



Equitas Health

INSTITUTE FOR LGBTQ HEALTH EQUITY

Aging While Trans: A Discussion of
Challenges Faced by TGNC People

Essential Questions

- What are the ways aging specifically impacts trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC) people?
- What are the specific health disparities experienced by trans elders?
- What is the need for cultural competence training for providers serving trans elders?

Specific Challenges

- TGNC older adults simultaneously experience the challenges of ageism and transphobia. (1)
- TGNC older adults came of age in an era where being trans was heavily stigmatized. (1)
- Because of lack of acceptance from family, friends, and co-workers, TGNC older adults often suffer from the effects of weakened social networks. (1)
- Providers and facilities that serve TGNC older adults typically have no cultural competence training specific to trans elders. (1)

Factors leading to Health Disparities

- According to a 2011 study, regardless of socioeconomic status, TGNC older adults have lower levels of social support than non-TGNC older adults. (2)
- In addition, employment and housing discrimination are part of a matrix of health disparities “traceable to socioeconomic factors and stress caused by prejudice and stigma.” (3)

Factors Leading to Health Disparities

- According to a 2013 study, the most common types of discrimination and victimization experienced by transgender older adult participants:
- verbal insults (76%)
- being threatened with physical violence (54%)
- not being hired for jobs (46%)
- being denied or provided inferior health care (40%)
- being denied a promotion (39%), and being hassled by the police (37%). (4)

Health Disparities Experienced by TGNC Older Adults

- Compared to younger TGNC people, more likely to use black-market hormones (3)
- Less likely to receive preventive care (3)
- Less likely to have mental health needs met (3)
- One third of TGNC older adults report being in poor physical health, and 62% of TGNC older adults report having a disability. (5)

Challenges with Aging Agencies and Facilities

- Only 7.2% of aging agencies and facilities offer services specifically aimed at TGNC older adults (5)
- In a 2011 study, 10% of LGBT older adults in long-term care facilities said that they, a loved one, or a client had experienced staff intentionally misgendering trans residents. (6)
- In a 2014 study, 40% of TGNC older adults reported that they feared accessing health services outside the LGBT community. These proportions were significantly higher than those for nontransgender LGB older adult participants. (4)

Recommendations for Action

- There is an extreme level of need for TGNC Cultural Competence training among providers and institutions that serve TGNC older adults.
- Prohibition of discrimination based on gender identity in institutions that serve TGNC older adults.
- Improvement of the quantity and quality of TGNC-related care available through the VA (given the high percentage of TGNC older adults who are veterans).
- Greater efforts to integrate TGNC older adults into organizations and community events targeting TGNC populations.

Questions?

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Ground Rules For Discussion

- This is a safe space
- Everyone's lived experiences are valid
- Respect the lived experiences of others
- If you have something to say, **STEP UP**. If you have been talking for a while, consider if you should **STEP BACK**.
- Use "I" statements
- Participate and have fun!

References

1. [http://
www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/TransAgingPolicyReportFull.pdf](http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/TransAgingPolicyReportFull.pdf)
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