

LGBTQ Older Adult Housing and Care

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What Types of Care Exist?



- ▶ Living at Home - with or without assistance
- ▶ Independent Living in a community
- ▶ Assisted Living in a community
- ▶ Memory Care
- ▶ Skilled Nursing
- ▶ Adult Family Homes

How do we decide which is appropriate?

Decision Factors

- ▶ Safety - Falls, accessibility, cognition
- ▶ Financial -Private pay VS Medicaid
- ▶ Medical needs
- ▶ Socialization
- ▶ Personal preferences
- ▶ Inclusion/Awareness of LGBTQ issues

How does it differ for LGBTQ older adults?

- ▶ High risk of isolation - 45% live alone
- ▶ 66% have experience 3 or more incidents of victimization
- ▶ Lack of service providers that understand their needs
- ▶ When asked if a community has LGBTQ residents, most will reply 'No'.
 - ▶ Approximately 5 million LGBTQ older adults in the US
- ▶ Out of the 150 leading senior livings providers in the US, more than 75% are faith-based.
- ▶ When identified - many LGBTQ residents are ostracized by staff and other residents, refused care, and are denied the ability to live with their same-sex partner
- ▶ Trans individuals are often placed with roommates that do not match their gender identity.
- ▶ Culturally diverse staff are often unfamiliar working LGBTQ individuals - resulting in less care, discrimination and ostracization.
- ▶ Discrimination can also occur for straight individuals with LGBTQ family/friends

What can we do?

- ▶ Enlist professionals that are knowledgeable about LGBT Issues - Geriatric Care Mangers, Lawyers, Doctors, Financial Planners, Social Workers, Care Agencies...
- ▶ Ask care agencies and housing communities about their training, policies and recognition of LGBTQ individuals.
- ▶ Ask about other LGBTQ residents/clients and if there is opportunity to speak to them
- ▶ Training - self education and formal cultural competency trainings
- ▶ Provide inclusive forms with options besides male/female. Include questions about pronoun choices, gender identification, family of choice and sexual orientation
- ▶ Look for diverse representation on websites, pamphlets, marketing materials and in actual office and residential areas.



LGBTQ Older Adults

- ▶ National Center on LGBT Aging
- ▶ Generations Aging with Pride
- ▶ NW LGBT Senior Care Providers Network
- ▶ Old Lesbians Organizing for Change
- ▶ Ingersoll Gender Center
- ▶ The LGBT Aging Project
- ▶ Tacoma Older LGBT
- ▶ Rainbow Center in Tacoma
- ▶ And many more!

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