderator: Dr. Cyd Courchesne, OMM, CD, MD, CHE Chief Medical Officer, Director General Health Professionals, Veterans Affairs Canada
15:15 – 15:30	Break		
15:30-15:45	Plenary Regroup		Todd Ross , Co-Chair, Board of Directors, Rainbow Veterans of Canada Michelle Douglas , Executive Director, LGBT Purge Fund
15:45 – 16:00	Closing Remarks		Christine McDowell , Deputy Minister, Veterans Affairs Canada
16:00	Forum concludes		
16:00 – 16:25	Shuttle Service	A bus will transport participants from Library and	

		Archives Canada to the Lord Elgin Hotel.	
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Appendix C – Forum Feedback

Following the execution of an event, it is a standard procedure for VAC to send attendees an electronic questionnaire to collect feedback. All responses have been retained and reviewed; this section will highlight key results.

There were 55 respondents to the questionnaire, representing a 46.4% response rate. Of these, 64.4% identified as Veterans, 15.3% as VAC staff, and 15.3% as serving CAF members, with smaller representation from RCMP Veterans and community partners.

The feedback strongly supports that the Forum continues to be an effective way to foster dialogue and meaningful interaction. The majority of respondents agreed that the Forum created an environment where they could engage openly and authentically. Participants emphasized the value of hearing lived experiences, institutional updates, and practical sessions, describing the Forum as “life-changing”, “healing”, and as “a space to reconnect.”

Feedback highlights

- 82% agreed that the Forum created a safe and inclusive environment.
- 93% reported increased understanding of issues affecting 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans.
- 92% felt more informed about available supports, services, and resources.
- 86% agreed that the Forum helps advance equity for 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans.
- 97% agreed that Veterans benefit from the Forum, and 94% emphasized the importance of continuing it.
- 96% expressed interest in attending future forums.

Virtual experience

- 83% rated Zoom connectivity effective

Session specific feedback

- 92% found support provided through the VAC Service Room to be helpful
- 83% agreed that the Sharing Circle set a safe and respectful tone

- 90% found the Thriving in health session to be relevant and informative
- 96% agreed that the featured presentation was relevant and informative
- 74% felt they were well informed about progress VAC is making in supporting 2SLGBTQI+ Veterans

