

**National
Resource
Center**



ON LGBT AGING

So that knowledge gets better with age.

LGBT Older Adults Face Unique Challenges to Successful Aging

1. Effects of stigma, past and present

- 1.6 million LGBT elders; largely closeted
- A psychiatric disorder (*until 1973*)
- Criminal (*until 2003*)
- Fear accessing health and community services



2. Need to rely upon “families of choice” for care and support



- Twice as likely to be single, four times less likely to have children
- Rely on friends and partners who lack legal and social recognition

3. Unequal treatment under laws, programs and services for older adults



- Design safety nets around marriage, then exclude LG couples
- Fail to address stigma and discrimination

AoA's solution

- The Older Americans Act directs the Aging Network to pay particular attention to serving populations with greatest social need.
- AoA has a history of funding national organizations to serve as technical assistance resource centers for specific minority populations including Hispanic Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans.
- With the encouragement of the Administration, AoA recognizes through this new resource center that older gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender individuals have unique needs and preferences that must be addressed

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Vision Statement

Older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals in the United States feel welcome and supported in their communities, urban and rural, by both aging network and LGBT organizations and have access to culturally appropriate supports and services to assist them in their efforts to live as independently as possible in the setting of their choice.



Who makes up the NRC?

- **Training Partners:** PHI, LGBT Aging Project, openhouse, GRIOT Circle (LGBT elders of African descent), FORGE /Transgender Aging Network
- **Aging Portal Partners:** American Society on Aging, National Council on Aging's National Institute of Senior Centers, National Association of Area Agencies of Aging (n4a)
- **LGBT Portal Partner:** CenterLink (national association for LGBT community centers)
- **Evaluation Partner:** Hunter College



WHAT DO WE DO?

1. Educate mainstream aging services organizations about the existence and special needs of LGBT elders
2. Sensitize LGBT organizations about the existence and special needs of older adults
3. Educate LGBT individuals about the importance of planning ahead for future long-term care needs

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How do we do it?

- Resources Clearinghouse (lgbtagingcenter.org)
- Technical Assistance Center (email and phone)
- In-Person Trainings (Requests made online)



Being LGBT in an LTC

- Difficult to find quantitative data – many are closeted or not being surveyed/asked
- Connecting to Resources –
 - Via Ombudsman (NRC technical assistance)
 - Via direct telephone or website (many national groups, including NRC)
 - Ombudsmen training

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Reaching and Working with LGBT Consumers

- It may be threatening to be “found”
- Show signs of being open, safe and respectful
 - use inclusive language (e.g. partner, instead of husband/wife)
 - use forms that reflect inclusiveness
 - confidentiality is key
 - advocate in a safe way (know their rights & make sure rights are respected)
 - suggestions around programming/groups

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