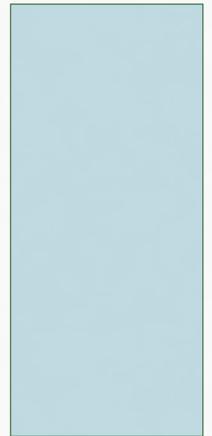


Gay & Grey

PDX

KELSEY BRANCA  
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
BEHAVIORAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

SUMMER 2012 PRACTICUM



# SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) older adults represent a growing population in the U.S.
  - Approximately 1.5 million older adults (ages 60+) currently identify as LGBT; this number is expected to double by 2030
- Lifetime experiences with discrimination, victimization, and stigma affects desire and ability to receive services



# LITERATURE REVIEW

- Health disparities
  - High rates of depression and other mental health issues
  - Disproportionate rates of disability
  - Living longer with HIV
- Social isolation
  - Twice as likely to live alone and 3-4 times less likely to have children than heterosexuals
  - Less likely to access support services due to fear of stigma
- Going back “in the closet”
  - LGBT older adults often do not disclose sexual orientation to health and housing providers due to a lifetime of discrimination

# LITERATURE REVIEW

- LGBT-inclusive aging services are few and far between
  - A 2010 nationwide survey of state and county aging providers found that only 8% offered services targeted to LGBT older adults and 12% had targeted outreach to this population.
- Aging providers lack knowledge and skills
  - Health and housing providers may be hostile or unaware of this population
  - Higher rates of abuse and neglect among LGBT older adults in care
- High rates of poverty
  - Employment discrimination, lack of marriage equality, being uninsured, gender and racial inequalities, and inadequate family support all contribute to higher rates of poverty among the LGBT community.
- Important to differentiate between cohorts
  - Pre-Stonewall vs. Gay Liberation Era

# LITERATURE REVIEW - STRENGTHS

- Crisis competency
  - LGBT older adults feel that challenges in their lives have prepared them for growing older
- “Family of Choice”
  - Although there are disparities in family support, LGBT older adults often rely on a network of close friends or “chosen family” to provide support
- Spirituality
- Wellness activities

# DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY: GAY & GREY



Gay & Grey is a program of Friendly House, a non-profit neighborhood and social services agency in Portland, OR.

Programs are open to LGBTQI seniors (and allies) and offer regularly scheduled social events, peer support groups, and resources and referrals related to health and housing.

# GAY & GREY MISSION

- ✓ Raise awareness and educate mainstream senior services providers about the specific needs and diverse cultures of the rapidly increasing population of LGBT seniors in the Portland Metro area.
- ✓ Utilize findings from event discussions to set goals for the creation of increased social, health and housing resources that meet the needs of LGBT seniors in both the short- and long-term.
- ✓ Make LGBT seniors and allies aware of current social, health and housing resources for LGBT seniors.
- ✓ Provide health check services such as blood pressure, blood sugar, bone density screening, etc.
- ✓ Educate intergenerational participants about the history of the gay community.

# PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES

Address the needs of LGBT seniors in the Portland metro area through:

- Social events and educational events
  - Assisted with weekly LGBT senior lunches
  - Planned and facilitated healthy aging with HIV class
  - Coordinate senior programming at Portland LGBT Pride
  - Attended housing advisory committee meetings
- Quarterly newsletter
- Training aging providers

# HEALTHY AGING WITH HIV

- Developed and facilitated an eight-week educational and social support class for adults 50+ living with HIV
- Adapted information from *Aging with HIV: A Gay Man's Guide* by James Masten



## Healthy *aging with* HIV

Gay & Grey is a social and advocacy group for LGBT older adults and is a program of Friendly House. Our House provides healthcare, housing, and other vital services to low-income people living with HIV/AIDS

A new class brought to you by  
Gay & Grey and Our House

*Free Class*  
*Topics Covered:*

- How the aging process is affected by HIV
- Discussion of physical changes and self care
- Dealing with loss
- How to manage real limits of HIV
- Opportunities for new growth and relationships
- Tips for optimal aging with HIV
- Symptom management and nutrition
- Learning how to advocate for yourself
- Tips to help you talk with your healthcare team and providers

**Registration is required**  
This class is for those over the age of 50 who are HIV positive

To register or get more info call or email  
Lauren Fontanarosa, Gay & Grey Coordinator  
**(503) 224-2640** [gayandgrey@friendlyhouseinc.org](mailto:gayandgrey@friendlyhouseinc.org)

This class is projected to start at the end of September  
For up to date info please visit our websites:  
[www.ourhouseofportland.org](http://www.ourhouseofportland.org)  
[www.friendlyhouseinc.org](http://www.friendlyhouseinc.org)



# PORTLAND LGBT PRIDE FESTIVAL AND PARADE



- Gay & Grey's participation in the Pride parade helped to increase awareness of LGBT seniors in the greater LGBT community
- Distributed resources to LGBT seniors and their allies
- Staffed the senior tent where seniors could come to eat snacks and rest

# AGING PROVIDER TRAININGS

- Assisted with the development of a train-the-trainer for the Oregon Home Care Commission
  - Trainers are now facilitating up to 10 trainings per month on challenges faced by LGBT older adults throughout the state of Oregon
- Senior housing assessment program
  - Rose Villa Assisted Living
- Co-facilitated LGBT competency trainings for Emilie House, an independent living facility

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- *LGBT Americans Act (amendment to the Older Americans Act)*
  - Include LGBT older adults as a vulnerable population
  - Permanently establish the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging
  - Improve data collection and analysis
  - Prioritize research and grant funding for projects which aim to meet the complex needs of LGBT older adults
- Expand aging resources which are LGBT-specific
- Advocate for all aging services providers to receive training

## SPECIAL THANKS

Lauren Fontanarosa,  
Gay & Grey Program  
Coordinator

Friendly House staff

Gay & Grey program  
participants



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- MetLife Mature Market Institute (2010). *Still out, still aging: The MetLife study of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender baby boomers*, New York, NY: MetLife Market Institute.
- Services & Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Seniors (SAGE): <http://www.sageusa.org>