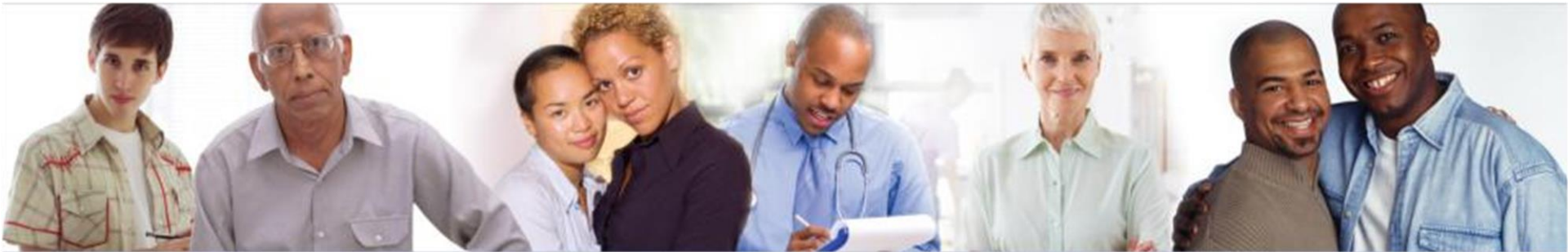




NATIONAL LGBT HEALTH
EDUCATION CENTER

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LGBT Aging 101: **What You Need to Know about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Aging**

Lisa Krinsky, LICSW

Director, LGBT Aging Project



Goals for today



1. Identify unique life experiences, care concerns and aging challenges facing LGBT older adults and caregivers
2. Increase knowledge of innovative approaches to creating welcoming environments and programming for LGBT older adults and caregivers
3. Understand various opportunities in clinical and macro settings to advance the services, policies and programs that support the wellbeing of LGBT older adults and caregivers

History of the LGBT Aging Project

- Elder Services: *LGBT Issues not on their radar screen*
- LGBT Community: *Elder Issues not on their radar screen.*
- Result: LGBT Older Adults were being overlooked

Our Mission

To ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults and caregivers have equal access to the life-prolonging benefits, protections, services and institutions that their neighbors take for granted so that they can grow older with the dignity and respect they deserve

Equal not Separate

Our goal is not to develop a separate service network for LGBT older adults but to be catalysts of change to make the existing system inclusive of all older adults and caregivers.

How Many LGBT Older Adults?

Today: 1.4 to 3.8 million in U.S

(Harley & Teaster, 2016)

2030 estimate: 3.6 to 7.2 million in U.S.

(Harley & Teaster, 2016)

Three Generations:

- Invisible -- the oldest old
- Secret --- greatest generation
- Proud – baby boomers and beyond

What's So Different?

Elder Issues

- Healthcare
- Housing
- Medication Costs
- Social Network: Family, Friends
- Income
- Retirement / Work
- Social / Recreational Activities

LGBT Elder Issues

- Healthcare
- Housing
- Medication Costs
- Social Network: Family, Friends
- Income
- Retirement / Work
- Social / Recreational Activities

Aging Supports



Spouse
Partner



Children
& Grand



Family
Of Origin



Faith
Community



Local
Community



Social
Community



Social
Services



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Aging Supports



Spouse
Partner



Children
& Grand

Family
Of Origin



Faith
Community



Local
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Social
Community



Social
Services



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Aging Supports: Boomers & Millennials



Spouse
Partner



Children
& Grand



Family
Of Origin



Faith
Community



Local
Community



Social
Community



Social
Services



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Mainstream Supports



Public
Safety



Health
Care



Military
Service



Faith
Community



Housing



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Mainstream Supports



Public
Safety



Health
Care



Military
Service



Faith
Community



Housing

Entrapment,
Harassment



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Mainstream Supports



Public
Safety

Entrapment,
Harassment



Health
Care

Mental Illness
(until 1973)
Institutionalization



Military
Service



Faith
Community



Housing

Mainstream Supports



Public
Safety

Entrapment,
Harassment



Health
Care

Mental Illness
(until 1973)
Institutionalization



Military
Service

Dishonorable
Discharge



Faith
Community



Housing



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Mainstream Supports



Public
Safety

Entrapment,
Harassment



Health
Care

Mental Illness
(until 1973)
Institutionalization



Military
Service

Dishonorable
Discharge



Faith
Community

Sin
Immoral



Housing



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Mainstream Supports



Public
Safety

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Discharge



Faith
Community

Sin
Immoral



Housing

Eviction
Harassment



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Anna

Sarah

Born:	1930	1950
McCarthy Trials (1954)	24	4
Stonewall (1969)	39	19
APA/DSM (1973)	43	23
Harvey Milk Elected (1977)	47	27
Reagan Mentions AIDS (1987)	57	37
“Ellen” Comes Out on TV (1997)	67	47
Gay Marriage is Legal in MA (2004)	74	54
Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Repealed (2011)	81	61
DOMA Repealed (2013)	83	63
SCOTUS: Marriage Equality (2015)	85	65

Consequences of Distrust in Mainstream Institutions

- Greatest coping strategy: Becoming Invisible
- Strong self-reliance
- Limited circle of support
- “Home” is important safe-haven

Mental Health

- Pathology of Identity: You are Sick and Need a Cure
- 1973 DSM Revision: Homosexuality no longer a Mental Disorder. Change in Policy; Change in Practice?
- Gender Identity Disorder: DSM Clinicians as gatekeepers to hormone/reassignment treatment
- 2013 DSM Revision: GID no longer a Mental Disorder.
- Gender Dysphoria: emotional distress from "a marked incongruence between one's experienced/expressed gender and assigned gender."

HIV/AIDS and Aging

- Disproportionally LGBT and People of Color
- By 2017: Approximately 50% of all people in the U.S. living with HIV & AIDS are over 50 years old

CDC, 2015

- Long Term Survivors (infected pre HAART; 20 years with HIV)
- New Infection (not at risk or ‘should have known better’ → later stage)
- New Diagnosis (17% of all new diagnosis were 50+)
- Enormous Cultural Taboo: Sexuality and Aging
- “who me?” heterosexual transmission & “who cares” in gay/bi transmission



Bisexuality and Aging

- Most invisible element in LGBT spectrum -assumption of identity based on current partner
- Stigma, historical/cultural factors, life history, and context impact self identification
- In comparison with Heterosexuals, Lesbians, and Gays, Bisexuals experience significant Health Disparities including higher rates of self-harm, suicide, depression, anxiety, drug/alcohol use

Elders of Color & Aging

- Lifetime experience with minority stress (multiple minority identities – multiple stressors)
- What does it mean to be LGBT in one's racial/ethnic community? What does it mean to be old?
- What does it mean to be a person of color in the LGBT community? What does it mean to be old?
- Flashback Sunday – community for LGBT EOC



Transgender Aging

- Transition early in life: some lived “stealth” with no history or context; significant losses
- Transition later in life: after milestones
 - Death of parents, grown children, retirement, divorce
- High rates of unemployment, underemployment, violence, denied healthcare
- Reluctance & fear of health/long term care



LGBT Baby Boomers as Caregivers

Most LGBT Caregiving is Horizontal not Vertical

<u>General Population</u>	<u>LGBT Population</u>
women	men/women
90% birth/marriage	35% partner/spouse
	16% parent
	9% other relative
10% non relative	32% friend
	7% non relative/neighbor

Source: *The Aging and Health Report: Disparities and Resilience in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Older Adults*, 2011

LGBT Caregiver Support Group: Safe space for unique experience

Alzheimer's & LGBT Patients/Loved Ones

- Diagnosis – When and by whom?
 - Diagnosis could be delayed due to lack of socialization/family support and/or fear of doctor visits
- Care – Primary contact? Who manages? Who is informed?
 - Family may be estranged = partner may be ousted
 - May not have family or emergency contact information
- Legal Issues – “next of kin” vs. “family of choice”
 - Estranged/unaccepting family member may not respect relationship or wishes
 - LGBT friends may end up being Health Care Proxy or Power of Attorney



LGBT Cultural Competency Training for Individual Practice

- Individual and Organizational Practice
 - Challenge Heterosexist assumptions
 - Normalize inclusion
 - Consider gender-neutral language and labels
 - Language of times/context
 - Expand definition of family and friends
 - Handle possible backlash as a strong LGBT ally

LGBT Cultural Competency Training for Organizations

- Create inclusive and supportive service delivery systems
 - More than a rainbow sticker
- Enhance professional capacity and cultural competency
 - Diverse backgrounds of workforce and consumers
- Strengthen the collaboration between mainstream providers and the networks that serve the LGBT population
 - Ask what is happening for LGBT older adults?

Clinical and Community Engagement

Clinical

- Coming out as a lifelong event (when/where)
- Intersectionality with other identities
- LGBT caregiving and bereavement support

Community Organizing & Engagement/Programming

- LGBT Pride
- LGBT elders of color
- LGBT senior housing focus groups/task force

Engagement of LGBT Older Adults and Caregivers

- LGBT Pride Celebrations
- LGBT friendly community meal sites for older adults – 18 statewide!
- Intergenerational activities – LGBT cultural heritage and affirmation
- PFLAG – Hetero/Cis older adults with LGBT children/g kids

Macro Settings

- Organization, Staff and Program Management
- Civic Leadership and Visibility: LGBT in Aging
Aging in LGBT
- Research inclusive of LGBT older adults
- Ensure policy and Advocacy: Local/National level remain inclusive of LGBT older adults

SPECIAL
LEGISLATIVE
COMMISSION ON
LESBIAN, GAY,
BISEXUAL AND
TRANSGENDER
AGING

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Q & A

Are there any unanswered questions that you would like to ask?

For More Information:

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