

# THE NATIONAL LGBT HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER



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## **LGBT Aging: Social Supports, Outreach, and Policy**

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## **LGBT Aging: Social Supports, Outreach, and Policy**

This publication was produced by the National LGBT Health Education Center, The Fenway Institute, Fenway Health with funding under cooperative agreement# U30CS22742 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Primary Health Care. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of HHS or HRSA.

# Disclosures

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Disclosure: No relevant financial relationships. Content of presentation contains no use of unlabeled and/or investigational uses of products.

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# Polling Question

Did you attend the January 22, 2013 Fenway/SAGE webinar on LGBT aging, featuring Dr. Mark Simone-Skidmore?

-Yes

-No

-Not Sure



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# Polling Question

Where do you currently work?

- a. Health care setting (e.g. FQHC, office, hospital, short-term rehab)
- b. Aging services (e.g. long-term care, senior center, SUA, AAA, ADRC)
- c. Academia/research
- d. Government agency not listed above
- e. Community-based agency not listed above
- f. Other



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# Learning objectives

- ☐ Describe current research on the psychosocial needs of LGBT older adults
- ☐ Identify services and supports currently available for referral and replication
- ☐ Understand key legal and policy issues affecting LGBT older adults



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# Why focus on these objectives?

- ❑ Aging patients need more support
  - LGBT older adults have other unique needs



# Who are LGBT Older Adults?

## ❑ Older LGBT Adults:

- 1 million to 2.8 million today
- 2 million to 6 million by 2030

## ❑ Geographically and racially diverse

## ❑ Older LGBT people have higher rates of poverty



Sources: Cahill et al. National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Foundation 2000

Gary Gates, "Same-Sex Couples in US Census 2010: Race and Ethnicity," The Williams Institute, 2012

Albeda R et al. "Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community" The Williams Institute, March 2009



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# Disparities

*The Aging and Health Report, Disparities and Resilience among LGBT Older Adults (2011) found:*

- ☐ Nearly one-half have a disability
- ☐ Nearly one-third report depression
- ☐ Almost two-thirds have been victimized three or more times
- ☐ Thirteen percent have been denied health care or received inferior care
- ☐ More than 20% do not disclose their sexual or gender identity to their physician
- ☐ About one-third do not have a will or durable power of attorney for health care.



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# Resilience

*The Aging and Health Report, Disparities and Resilience among LGBT Older Adults (2011) found:*

- ❑ Most (91%) engage in wellness activities
- ❑ 89% feel good about belonging to the LGBT community
- ❑ 38% attend spiritual or religious services or activities
- ❑ 83% have people with whom to do something enjoyable, but...

# Risk for Isolation, Loneliness

- ❑ In comparison with heterosexual and non-transgender older adults, LGBT older adults are:
  - Significantly more likely to be isolated
  - Half as likely to have a significant other
  - Half as likely to have close relatives to call for help
  - Four times more likely to have no children to help them
    - Source: *Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults*, March 2010, <http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=16>
  - 49% of gays and lesbians over 50 years live alone compared to 33% of heterosexuals over 50
    - Source: MA Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey (BRFSS)



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# Risk for Isolation, Loneliness

10-25% of LGBT older people are unable to identify someone to call in a time of need

*Source: Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults, March 2010,*  
<http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=16>



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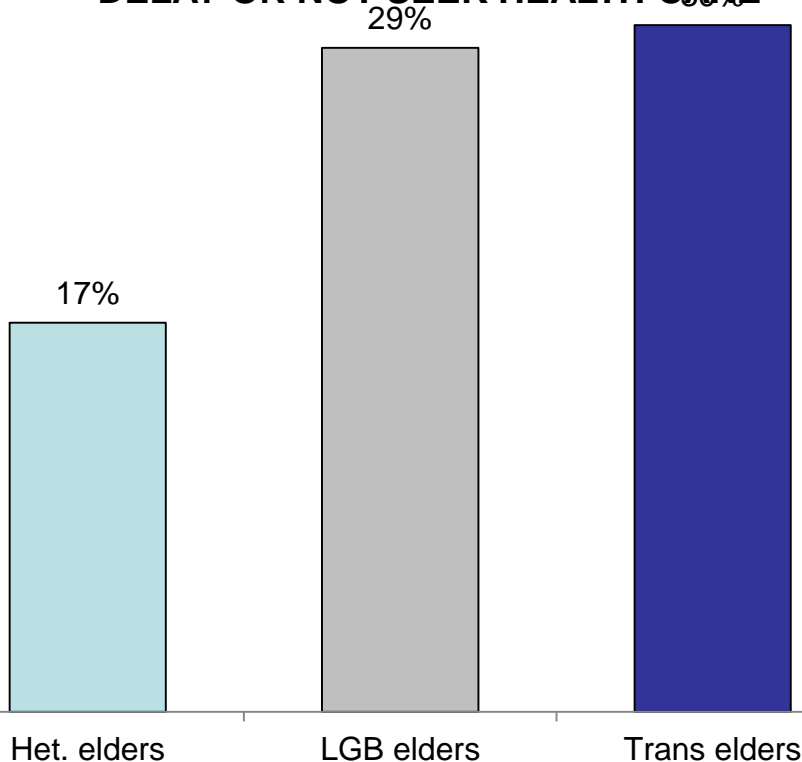
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# Inhospitable Health Care Environments



## DELAY OR NOT SEEK HEALTH CARE



## NEGLECTED BY A CARETAKER BECAUSE OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY



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# Summary- LGBT older adults...



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# Accessing Services

- ❑ Several studies show that LGBT older adults access essential services less frequently than the general aging population:
  - visiting nurses
  - food stamps
  - senior centers
  - meal plans

Sources: Brotman, Ryan S., and R.B. Cormier. "The Health and Social Service Needs of Gay and Lesbian Elders and Their Families in Canada." *The Gerontologist* 43(2): 192-202.

Cahill, S., South, K., Spade, J. (2000). *Outing age: Public policy issues affecting gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender elders*. The Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

The MetLife Mature Market Institute. "Survey of American Attitudes Toward Retirement," 2005.

Milwaukee County Department for the Aging. Unpublished 1997.



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# Possible Issues in Long-Term Care:

- ☐ Potentially hostile staff members and fellow patients
- ☐ Denial of visits from family of choice
- ☐ Refusal to allow same-sex partners to room together
- ☐ Refusal to involve family of choice in medical decision-making
- ☐ Refusal to respect gender identity of transgender patients

*Sources: Improving the Lives (id.)*

*LGBT Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities, Stories from the Field,*  
[lgbtlongtermcare.org](http://lgbtlongtermcare.org)



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***“Isolation, finding friend support, caregiving and health are the biggest issues older gay persons face. Who will be there for us, who will help care for us without judgment?”***

**- 66-year-old lesbian**

Source: The Aging and Health Report: *Disparities and Resilience among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults*. Seattle: Institute for Multigenerational Health, 2011



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# The SAGE Center: Portal to care

In March of 2012, through an Innovative Senior Center Initiative launched by NYC's mayor, Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE), opened the nation's first full time LGBT Senior Center.



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# Health and Wellness

The SAGE Center's Health and Wellness programs have been designed to address the issues and barriers that LGBT older adults experience in accessing care.



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# Overall Goal

- ❑ The overall goal of the SAGE Center's Wellness Programming is to:
  - Help LGBT older adults navigate the health care system
  - Bring information and education to them
  - Reduce the isolation and stigma that often results in poor follow-up and adherence.



# H&W programming examples

- Health and nutrition education
- Targeted support groups for high risk populations
  - Cancer support groups
  - Fitness and nutrition programs to achieve healthy weight
  - HIV and Aging program focusing on community support



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# Education

The goal of The SAGE Center is to provide, in community, the tools to empower LGBT older adults to age in place and in health.



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# Partnerships

The SAGE Center currently has relationships with:

- Major medical center (*Beth Israel/Continuum*)
- Community Health Centers (*Callen Lorde*)
- Managed Long-Term Care programs
- Nutrition providers (*The Food Bank of New York City*)
- Community wellness providers (*YMCA, Walgreen's Pharmacies*)
- CBOs (CancerCare, Ctr. for Medicare Rights, Iris House, GMHC)



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# Some services offered

□ Through these partnerships, The SAGE Center:

- Provides on-site RN services
- Created a *"Meet the Doctors"*
- Offers congregate and take-home meals, and creating a food bank
- Educates seniors on benefits counseling
- Provides flu-shots and HIV testing
- New programming added monthly



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# The National Resource Center on LGBT Aging

- ❑ Project of SAGE, in partnership with 14 national orgs
- ❑ Funded by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
- ❑ Provides clearinghouse information ([www.lgbtagingcenter.org](http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org))
- ❑ Trains service providers on culturally competent care

Visit our HIV & Aging resources, generously supported by the M-A-C AIDS Fund.

Like Us On Facebook | Follow Us On Twitter

HOME EMAIL UPDATES FACEBOOK TWITTER READING HELP FONT SIZE

**National Resource Center ON LGBT AGING**

For Aging Providers | For LGBT Organizations | For LGBT Older Adults | About Us | Resources | News & Events | Donate

Articles | Publications | Multimedia | Resources in Your Area | Other Resources

## Health & Wellness

**SORT LIST BY**  
Date  
Title

We're steadily creating a resource center that will provide resources across a variety of LGBT aging topics. Tell us what you'd like to see and sign up for updates.

**REGISTER NOW**

Disclaimer

**NEW LGBT CAREGIVER CONCERNS (ALZHEIMER'S)**  
This brochure is for LGBT caregivers for persons with dementia, helping to navigate community resources and options for support. [MORE >](#)  
[View PDF Online](#) | [Download PDF](#)  
Read more: Aging & Ageism, Caregiving, Health & Wellness, Aging Providers, LGBT Organizations, LGBT Older Adults

**NEW HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS OF LGBT OLDER ADULTS**  
This research study provides one of the most comprehensive descriptions of the health, well-being and social context of LGBT older adults. [MORE >](#)  
[View PDF Online](#) | [Download PDF](#)  
Read more: General Issues, Health & Wellness, Health Care Access, HIV & Aging, Aging Providers, LGBT Organizations, LGBT Older Adults

**NEW IMPROVING THE HEALTH CARE OF LGBT PEOPLE**  
This document, produced by the National LGBT Health Education Center, offers a brief overview of the major issues relevant to the health and health care of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. [MORE >](#)  
Read more: Health & Wellness, Health Care Access, Aging Providers, LGBT Organizations, LGBT Older Adults

**SUBSTANCE USE IN LGBT OLDER ADULTS: WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE NEED TO LEARN**  
This article begins to explore research needs on substance abuse within LGBT older adults. The author cites facts from recent reports and studies that were conducted within the LGBT older population. [MORE >](#)  
Read more: Health & Wellness, Mental Health, LGBT Organizations

**BROWSE RESOURCES**

**BY SUBJECT**

- Aging & Ageism
- Bisexuality
- Caregiving
- Community
- Cultural Competence
- Elder Abuse
- Employment / Workforce Issues
- End of Life Decisions
- En Español
- Families
- Financial Security
- General Issues
- Health & Wellness
- Health Care Access
- HIV & Aging
- Homophobia & Transphobia
- Housing & Homelessness
- Legal Support
- Lesbian
- Medicaid & Medicare
- Mental Health
- Racial Equity
- Retirement
- Social Security
- Spirituality
- Transgender

**BY TYPE**

- Articles
- Publications
- Multimedia
  - Videos
  - Webinars
  - Slideshows
  - Audio

[www.lgbtagingcenter.org](http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org)



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A map of the United States showing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Each state is filled with a solid purple color and contains its two-letter postal abbreviation in white capital letters. The abbreviations are as follows:

- Alaska:** AK
- Alabama:** AL
- Arizona:** AZ
- Arkansas:** AR
- California:** CA
- Colorado:** CO
- Connecticut:** CT
- Delaware:** DE
- District of Columbia:** DC
- Florida:** FL
- Hawaii:** HI
- Idaho:** ID
- Illinois:** IL
- Indiana:** IN
- Iowa:** IA
- Kansas:** KS
- Kentucky:** KY
- Louisiana:** LA
- Maine:** ME
- Maryland:** MD
- Massachusetts:** MA
- Michigan:** MI
- Minnesota:** MN
- Mississippi:** MS
- Missouri:** MO
- Montana:** MT
- Nebraska:** NE
- Nevada:** NV
- New Hampshire:** NH
- New Jersey:** NJ
- New York:** NY
- North Carolina:** NC
- North Dakota:** ND
- Ohio:** OH
- Oklahoma:** OK
- Oregon:** OR
- Pennsylvania:** PA
- Rhode Island:** RI
- South Carolina:** SC
- South Dakota:** SD
- Tennessee:** TN
- Texas:** TX
- Vermont:** VT
- Virginia:** VA
- Washington:** WA
- West Virginia:** WV
- Wisconsin:** WI
- Wyoming:** WY

Click on a state above or show Resources in: Select State



Across the country, a growing number of federal offices and state organizations offer tools and resources to help older adults find services, benefits, and other forms of aid that may be available to them. **Go to our listing of these resources** for more information on health care, LGBT community centers, housing services and

## BY SUBJECT

- Aging & Ageism
- Bisexuality
- Caregiving
- Community
- Cultural Competence
- Elder Abuse
- Employment / Workforce Issues
- End of Life Decisions
- En Español
- Families
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- Health Care Access
- HIV & Aging
- Homophobia & Transphobia
- Housing & Homelessness
- Legal Resources
- Lesbian
- Medicaid & Medicare
- Mental Health
- Racial Equity
- Retirement
- Social Security
- Spirituality
- Transgender

## BY TYPE

- Articles
- Publications
- Multimedia
  - Videos
  - Webinars
  - Slideshows
  - Audio
- Local Resources

## BY AUDIENCE

- For Aging Providers
- For LGBT Organizations
- For LGBT Older Adults



## In Massachusetts

### SORT LIST BY

Date  
Subject  
Title

We're steadily creating a resource center that will provide resources across a variety of LGBT aging topics. Tell us what you'd like to see and sign up for updates.

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Disclaimer

### NEW LGBT AGING PROJECT

A non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults have equal access to the life-prolonging benefits, protections, services and institutions that their heterosexual neighbors take for granted. [MORE >](#)

[Go to Web Site](#) | 617-522-1292

[Read more:](#) Caregiving, Community, Cultural Competence, Health & Wellness, Aging Providers, LGBT Organizations, LGBT Older Adults



### Q&A WITH BOB LINSCHOTT OF THE LGBT AGING PROJECT

Bob Linscott, Assistant Director of The LGBT Aging Project in Boston, speaks with us about his organization's caregiving services. [MORE >](#)

[Read more:](#) Caregiving, Aging Providers, LGBT Organizations, LGBT Older Adults

### NEW OVER THE RAINBOW SUPPER CLUB (NORTH SHORE)

LGBT community meals in Massachusetts [MORE >](#)

[Go to Web Site](#) | (978) 624-2261

[Read more:](#) Community, Aging Providers, LGBT Organizations, LGBT Older Adults

### NEW RAINBOW LUNCH CLUB (WORCESTER AREA)

LGBT Community Meals in Massachusetts [MORE >](#)

[Go to Web Site](#) | (508) 756-1545 X339

[Read more:](#) Community, LGBT Older Adults

### NEW LAKE SIDE CAFÉ (METRO EAST)

LGBT Community Meals in Massachusetts [MORE >](#)

[Go to Web Site](#) | (781) 784-4944

[Read more:](#) Community, LGBT Older Adults

### NEW CAFÉ EMMANUEL (BOSTON/BACK BAY)

LGBT Community Meals in Massachusetts [MORE >](#)

[Go to Web Site](#) | (617) 477-6610

[Read more:](#) Community, LGBT Older Adults

### NEW OUT TO BRUNCH: MONTHLY BRUNCH FOR OLDER LBT WOMEN

LGBT Community Meals in Massachusetts [MORE >](#)

### BROWSE RESOURCES

#### BY SUBJECT

- Aging & Ageism
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#### BY TYPE

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- Local Resources

#### BY AUDIENCE

- For Aging Providers
- For LGBT Organizations
- For LGBT Older Adults

#### ADVANCED SEARCH

# Across the Country

## ☐ LGBT older adult meal sites:

- New York, NY
- St. Louis, MO
- Chicago, IL
- Across MA
- Rochester, NY
- Tulsa, OK

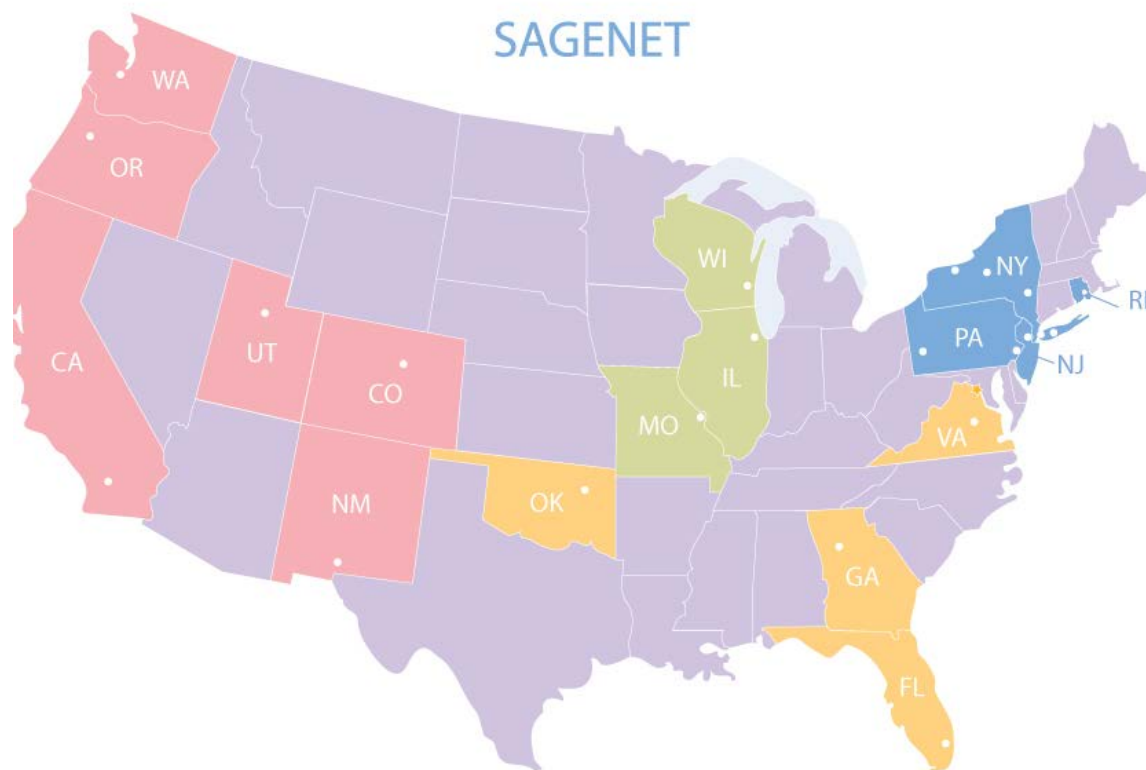


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## SAGE Affiliates with H & W Programming

Learn more: [sageusa.org/advocacy/sagenet](https://sageusa.org/advocacy/sagenet)



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# Financial, Legal, and Policy Challenges for LGBT elders



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# Advance Directives

## ❑ Two main types

- Living will
  - Provides instruction if person incapacitated
  - Disadvantage: doesn't pick a decision maker
- Health care power of attorney
  - Allows the individual to designate a surrogate decision maker

## ❑ Often combined into an “Advance Health Directive”



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# Advance Directives

- ☐ Many elders don't have the means to obtain them
- ☐ Even if legal, some health providers may disregard them, and patients may not know their rights
- ☐ LGBT elders must carry these documents with them at all times



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# Hospital Visitation Rights

## The New York Times

WELL

Kept From a Dying Partner's Bedside



Karie Hamilton for The New York Times

Aggrieved Janice Langbehn, with her children, Danielle, 15; David, 13; and Katie, 12 (back to camera), has sued the hospital that treated her partner.

By TARA PARKER-POPE

Published: May 18, 2009



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# The Lisa Pond Case, 2007

- ❑ Ms. Pond collapsed during a vacation and was taken to a Miami trauma center
- ❑ She died while her partner, Janice Langbehn, and their children, were trying to visit
- ❑ She filed a lawsuit but it was dismissed in federal court

# 2010 Executive Order on Visitation

- ❑ Executive order, April 2010 for Medicare/Medicaid facilities
- ❑ Must honor visitation rights and advance directives of LGBT patients



# Default Surrogate Selection Laws

- ❑ In the absence of advance directives, states have laws for default surrogate decision makers
- ❑ Some already recognize gay unions
- ❑ Others offer leeway in letting people select “close friends” as decision makers
- ❑ Others create “legal strangers”



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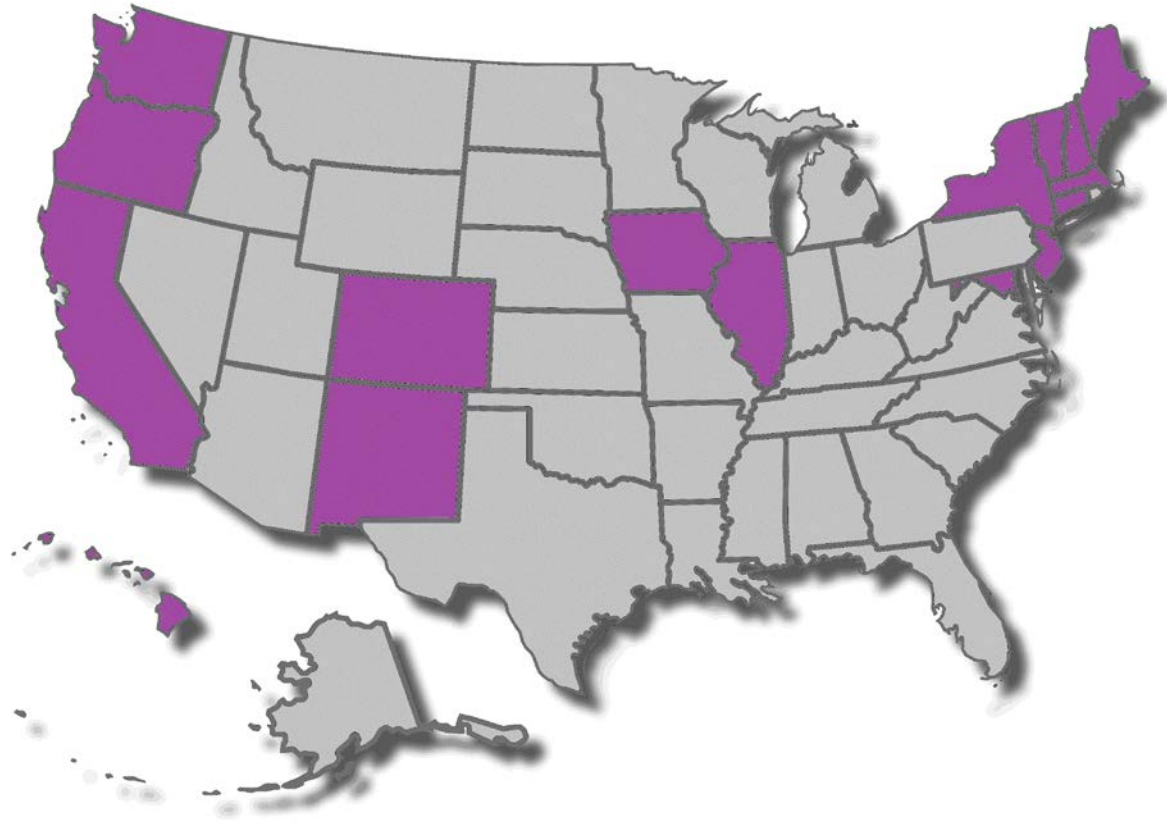
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# Laws

- ❑ Tier 1: Offer some legal recognition

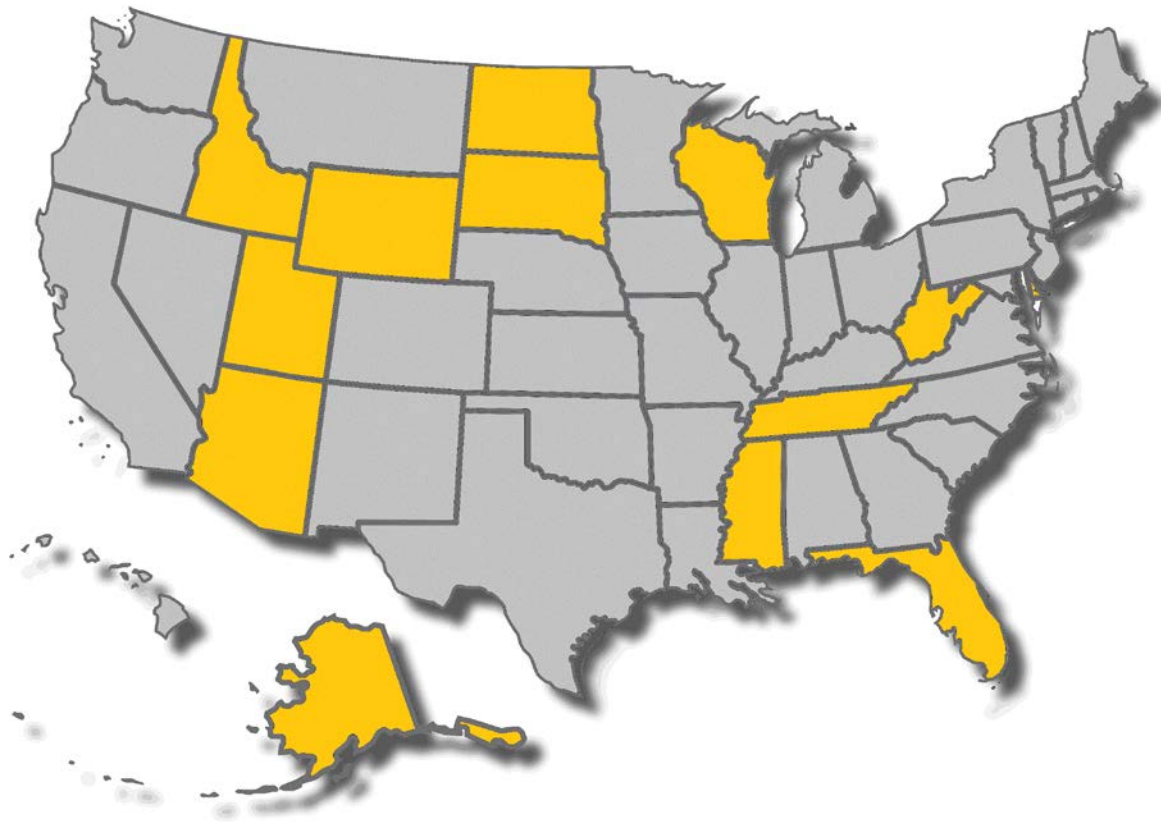


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# Default Surrogate Selection Laws

- ☐ Tier 2:  
Include a  
“close friend”  
category



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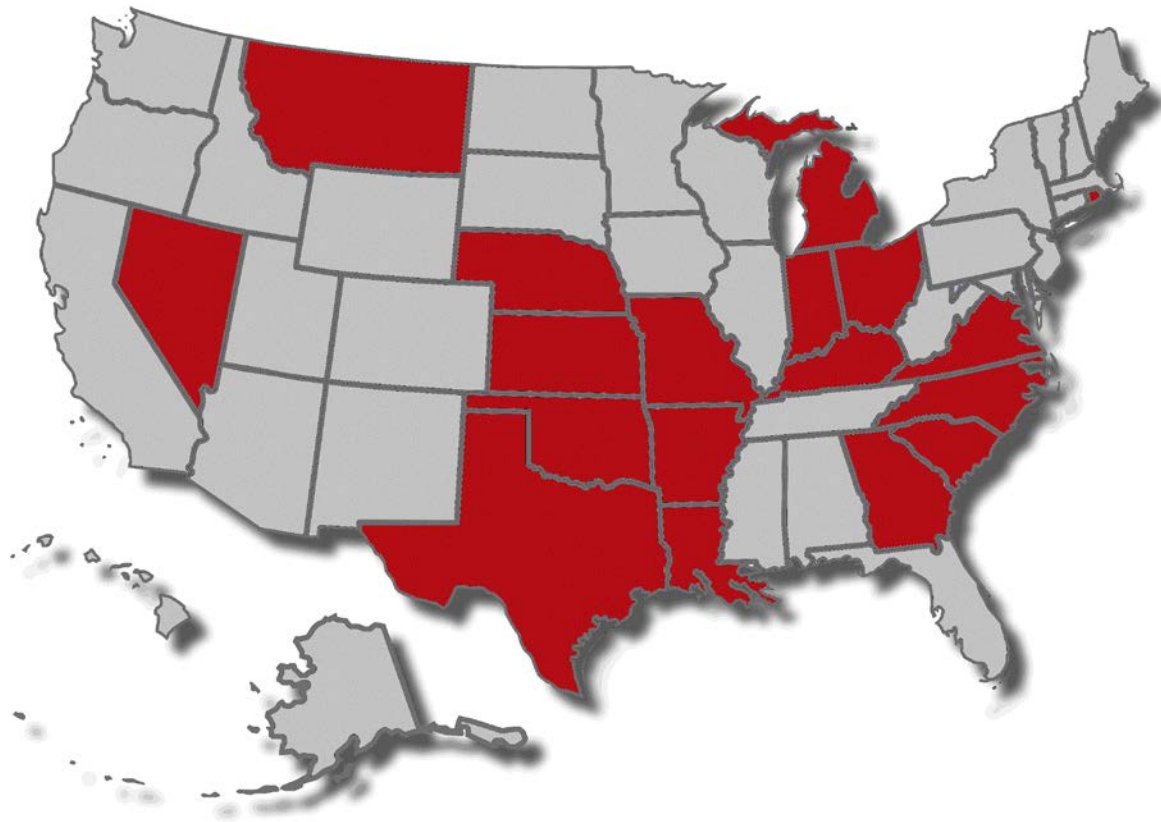
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# Default Surrogate Selection Laws

□ Tier 3: “Legal stranger” states



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# Default Decision Makers- Bottom Line

- ❑ In “legal stranger” states, LGBT people need to be aware of availability of advance health directives, and use them
- ❑ Also need to be aware of their rights so they can exercise them when needed



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# Polling question

- ☐ In your experience, what have been the greatest challenges of older LGBT people that you know or care for?
- a. Isolation, loneliness (not having someone to care for them if become ill)
  - b. Access to culturally competent care and services
  - c. Caring for ill or disabled partner/spouse
  - d. Medical decision making
  - e. Financial security
  - f. Something else/ not sure



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# Financial Security for LGBT Elders

- ❑ Stereotype of affluent LGBT people doesn't apply
- ❑ Older LGBT couples face higher poverty rates than heterosexual counterparts (Williams Institute, 2009)
  - Older lesbian couples even more disadvantaged because of wage differentials
  - Social security access



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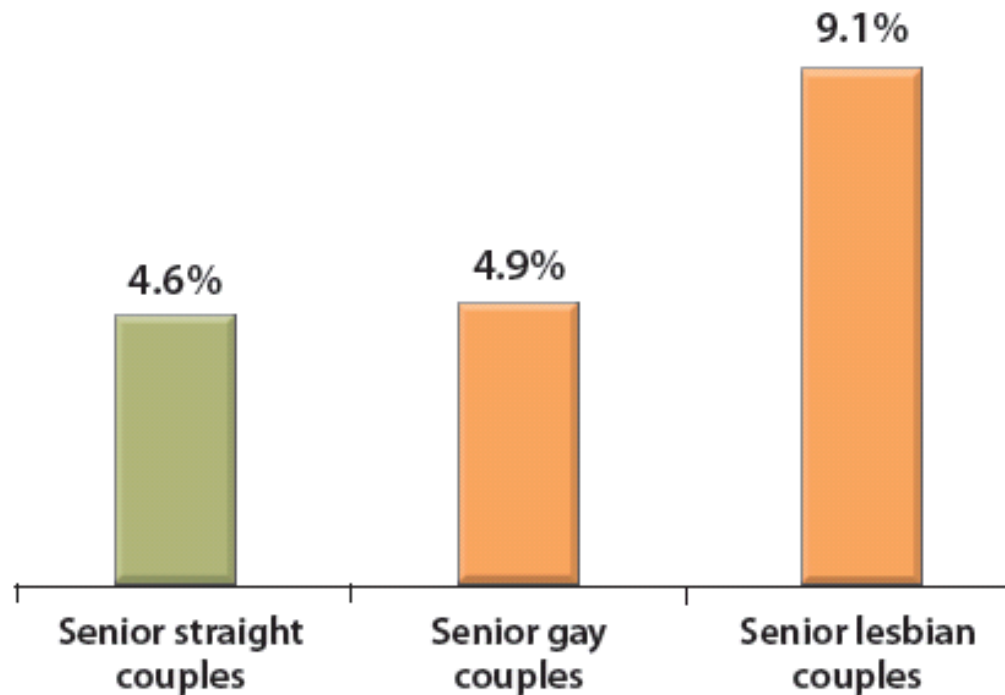
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## Rate of Poverty



Source: Goldberg, Naomi G. "The Impact of Inequality for Same-Sex Partners In Employer-Sponsored Retirement Plans," The Williams Institute, May 2009

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Obtained from "Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults", 2010



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# Access to Medicaid

- ❑ Medicaid is the largest payer of nursing home care in US
- ❑ Nursing home care is costly: \$90,250 annually (Metlife LTC survey, 2012)
- ❑ To qualify for Medicaid, programs require elders to “spend down” their income
- ❑ Most states have provisions to prevent a healthy spouse from living in poverty to fund nursing home care for a spouse
- ❑ Same-sex couples, even in states with marriage rights, did not qualify until recently



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# Medicaid (2)- Spousal Impoverishment

- ☐ Until recently, same-sex couples did not have access to spousal impoverishment protections
- ☐ CMS released guidance in 2011 that allowed states to offer these protections to same-sex couples
- ☐ States are free to offer or not offer protections



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# Summary

- ❑ Aging LGBT people face unique challenges that affect their health and well-being, including
  - Risk of isolation and lack of family supports
  - Reduced access to aging programs
  - Fear of discrimination in long-term care settings
  - Risk of financial insecurity / barriers to accessing spousal benefits

# Summary

## □ Health care providers can help by:

- Recognizing risks and barriers, as well as areas of resilience for their older LGBT patients
- Offering support and linking patients to behavioral health care as needed
- Finding appropriate local and national programs and referring patients to these
- Encouraging LGBT patients to complete advance directives
- Understanding and honoring visitation rights



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