

# TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

**NOVEMBER IS A TIME TO REFLECT ON THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES FACED BY TRANSGENDER AND TWO-SPIRIT INDIVIDUALS**, not just here in Nova Scotia, but also worldwide. Each year, on Nov. 20, we observe Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR), a day to honour those who have tragically lost their lives to transphobic violence. This day isn't just about remembering the past, though; it's also a reminder of the work still to be done to ensure the safety of transgender and Two-Spirit communities.

Transgender Day of Remembrance dates back to 1999, when transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith organized a vigil to remember Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was murdered in 1998. Since then, TDOR has grown into a global movement, including here in Nova Scotia, to raise awareness of the violence that disproportionately affects transgender people, particularly trans women of colour and Two-Spirit individuals. Events held across the province offer us a chance to pause, reflect and push for much-needed change in both our systems and our attitudes.

The term Two-Spirit is unique to Indigenous cultures in North America and refers to individuals who embody both masculine and feminine spirits or who hold a gender identity outside of the Western gender binary. Two-Spirit people have historically played important spiritual, leadership and healing roles within their communities. It's essential to recognize that Two-Spirit identities are distinct from transgender identities and are rooted in the cultural traditions and values of Indigenous nations. Supporting Two-Spirit individuals means honouring their cultural heritage while also continuing to advocate for inclusive, gender-affirming healthcare.

## Connection to Doctors Nova Scotia's Work

Physicians in Nova Scotia play a vital role in offering affirming and culturally competent care to transgender and Two-Spirit patients. Meeting the health-care needs of these communities involves more than just providing medical services; it means understanding the barriers they face in accessing care, such as challenges related to gender-affirming treatments and Two-Spirit health perspectives. At Doctors Nova Scotia, we are dedicated to promoting equitable care by supporting physicians in understanding how these intersecting identities impact the health experiences of their patients. Our commitment to reconciliation and EDIA reflects this awareness, as we work to ensure all patients receive the support they deserve.



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## Resources

- Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project ([nsrap.ca](https://nsrap.ca))
- prideHealth at Nova Scotia Health ([tinyurl.com/NSH-PrideHealth](https://tinyurl.com/NSH-PrideHealth))
- What is Two-Spirit? ([tinyurl.com/CMHR-TwoSpirit](https://tinyurl.com/CMHR-TwoSpirit))
- Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance ([w2sa.ca](https://w2sa.ca))



Find more EDIA resources, videos and tools in the DNS SharePoint EDIA Hub.