

# As HIV rates rise in Canada, physicians launch online healthcare service to improve access to preventative treatments

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*Freddie provides free online access to discreet, accessible HIV prevention and prescriptions*

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, September 22, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Two Canadian physicians officially launched [Freddie](#), a video-telemedicine service that connects patients with physicians' online who specialize in HIV care and are certified to prescribe the preventative medication HIV PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis). The medication is a pill taken once per day that reduces the risk of acquiring HIV by up to 99 percent. Freddie was initially launched in Alberta and has now expanded into Ontario and Saskatchewan after experiencing significant demand. They are looking to launch across Canada and give everyone access no matter where they are. It is free for many Canadians under provincial health care services, and/or a low cost for those with private drug insurance.

Over 26,000 individuals are currently living with HIV in Ontario alone, and over 20% of whom are unaware of their HIV status.

Launched by Dr. Husein Moloo and Dr. Caley Shukalek, Freddie is the first virtual platform of its kind in Canada. With HIV rates rising across the country in recent years, Moloo and Shukalek want to provide an easily accessible, judgment-free, and discreet method for HIV at-risk Ontarians to access information about the virus and preventative treatments.

"Many communities who are most at risk of contracting HIV either do not have easy access to a physician who is trained in HIV prevention or is battling the stigma of inquiring with their doctor about it," says Dr. Shukalek. "We know in both rural communities and even urban centres, the topic can still feel taboo, and unfortunately, many physicians are unaware of the treatments available to prevent HIV. With Freddie, a patient can discreetly book an appointment and consult a doctor online, and if HIV PrEP is the right treatment for them, it can be delivered discreetly straight to their home."

In December 2019, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) released its "HIV in Canada—Surveillance Report, 2018", which revealed the number of new HIV cases in Canada jumped 25.3% over the previous four years; from 2,040 in 2014 to 2,561 in 2018. Communities who are most at-risk of contracting HIV include injection drug users, MSM individuals (men who have sex with men), sex workers, and people of African and Caribbean descent. Freddie has

launched in Alberta and is now expanding to Ontario and Saskatchewan with plans to provide the service across the country to all Canadians to help prevent the spread of HIV.

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## About Freddie

Freddie virtually delivers PrEP, the treatment that reduces one's risk of acquiring HIV by 99%. The platform's vision is to use telemedicine and compassionate care to improve health outcomes for all members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. Founded in 2020 and based in Calgary, Alberta, Freddie enables patients to see expert physicians for free and get their medication delivered to their door. The platform provides access to those who need it most and aims to reduce the burden on Canada's existing universal health care system

Website: [www.gofreddie.com](http://www.gofreddie.com)

Instagram: @go\_freddie

## About Dr. Caley Shukalek

Dr. Caley Shukalek is passionate about evidence-based, patient-centred care, including telemedicine, that can provide high-quality care from wherever a patient may reside. Dr. Shukalek holds an MD from the University of Calgary and works in Calgary, Alberta, as a specialist in General Internal Medicine with additional sexual health training, including HIV and sexually transmitted infections. He has also completed his Master of Science at the University of Alberta and is near completion of his Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins University.

## About Dr. Husein Moloo

Dr. Husein Moloo firmly believes that virtual care will play a vital role in providing better healthcare access in the future. Improving health outcomes for Canadians and people everywhere is his primary goal. Husein holds an MD from the University of Calgary, a Master in Public Health from Brown University, and a Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene from the University of London School of Tropical Medicine. He practices as a Hospitalist Physician in Calgary, Alberta.

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