

Caring for Older Adults of Color and LGBTQ Older Adults:

**An Intersectional Resource Guide for Older
Individuals and their Caregivers & Service
Providers**

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Introduction	2
Terms to Know	3
Intersectionality 101	5
Resources for:	
▪ LGBT Older Adults	8
▪ Older Adults of Color	12
▪ Both	14
Resources for Providers and Caregivers of:	
▪ LGBT Older Adults	15
▪ Older Adults of Color	19
▪ Both	21

DEAR READER:

Welcome to **Caring for Older Adults of Color and LGBTQ Older Adults**. This document is meant to be an all-encompassing pool of information for both older adults and their providers and caregivers. Because many resources already exist for older adults in general, **our guide serves to address the specific needs and concerns of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) older adults, older adults of color, and people who identify as both**. Caregiving for older adults is often administered with a one-size-fits-all philosophy; providers believe that treating clients equally is all that's necessary to create an inclusive organization. This outlook, though well-intended, indicates a lack of understanding of the special care and attention that older adults in marginalized communities require to maintain good mental and physical health. Indeed, these older adults are often subjected to discriminatory providers who do not even strive for equal treatment.

Here, we seek to shift attitudes, policies, and practices of agencies who work with older adults toward a more holistic understanding of their clients' respective journeys in addition to **giving older adults themselves the resources to connect with communities and providing a realistic path to a fulfilling aging experience regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability**.

We have collected a series of websites, printable documents, trainings, workshop ideas, and videos that are indispensable to people who identify as or work with the aforementioned demographics. Thank you for your interest in bettering the lives – whether your own, your friends', your family members' or your customers' – of **older adults who have experienced years of victimization, discrimination, and judgment because of an identity over which they have no control**. We hope you find this resource helpful and welcome your suggestions for improvement.

Best,
Shelby Tuthill
2015 Summer Intern at the AAIII A in Kalamazoo, MI



TERMS TO KNOW:

LGBTQ: an acronym for lesbian (woman attracted to women), gay (person, especially male, attracted to members of the same sex/gender), bisexual (attracted to people of more than one gender), transgender, and questioning; sometimes expanded to LGBTQIAAP+ to encompass intersex, asexual, and pansexual individuals as well as allies and any other non-normative sexual orientation or gender identity

Sexual orientation: refers to the gender of the people to whom someone is physically, romantically, and/or emotionally attracted (bisexual, heterosexual, gay, etc)

Gender identity: one's internal sense of gender, whether male, female, both, or neither; may or may not differ from one's sex assigned at birth (see transgender & cisgender)

Sex assigned at birth: a person's biological status typically categorized as male, female, or intersex (atypical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female); indicated by sex chromosomes, genitalia, etc

Transgender: umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth; not all transgender people decide to alter their bodies with surgery and/or hormones, but many do

Transition: the process of changing one's gender expression and/or sex characteristics to reflect the gender with which a person identifies

Cisgender: a person with a gender identity that matches their sex assigned at birth

Gender expression: the way in which a person expresses (or does not

express) their gender identity; behavior, speech, hairstyle, clothing, etc

Two-Spirit: refers to LGBT Native people; a term that reflects the coming together of both male and female identities & gender roles

Genderqueer/gender non-conforming/non-binary/gender

variant/genderfluid: terms for people who do not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identify with neither, both, or any combination of male and female genders.

Queer: though many younger people have reclaimed this as a positive umbrella term for all LGBTQ+ identities, it is still considered offensive by most LGBT older adults because of its negative historical context

Same-Gender Loving: a term coined by Black

activist Cleo Manago used to describe/affirm same-sex/same-gender attraction in the Black community

Preferred gender

pronouns: the set of pronouns a person prefers others to use when referring to them; including but not limited to she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs, and ze/zir/zirs; it is important to respect the PGPs a person chooses when speaking to and about them

Coming out: a lifelong process of understanding one's own sexual or gender identity and disclosing it to others; unique for each individual; not every LGBTQ individual comes out, and many only come out to a select few people

Closeted/in the closet:

refers to an LGBTQ person who has not disclosed their sexual or gender identity to anyone, or has only disclosed it to a few "safe" people

Partner: a gender-neutral term used to describe a person's significant other

Families of choice: usually created by LGBTQ people, immigrants, and/or racial/ethnic minorities; the important people in one's life/providers of support, including biological family, close friends, and partners

SOFFA: an acronym for significant others, families, friends & allies; the support system, both biological and chosen, of transgender people.

Heterosexism: the belief that heterosexuality (attraction to people of the "opposite" gender) is inherently right/better than other sexual orientations

Heteronormativity: the assumption that another individual is straight; ways in which heterosexuality is thought of as the only normal and natural way to experience attraction

Person/older adult of color: any person/older adult whose racial/ethnic background is not white

These terms were defined using/adapted from the following resources:

- *Inclusive Questions for Older Adults*
http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/inclusivequestionsolder_adults_guidebook
- *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*
<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>
- *American Psychological Association's Definition of Terms: Sex, Gender, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation*
<http://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/sexuality-definitions.pdf>
- *What the heck is a "PGP"?*
<https://www.gsafewi.org/wp-content/uploads/What-the-heck-is-a-PGP1.pdf>
- *Two Spirit: The Story of a Movement Unfolds*
<http://www.nativepeoples.com/Native-Peoples/May-June-2014/Two-Spirit-The-Story-of-a-Movement-Unfolds/>

INTERSECTIONALITY 101:

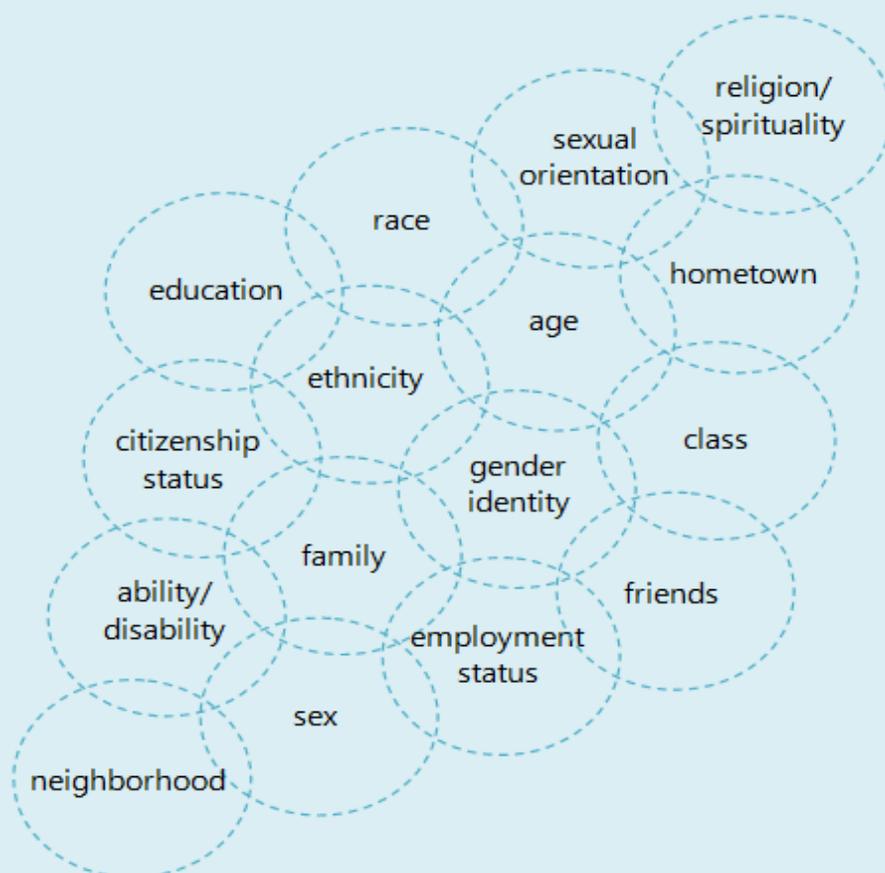
The term **intersectionality** was coined by Black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American scholar of critical race theory and gender studies. It is defined as “the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage” CITE. It has also been referred to as the “**simultaneity of oppression**”, a term created by Black feminists Gloria Hull, Patricia Bell-Scott, and Barbara Smith. CITE

In “There Is No Hierarchy of Oppressions”, Black lesbian feminist Audre Lorde explains that experiences of oppression are shaped by overlapping, not separate, identities. In other words, every Black issue is an LGB issue and vice versa; she “cannot afford the luxury of fighting one form of oppression only”. CITE

Often, intersectionality is misinterpreted to mean that simply because you are a member of one marginalized group, you automatically understand and relate to the experience of people belonging to other marginalized groups. It is important to clarify that this is not the case; a heterosexual white woman, for example, can never fully comprehend a bisexual Latina’s experience of womanhood just because they are both female.

Does that make sense? The underlying principle is pretty simple; **everyone has overlapping identities which create a unique person**. To help you better understand the notion of intersectionality, try the activity on the next page.

Think about the **identities and communities** that have shaped your own life and write them down (try using the Venn-diagram template below to help you, filling in aspects of yourself). Choose any of the categories from the chart (and feel free to add your own!) and consider: in what ways is this intertwined with the other circles? For example, LGBT-identified people will likely have a different relationship with religious groups compared to heterosexual individuals; their family dynamic will look different; they will not feel safe living and seeking employment in many of the same places.



Now, imagine a person with the same exact chart as you, but swap one of your privileged identities for a marginalized one and think about how it might change the other identities to make life more difficult. How would a disability make school trickier? How would a woman of color experience femininity in a different way than a white woman? How would it be harder for a transgender woman? **All of these identities are inextricably linked** and, like Audre Lorde said, "I simply do not believe that one aspect of myself can possibly profit from the oppression of any other part of my identity."

Generalizing the experiences of all women, for example, doesn't account for the racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, religious (etc.) differences between them. Likewise, **older adult care providers may generalize the experiences of their clients because they are all of a similar age**. This model of care tends to mean providing care that benefits white, heterosexual, cisgender clients and ignoring the inequalities that other individuals face.

Older adults do not need their privileged identities (i.e. white, heterosexual, wealthy, male, cisgender, able-bodied, etc.) explicitly affirmed by their long-term care providers; society has already given these communities countless affirmations through adequate media representation, civil rights, accessible resources, opportunity, and lack of violence. In order to promote better mental and physical health during the aging process, individuals with marginalized identities (i.e. people of color, LGBT, disabled, female-identified, impoverished, etc.) should feel **welcomed, safe, celebrated, and fulfilled** in the spaces they inhabit or attend to receive care.

If you are a provider/caregiver, you WILL work with patients/clients who have at least one marginalized identity. It is important not only to avoid comments and behavior reflective of racism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, classism, ageism, and ableism – you should also be addressing the individuals' unique needs which arise as a function of their unique identities.

An agency may claim to be LGBT-affirming, for example, but if providers are racist toward LGBT people of color, the organization is not affirming all members of the LGBT community. An anti-racist organization is not really anti-racist if they are homophobic and/or transphobic, because that same group (LGBT people of color) is shortchanged once again.

Now that you've read all this information and had some time to think critically about it, congratulate yourself! You are on your way to **understanding intersectionality**.

resources for

LGBT OLDER ADULTS:

LOCAL:

Greater Kalamazoo Area Guide to Long-Term Care Planning, Resources, and Services for the LGBTQ Community

http://www.kalcounty.com/aaa/pdf_files/08.12_A3_Guide_FINAL.pdf

A guide put forth by the Kalamazoo County Area Agency on Aging that encompasses advocacy resources, senior centers, elder abuse prevention and assistance, financial and legal information, health care information, housing for older adults, long-term care facilities, mental health and substance abuse resources, nutrition programs, LGBTQ-affirming religious organizations, transgender networks, transportation services, and hospice care. It contains local, state, and national-level resources.

GENERAL/NATIONAL:

Stonewall Seniors

<http://stonewallseniors.com/>

A “loving and supportive LGBT Community of Seasoned Adults” with links to articles and resources related to advocacy, healthy living, LGBT news & media, education, and more. It is Massachusetts-based but lists many national or general resources.

National Resource Center on LGBT Aging: For LGBT Older Adults

<http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resources.cfm?a=3>

A collection of articles, documents, and websites for LGBT older adults with a variety of specific needs, from housing guides and cancer support groups to fitness programs and fraud prevention advice. The National Resource Center on LGBT Aging is full of resources for caregivers which LGBT older adults may want to check out (listed later in this guide) so that they know what their care providers should be doing to make them feel safe, comfortable, and affirmed.

Pearls of Wisdom

http://www.familyequality.org/get_involved/pearls_of_wisdom/

“The Pearls of Wisdom program is designed to empower grandparents and more experienced members of our community to share their experiences with other families where the parent(s) identify as LGBTQ. The program provides various platforms for these advocates to tell their stories and promote family equality on local, state, and national levels. For more than 30 years, we've been empowering our families to tell the truth, dispelling myths and misinformation about families with parents who are LGBTQ, changing the national dialogue in a more informed way about our communities' true family values.”

The Aging and Health Report: Disparities and Resilience among LGBT Older Adults

<http://depts.washington.edu/agepride/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Full-report10-25-12.pdf>

A report by Caring and Aging with Pride (<http://caringandaging.org>) on health disparities seen in LGBT older adults. This may help LGBT older adults understand their increased risks and identify which aspects of their lives (for example, social support and sense of community) are helping or hurting their ability to recover from life's difficulties.

Transgender Aging Network

<http://forge-forward.org/aging/>

This group works toward: Identifying, promoting communication among, and enhancing the work of researchers, service providers, educators, advocates, elders and others who are interested in trans/SOFFA aging issues; promoting awareness of concerns, issues, and realities of trans/SOFFA aging among service providers, researchers, advocates, health care professionals, the lesbian/gay/bisexual and trans communities, and other relevant audiences; advocating for policy changes in public and private institutions, services, organizations, programs, etc. to provide better access for and respectful and appropriate treatment of trans/SOFFA elders; and providing communication channels through which trans/SOFFA elders can give and receive support and information.

Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders

<http://www.sageusa.org/>

SAGE encompasses a wide variety of resources on topics related to LGBT aging - elder abuse, discrimination, housing, mental health, and more - as well as programming at the national level and in 27 local communities across the U.S.

Lambda Legal: Working for LGBT and HIV-Affected Seniors

<http://www.lambdalegal.org/issues/seniors>

Publications and resources (including "Residents' Rights and the LGBT Community" and "Trans Aging: We're Still Here"), relevant court cases, and news stories on LGBT older adults.

Gray Pride Parade

<http://www.grayprideparade.com/>

"This blog serves as a platform to inform and connect LGBT aging activists and has strong emphases on policy issues and disseminating promising practices. It is also home to Have You Thanked, a twitter-based campaign to begin shifting people's beliefs that aging is a time of losses, particularly of 'independence.' Instead, Have You Thanked argues, aging is just a continuation of our moment-by-moment, lifelong pattern of choosing where we will focus, leaving the rest to the countless others who knowingly and unknowingly support us."

National Center for Transgender Equality

<http://transequality.org/>

This site features a section on transgender aging (under the "Issues" section) as well as Medicare, employment, Social Security, and housing information (see "Know Your Rights" section).

LGBT Caring Community Online Support Group

<https://www.caregiver.org/lgbt-caring-community-online-support-group>

Acknowledging that LGBT older adults can be caregivers as well (as many of their peers age alongside them), this free resource is a place where LGBT-identified caregivers of all ages can share advice, resources, and experiences.

Planning with Purpose: Legal Basics for LGBT Elders

http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Resources_Planning_with_Purpose.pdf

"This guide provides basic information about select areas of the law that are important to LGBT elders, especially individuals and couples who are age 55 and over, based on our experience advocating for LGBT elders. We include information about issues related to relationship recognition, finances, health care, long term care, and planning for the care of minor or disabled children and inheritance. This guide covers many of the areas where rights, benefits, and protections are generally provided based on spousal status, but are denied to same-sex couples, even if married or in other legal unions. Where there are specific considerations for transgender people, we note them."

resources for

OLDER ADULTS OF COLOR:

National Asian Pacific Center on Aging: AAPI Healthy Aging Resource Center

<http://napca.org/healthy-aging/resources/>

“A library of health information and resources in Asian and Pacific Islander languages”. Older adults can select a topic from an extensive list of health issues including cancer, HIV/AIDS, sleep problems, stroke, and more.

National Caucus and Center on Black Aging

<http://www.ncba-aged.org/>

The NCBA offers employment training, job placement, health and wellness programs, and affordable housing to minority and low-income older adults.

National Hispanic Council on Aging

<http://www.nhcoa.org/nhcoa-programs/>

This link gives a list of NHCOA programs for Hispanic older adults and their caregivers. The websites for each program (linked on the listed website) give information about the programs, which include AIDS, vaccinations, and other health-related issues.

National Indian Council on Aging

<http://nicoa.org/for-elders/>

An organization looking “to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic well-being for American Indian and Alaska Native” older adults. This link leads older adults to resources on health, community, economic stability, and veterans.

National Resource Center on Native American Aging

<https://www.nrcnaa.org/>

“The National Resource Center on Native American Aging is committed to identifying Native elder health and social issues. Through education, training, and technical assistance, we assist in developing community-based solutions to improve the quality of life and delivery of related support services to the Native aging population.”



resources for

LGBT OLDER ADULTS and/or OLDER ADULTS OF COLOR:

Diverse Elders Coalition

<http://www.diverseelders.org>

Older adults might like the “Sharing Stories” section of this site to read through the experiences of older adults, many of whom are LGBT-identified, from a variety of backgrounds (<http://www.diverseelders.org/what-you-can-do/explore-our-stories>) with the option to connect to this community of older adults by sharing their own story (<http://www.diverseelders.org/what-you-can-do/tell-your-story>). The website has links to resources on aging, chronic illness, health and wellness, HIV/AIDS, Social Security, a variety of centers and councils on aging specific to certain racial/ethnic groups, and much more.

2009 Directory of LGBT People of Color Organizations and Projects in the U.S.

http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/flgi_poc_dirctry_2009/9?e=0

Though not necessarily up-to-date, this guide offers state-by-state resources for LGBT people of color and provides descriptions and target populations of each organization (many of which specifically include older adults).

resources for the providers and caregivers of **LGBT OLDER ADULTS:**

Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders

<http://www.sageusa.org/>

SAGE encompasses a wide variety of resources on topics related to LGBT aging - elder abuse, discrimination, housing, mental health, and more - as well as programming at the national level and in 27 local communities across the U.S.

Inclusive Services for LGBT Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming Agencies

<http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/nrcinclusiveservicesguide2012>

A publication by the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging filled with important tips on how to be LGBT-affirming and how to meet the unique needs of this population of older adults. This is geared toward service providers, but may be useful for anyone caring for an LGBT older adult. There is also a version in Spanish (Servicios Inclusivos Para Personas Mayores LGBT: Una guía práctica para crear agencias acogedoras) here:

http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/sage_guidebookfinal/1?e=2766558/79063
88

Inclusive Questions for Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/inclusivequestionsolder_adults_guidebook

Another publication by the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging on inclusive intake forms, how to help clients feel safe disclosing sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and confidentiality. This is geared toward service providers, but may be useful for anyone caring for an LGBT older adult.

Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults

<http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/improving-the-lives-of-lgbt-older-adults.pdf>

This document “provides an overview of the unique challenges and inequities facing LGBT elders. It also offers detailed recommendations for eliminating—or at least reducing—inequities and improving the lives, and life chances, of LGBT older Americans.” It is also available in large print here:

<http://www.lgbtmap.org/file/improving-the-lives-of-lgbt-older-adults-large-print.pdf>

LGBT Programming for Older Adults: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide

http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/sage_movietoolkit_pages/1?e=2766558/10830304

A guide for agencies who want their events to further LGBT inclusivity in their community of staff and older adults, complete with instructions for planning a movie night, film recommendations, and a sample evaluation form.

Planning with Purpose: Legal Basics for LGBT Elders

http://www.nclrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Resources_Planning_with_Purpose.pdf

“This guide provides basic information about select areas of the law that are important to LGBT elders, especially individuals and couples who are age 55 and over, based on our experience advocating for LGBT elders. We include information about issues related to relationship recognition, finances, health care, long term care, and planning for the care of minor or disabled children and inheritance. This guide covers many of the areas where rights, benefits, and protections are generally provided based on spousal status, but are denied to same-sex couples, even if married or in other legal unions. Where there are specific considerations for transgender people, we note them.”

2, 4, 6, 8: Who Says that Your Grandmother's Straight

<http://sfoonline.barnard.edu/a-new-queer-agenda/2-4-6-8-who-says-that-your-grandmothers-straight/>

A personal perspective on LGBT aging, with explanations of the barriers LGBT older adults face and insightful recommendations for how to cater to this community's specific needs.

Transgender Aging Network

<http://forge-forward.org/aging/>

This group works toward: Identifying, promoting communication among, and enhancing the work of researchers, service providers, educators, advocates, elders and others who are interested in trans/SOFFA aging issues; promoting awareness of concerns, issues, and realities of trans/SOFFA aging among service providers, researchers, advocates, health care professionals, the lesbian/gay/bisexual and trans communities, and other relevant audiences; advocating for policy changes in public and private institutions, services, organizations, programs, etc. to provide better access for and respectful and appropriate treatment of trans/SOFFA elders; and providing communication channels through which trans/SOFFA elders can give and receive support and information.

LGBT Older Adults in Long Term Care Facilities: Stories from the Field

<http://issuu.com/lgbtagingcenter/docs/storiesfromthefield/1?e=2766558/5334320>

"This publication is the result of a survey undertaken by six organizations seeking to better understand the experiences of LGBT older adults in long-term care settings. The survey also sought to capture personal comments that describe some of the varied experiences of LGBT older adults, their loved ones, and the providers who care for them."

Intersectionality: LGBT Older Adults

<http://www.starlingcenter.org/podcast/intersectionality-lgbt-older-adults/>

“What does the acronym LGBT mean? What does it mean to be transgender? Join Stacey as she explores these topics and learns how they relate to older adults. Learn definitions, respectful ways to ask questions and salient issues for the LGBT aging population now and going forward as the Baby Boomers age. One of our guests is a transgender activist/advocate and will share her expertise and experience of aging as a person who is a transgender advocate with us. Our other guest will share her experience in training aging service providers regarding the inter-sectional issues facing the aging LGB population. Both guests will discuss issues within the LGBT community and the community at large.”

Gray Pride Parade

<http://www.grayprideparade.com/>

“This blog serves as a platform to inform and connect LGBT aging activists and has strong emphases on policy issues and disseminating promising practices. It is also home to Have You Thanked, a twitter-based campaign to begin shifting people’s beliefs that aging is a time of losses, particularly of ‘independence.’ Instead, Have You Thanked argues, aging is just a continuation of our moment-by-moment, lifelong pattern of choosing where we will focus, leaving the rest to the countless others who knowingly and unknowingly support us.”

resources for the providers and caregivers of **OLDER ADULTS OF COLOR:**

National Asian Pacific Center on Aging

<http://napca.org/>

This site provides separate links for family and caregivers, service providers, and policymakers with resources tailored to each group.

National Hispanic Council on Aging

<http://www.nhcoa.org/nhcoa-programs/>

This link gives a list of NHCOA programs for Hispanic older adults and their caregivers. The websites for each program (linked on the listed website) give information about the programs, which include AIDS, vaccinations, and other health-related issues, as well as links to resources that serve as outreach toolkits.

National Indian Council on Aging

<http://nicoa.org/for-caregivers/>

An organization looking “to advocate for improved comprehensive health, social services and economic well-being for American Indian and Alaska Native” older adults. This link gives information specifically for grandparents raising grandchildren and for caregivers of older adults suffering from Alzheimer’s and/or dementia.

Reference and Resource Guide for Working with Hispanic/Latino Older Adults

<https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA10-4570/SMA10-4570.pdf>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s guide to culturally competent care for Latino/a older adults, particularly those who struggle with drug and alcohol abuse.

National Resource Center on Native American Aging

<https://www.nrcnaa.org/>

“The National Resource Center on Native American Aging is committed to identifying Native elder health and social issues. Through education, training, and technical assistance, we assist in developing community-based solutions to improve the quality of life and delivery of related support services to the Native aging population.”

resources for the providers and caregivers of **LGBT OLDER ADULTS and/or OLDER ADULTS OF COLOR:**

Health Equity and LGBT Elders of Color

https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/pdfs/Sage_PolicyBrief_HealthEquity.pdf

A document put out by the LGBT Aging Center which outlines policies and practices for services providers to address “the racial, economic and gender disparities facing LGBT elders of color”.

Improving the Lives of Transgender Older Adults: Recommendations for Policy and Practice

<http://issuu.com/diverseelders/docs/transagingpolicyreportfull>

The first half of this document is a comprehensive literature review of research on health disparities of LGBT people in general, transgender people, and LGBT people of color. The second half gives, as the title indicates, policy and practice suggestions applicable to long-term care providers.

Reaching Diverse Older Adult Populations and Engaging Them in Prevention Services and Early Interventions

<https://www.ncoa.org/resources/issue-brief-11-reaching-diverse-older-adult-populations-and-engaging-them-in-prevention-services-and-early-interventions/>

A document from the National Council on Aging which identifies behavioral health problems in older adults and provides strategies and services about how to engage diverse older adults and improve their health outcomes.

How to Close the LGBT Health Disparities Gap: Disparities by Race and Ethnicity

https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2009/12/pdf/lgbt_health_disparities_race.pdf

A breakdown of various health disparities between LGB people of color, LGB white people, heterosexual white people, and heterosexual people of color, with suggestions for improving this situation.