



CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS OF ELDERCARE

Presentation to Emblem Health
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Presented by Catherine Thurston

LGBT OLDER ADULTS

Part 1

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Services & Advocacy
for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual
& Transgender Elders

HIGH RISK POPULATION

When compared to their heterosexual counterparts, those who identify as LGBT seniors



- *2 X more likely to age as a single person*
- *2 X more likely to live alone*
- *4 X less likely to have children to support them*
- *More likely to develop mental health and substance abuse issues*
- *More likely to be prematurely institutionalized*

THE QUANDARY

Compared to the heterosexual community, the aging LGBT community...

- *Greater need for professional social services*
- *5 X times less likely than heterosexuals to access senior services.*



LGBT CAREGIVERS

Part 2

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GOING IT ALONE

Not feeling safe in reaching out for help leads to:



- *Increased physical and mental health issues for the caregiver*
- *Care recipient is less likely to access needed services and is at a higher risk for premature institutionalization*

IDENTIFICATION

- Not self-identified:
 - *“I’m not a caregiver, I’m just doing the right thing”*
- Families of choice blur the lines as to what constitutes a caregiver
 - *“We were partners 2 years ago- I am all he has”*
- Protective reaction among LGBT older adults
 - *“We take care of our own without outside help.”*

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RESOURCES

SAGE and other organizations working with LGBT Older Adults provide:



- *Training and technical assistance to mainstream providers across the U.S. in order to highlight the unique needs of LGBT caregivers;*
- *Direct service to those caregivers, ensuring LGBT older adults know that there are safe, affirming places for them to reach out for help.*

OUT AND AGING

Part 3

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THE REPORT

*In November 2006, the Metlife Mature Market Institute in conjunction with the Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network of the American Society on Aging and Zogby International published “**Out and Aging**”, the first national study of Lesbian and Gay Baby Boomers.*



Profile of the aging baby boomer

Lived through significant shifts in social attitudes towards LGBT issues

Baby boomers are the largest generation to plan for retirement, long term care and end of life needs

Unique family structures and gender roles cause distinct concerns about caregiving, social support networks, retirement and end-of-life planning



Caregiving and Social Supports

More likely to be a caregiver: 1 in 4 LGBT Boomers surveyed said they had provided care for an adult friend or family member within the last six months.

Only 1 in 5 Boomers in the general population could say the same.

Gender parity: Equal numbers of gay and bisexual men and lesbian and bisexual women are caregivers.

Only 25%-44% of the caregivers in the general population are male.

Caregiving and social supports

36% of LGBT boomers are caring for **parents**

18% are caring for **partners**

14% are caring for **friends and another**

12% are caring for **non relatives**



Caregiving and social supports

3 out of 4 LGBT boomers surveyed expect to become caregivers

1 out of 5 are unsure who will take care of them when the need arises

The number rises to 1 out of 3 when to respondents were not partnered

More than $\frac{3}{4}$ respondents report important connections with Families of Choice

AGING AND RETIREMENT

Part 4

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GENDER DIFFERENCES

- *Lesbian and bisexual women appear to be less financially prepared for the end of life.*
 - *They are less likely than their male counterparts to*
 - *have purchased long term care insurance*
 - *have written wills*
- *Most Fearful of:*

Women	Men
Outliving their income as they age	Becoming sick , disables and dependent upon others

CONFIDENCE OF EQUALITY IN HEALTHCARE

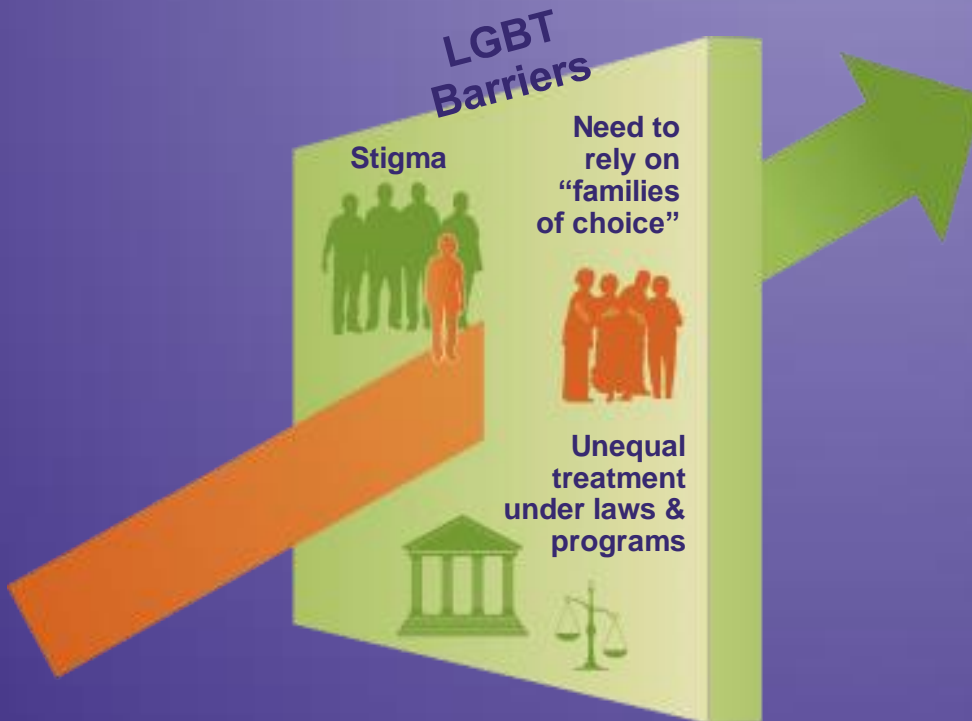
- *27% of LGBT boomers reported “great concern” about discrimination as they age.*
- *Less than half expressed strong confidence that healthcare professionals will treat them with dignity and respect.*
- *12% of lesbians said they have absolutely no confidence that they will be treated respectfully.*

UNPREPARED

- *People often ignore their own future planning*
- *51% of LGBT baby boomers do not have wills or living wills*
 - *Given the current lack of legal protection for LGBT couples and families, such documents are particularly important for LGBT older adults.*
- *LGBT caregivers often assume the rights and privileges afforded to their parents/straight friends are also afforded to them.*
 - *SS benefit*
 - *Medicaid spend down, etc.*

THREE OBSTACLES OF LGBT ELDERS' SUCCESSFUL AGING

SUCCESSFUL AGING



Financial
Security



Good Health/
Health Care



Social/
Community
Support

RESOURCES

Part 5

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EACH OTHER'S
BEST
CAREGIVERS



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SAGECAP

(Caring and Preparing) Initiative

- *Funded by the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation*
- *Focuses on the LGBT caregiver rather than the receiver of care.*
- *Dual focus*

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SAGE AND THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER ON LGBT AGING


- *Objectives of the Initiative- Administration on Aging's intent:*
 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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gets better with age.

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Challenges and Solutions of Eldercare

Presentation to Emblem Health



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