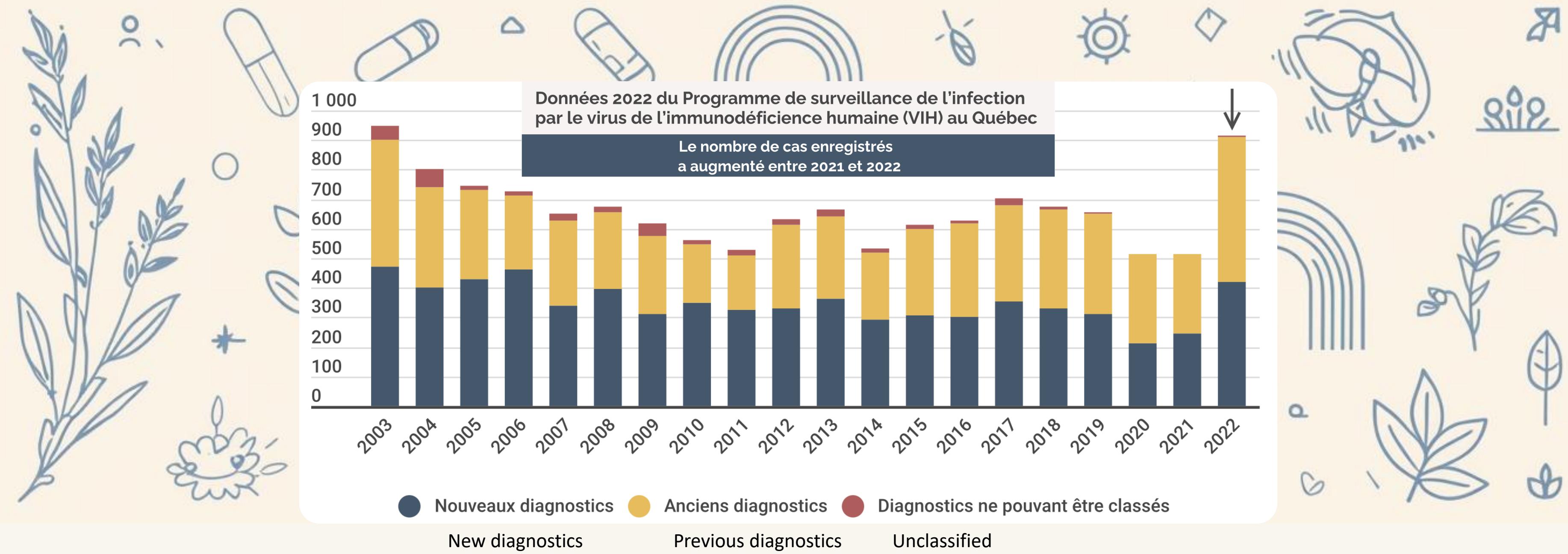


The latest in HIV prevention in Quebec



Emmanuel G.-Thibaudeau, Pharmacist
Pharmacist owner, Pharmacie Amine Ben Abdennabi & Emmanuel Thibaudeau



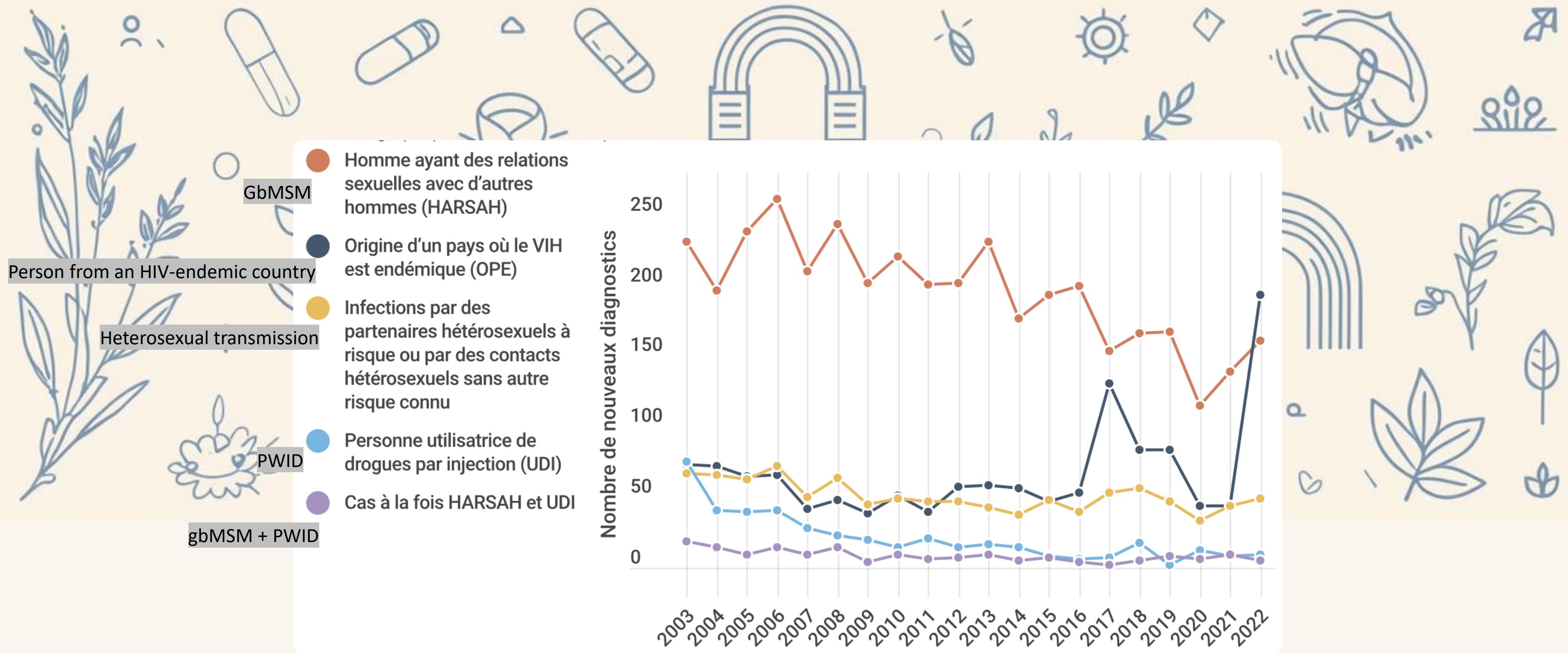
Quebec's HIV landscape

INSPQ (Public Health Institute of Qc)

Annual report of HIV surveillance (last edition: 2022)

New HIV diagnoses rising again after pandemic disruptions.

- +78% vs 2021, +40% vs 2019 : total of 422 new diagnoses
- Likely due to post-pandemic screening catch-up
- 45.7% of new cases among recent arrivals to Canada
- GBMSM remain most affected : 38.2% of new cases
- Montréal especially impacted: 71% of all new cases, a 120% rise vs 2020



Quebec's HIV landscape

INSPQ (Public Health Institute of Qc)
 Annual report of HIV surveillance (last edition: 2022)

- These numbers remind us that prevention accessibility remains a unfinished task.

The initial problem

“Necessity is the mother of invention.”



- Major and persistent gaps in access to PrEP and preventive care across Quebec;
- People outside Montréal had to travel long distances for services;
- Long wait times and fragmented follow-up discouraged initiation;
- Existing models failed to adapt to patients' lived realities and experiences of stigma;
- Strong demand emerged for simpler, decentralized access;
- → The unmet need was clear, access had to be simpler, closer, and faster

The Quebec Context

A Unique Legal Landscape



Québec's Pharmacy Ownership rules

- Only pharmacists can own a pharmacy in Québec : no external investors.
 - This ensures Quebec's pharmacist order (OPQ) has full reach over pharmacies administration to protect the public.
- A pharmacist may not share their professional fees with a person who is not a pharmacist.
 - This rule prevents outside investors or corporations from benefiting from a pharmacy's professional income.

Code of Ethics

- Pharmacists are prohibited from entering into any agreement designed to generate client referrals.
 - This rule prevents formal or informal partnerships that could influence patient direction or compromise professional independence.
 - This ensures patient protection but limits innovation
- Strict referral and solicitation rules limit how partnerships and care pathways can be built, forcing innovation to happen within tight ethical boundaries.

The Turning Point: Ownership and Vision

A Unique Legal Landscape

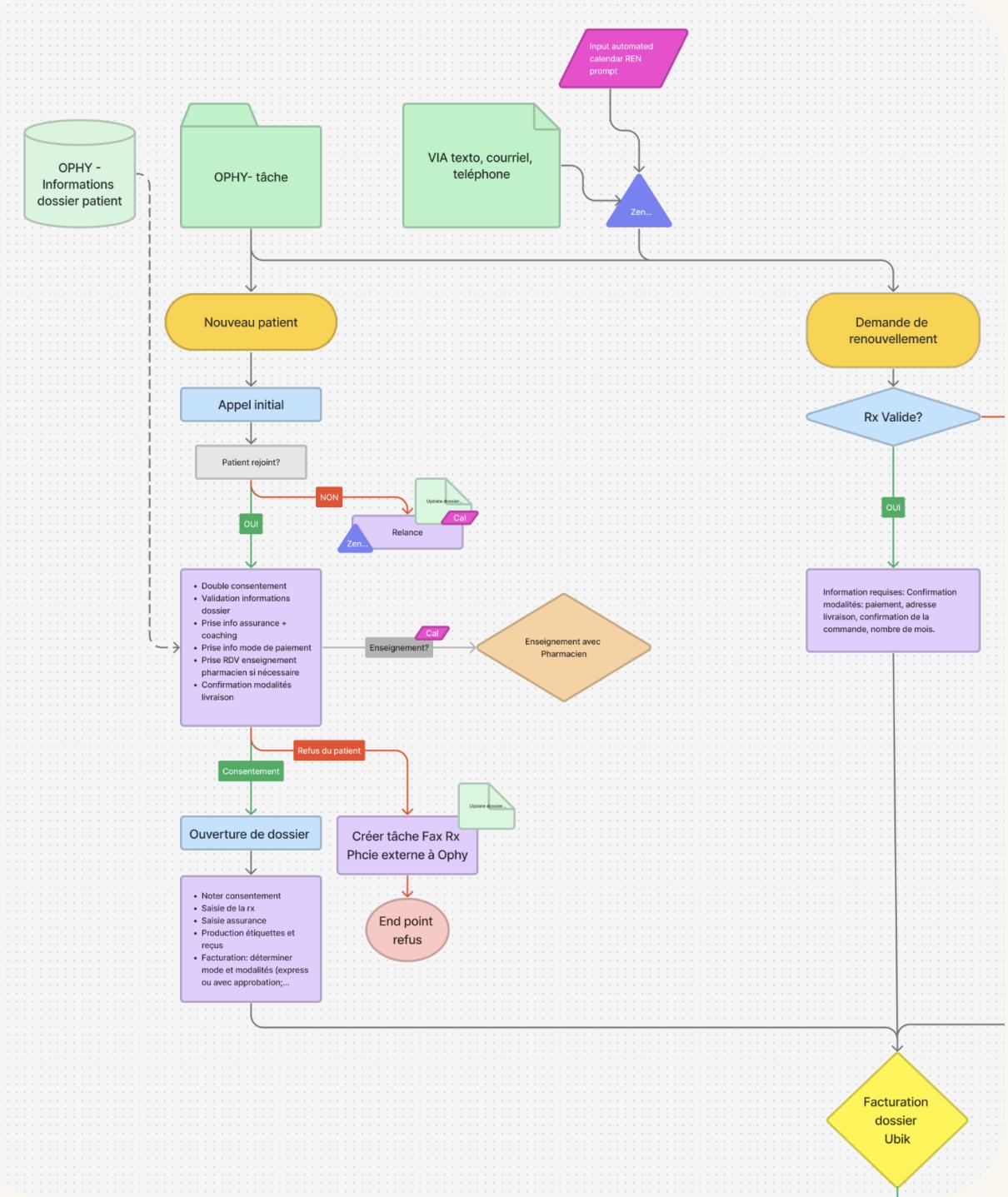


To drive innovation, you need autonomy

- Purchased the pharmacy in 2022, gaining both autonomy and responsibility;
- The business under pressure, somewhat at a crossroads, needing renewed purpose;
- Wanted to transform the pharmacy into an active community health hub.;
- Saw an opportunity to align our mission with evolving public-health needs: access, prevention, and dignity;
- Until ownership, there was no space to innovate — previous owners saw little incentive to invest in PrEP services.
- Ownership made it possible to design a new model of care instead of maintaining the status quo.

The Pilot Project

From Concept to Proof of Concept



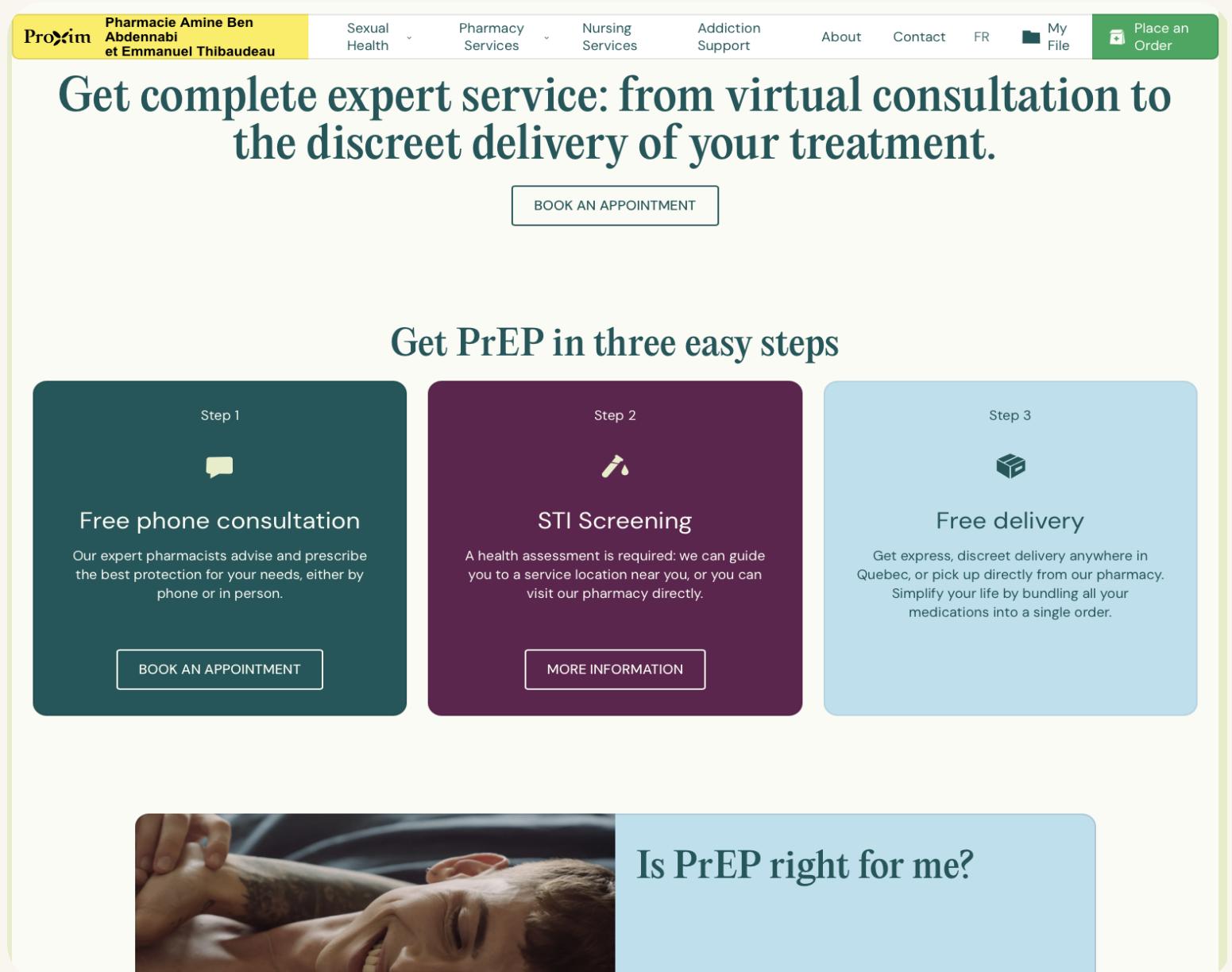
Testing a pharmacist-led model for PrEP initiation and follow-up

- Pilot launched with a Montréal STI screening center under a collective prescription agreement;
- Pharmacy team managed consultations, dispensing, and follow-up;
- Screening center handled lab tests and medical review of positives;
- The project validated feasibility, safety, and patient engagement;
- Built the operational base for an autonomous, pharmacy-led model;
- Patients could book a pharmacist appointment while scheduling STI testing;
- Difficult to sustain: no guaranteed funding, free consultations, custom IT integration needed.
- Only two pharmacists initially comfortable to offer consultations.

This first experiment validated feasibility, but showed how fragile innovation remains without structural support.

From Pilot to Platform

Scaling Access Through Telepharmacy



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Tou+PrEP website. The navigation bar includes links for Sexual Health, Pharmacy Services, Nursing Services, Addiction Support, About, Contact, FR, My File, and Place an Order. A yellow banner at the top left identifies the pilot site as "Proxim Pharmacie Amine Ben Abdennabi et Emmanuel Thibaudeau". The main banner features the text "Get complete expert service: from virtual consultation to the discreet delivery of your treatment." with a "BOOK AN APPOINTMENT" button. Below this, a section titled "Get PrEP in three easy steps" is shown in three colored boxes: Step 1 (dark teal) for "Free phone consultation", Step 2 (dark purple) for "STI Screening", and Step 3 (light blue) for "Free delivery". Each step includes a brief description and a "BOOK AN APPOINTMENT" or "MORE INFORMATION" button. At the bottom left is a small image of a smiling person, and at the bottom right is a blue box with the text "Is PrEP right for me?".

Testing a pharmacist-led model for PrEP Rx & delivery

- **Launch of Tou+PrEP, Québec's first telepharmacy platform dedicated to PrEP access. In Quebec, only a pharmacy can legally integrate and offer online consultation, lab requisitions, and next-day medication delivery**
- **Addresses barriers: geography, stigma, scheduling constraints**
- **Telepharmacy can amplify pharmacist capacity while removing barriers to care.**
- **Pharmacy now offers prescription and analysis of STI testing at any location in Qc**
 - **Pharmacies still can't collaborate with public labs, a major barrier to equitable access and affordable on-site testing.**

Today's results

An expanding in-pharmacy clinic meeting growing demand



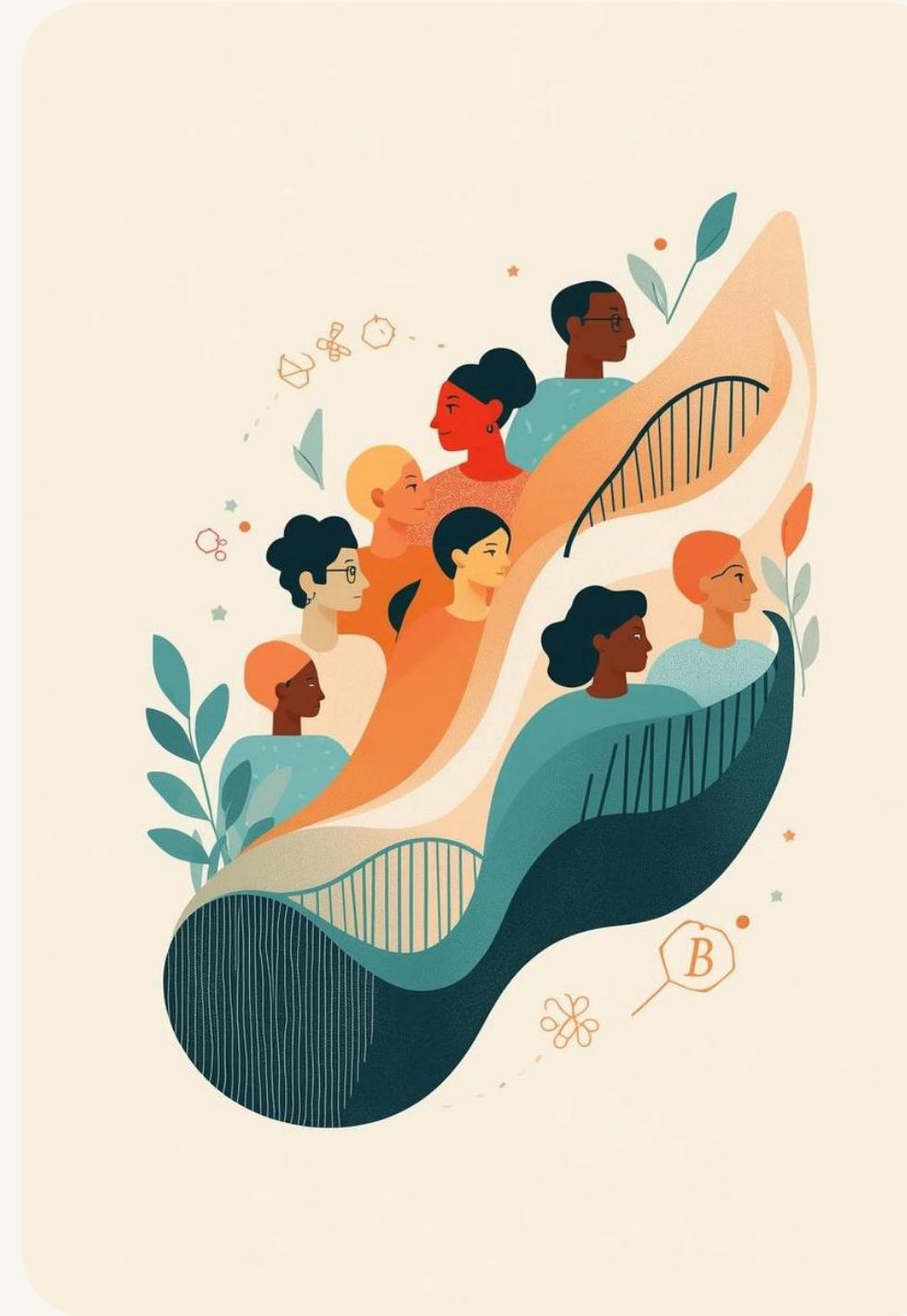
Where we are now

- 998 patients have received care, either continuously or episodically since July 2023
- 691+ active patients in the past year.
- 280 active patients last month (does not include most on-demand PrEP users)
- 46% follow the IPERGAY (on-demand) regimen; 54% on daily PrEP with rising demand for long-acting injectable PrEP (63 patients so far).
- 79% were new to PrEP at enrollment
- Added an in-pharmacy nursing service for STI testing and injections
- Dedicated exam room with treatment bed for injectables
- Doxy-PEP available since February 2025

Tou+PrEP has proven that a pharmacy-based model can drive meaningful impact province-wide.

Main challenges

Building a PrEP Clinic in a Small Business Setting



- **Resource constraints:**
 - managing both the clinic and regular pharmacy duties.
- **Financial risks:**
 - unpaid consultation hours, no revenue beyond prescription fees.
- **Fragmented care persists:**
 - patients often navigate multiple locations for labs and testing.
- **Logistics challenges:**
 - Free, province-wide deliveries difficult to organize and strained by Canada Post strikes.
- **System limitations:**
 - No software for tracking follow-ups, reminders, or patient retention.
- **Reaching underserved populations:**
 - Hard to reach Indigenous, immigrant, and racialized women without community partnerships.
- **Training gaps:**
 - Few pharmacists currently feel confident managing PrEP consultations or complex cases.

Bill 67 and the road ahead

A new legal framework for prevention and care access



THE GOOD NEWS:

Pharmacists will gain new prescribing powers

- Expands pharmacists' prescribing scope to a wide range of preventive and chronic conditions.
- For sexual health, pharmacists will be authorized to initiate and renew PrEP and PEP, and support STI screening.
- This could make HIV prevention more accessible province-wide, especially outside Montréal.
- The reform aligns public-health priorities with pharmacists' frontline expertise.
- → A turning point toward equitable, decentralized access to care.

Bill 67 and the road ahead

A new legal framework for prevention and care access



THE GOOD NEWS:

Pharmacists will gain new prescribing powers

Prescription for minor ailments possible when:

- High prevalence in the population of pharmacist's practice
- Typical signs and symptoms
- Likely to evolve favorably on its own
- Patient's overall health status
- Low risk of harm to the patient

Prescription to prevent diseases, health conditions, signs or symptoms.

The pharmacist must possess the necessary expertise to assess and manage such condition safely.

Next Steps

Building the foundation for sustainable, scalable access



Scaling up and meeting demand

- Recruit clinical nurse(s) to expand consultation hours, on-site testing, injections and support injectable PrEP.
- Adopt a medical CRM to coordinate follow-ups, labs, and patient reminders.
- Evaluate compliant AI technologies to help with note taking, workflow management, etc
- Hire an administrative coordinator to handle logistics, refills, and deliveries.
- Deploy compliant marketing campaign

We' aim to build not just a clinic, but an infrastructure for equitable, pharmacist-led prevention across Quebec.

Lessons Learned From the Field

What it will take to make Bill 67 work



- **Training & mentorship:** Equip pharmacists for PrEP, STI care, and inclusive patient communication.
- **Operational design:** Fit consultations into existing workflow and staffing models.
- **Fair remuneration:** Sustainable prevention relies on time-based compensation.
- **Community partnerships:** Collaboration with public labs and local organizations remains key.
- **Equity & inclusion:** Reach racialized, Indigenous, and immigrant populations.
- **Culture change:** Normalize sexual-health discussions within pharmacy practice.

The law opens the door, but it's up to us to walk through it.

Thank you



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