

Enhancing LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Multisector Plans on Aging: Best Practices and Recommendations for State Leaders and Advocates

Why should Multisector Plans on Aging be LGBTQ+ inclusive?

The needs of older people span across multiple government agencies, like public health, human services, transportation, housing, labor, education, corrections, etc. As such, there has been growing recognition by states for the need to develop what is often called a **multisector plan on aging** (sometimes referred to as a masterplan on aging) that addresses the needs of older people using a holistic, life-course perspective. Multisector plans on aging enable states to coordinate various efforts, initiatives, and projects that aim to address the **social determinants of health (SDOH)** that impact our health, well-being, and quality of life, and they can significantly affect our chances of staying healthy as we age. Discrimination, including discrimination based on **sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, and sex characteristics**, is an SDOH that can negatively affect the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) individuals.

How can state leaders and advocates include the needs of LGBTQ+ older adults in Multisector Plans on Aging?

Highlight the benefits of LGBTQ+ inclusion across all sectors.

This can include improved health outcomes, increased access to services, and reduced health disparities. Find the SAGE Facts on LGBTQ+ Aging document at www.lgbtagingcenter.org.

Recommendations:

Identify and reduce barriers to accessing services experienced by LGBTQ+ older people across sectors.

Many LGBTQ+ older adults have concerns about experiencing discrimination when accessing services in general. One effective strategy is providing comprehensive training to equip state agency leadership and staff with the knowledge to offer inclusive services to LGBTQ+ older adults. For more information about available training opportunities, please visit SAGECare at www.sageusa.care.

Explore sectors like Transportation, Labor, Housing, and others for opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ inclusion.

The needs of LGBTQ+ older adults span across *all* sectors and should be reflected in the goals, objectives, strategies, and outcome measures in multisector plans on aging.

Involve LGBTQ+ individuals and organizations in the planning process.

This can help ensure that the needs of LGBTQ+ older adults are being accurately represented and considered.

Recommendations:

Host public hearings and focus groups that focus on the voices of LGBTQ+ older adults.

It is important to have both qualitative and quantitative data to understand the needs of underrepresented populations such as LGBTQ+ older adults.

Invite leaders from LGBTQ+ organizations to be part of committees and subcommittees.

By including LGBTQ+ leaders and organizations in the planning process, state leaders can help build trust and confidence in the plan among LGBTQ+ older adults.

Collect data on LGBTQ+ older adults.

This can help identify areas where services and resources are lacking and can inform the development of targeted programs and interventions within and across sectors.

Recommendations:

Include SOGI questions in statewide needs assessments.

Collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) is a crucial step toward creating a more inclusive and equitable system of services and supports for LGBTQ+ older adults. For more information, please see *Inclusive Questions for Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* at www.lgbtagingcenter.org/guides

Use SOGI data to evaluate objectives and strategies.

States should use data collected on sexual orientation and gender identity to evaluate objectives and strategies in their multisector plans on aging, especially during program evaluation and monitoring.

Provide examples of successful LGBTQ+ aging programs and services.

By highlighting successful LGBTQ+ inclusion in existing strategic plans, such as the Older Americans Act-required state plan on aging, states can create a blueprint for other state agencies to follow, ultimately improving the lives of LGBTQ+ older people and their caregivers.

For additional information, technical assistance and training visit the SAGE family of websites:

www.sageusa.org

www.lgbtagingcenter.org

www.sageusa.care