Qmunity Generations
BC’s Queer Resource Centre
QMUNITY Generations

Who We Serve
- Lesbian, Gay, Trans*, Bisexual and Queer (LGT*BQ) older adults
- 5.79% non-weighted average based on averaging 62 peer reviewed studies in Canada and the USA from 1948 to present. (more than one in 20 people)

Services We Offer
- Outreach
- Advocacy
- Queer and Trans* Competency Training for Seniors Service Providers
- Information and Referral
- Social Support Groups
- Social Events
- Health and Wellness Programs
**Language**

**Queer**
- An umbrella term for people who identify as: lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, polysexual, asexual and ambisexual.
- Often used to refer to people who identify as: transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, pan-gendered, two spirits and intersex.

**Trans***
- What's does the asterisks mean?
  - The trans* community has adapted the asterisks to be inclusive of all gender identities with the exception of cisgender.
- Who does Trans* include?
  - All gender non-conforming people
  - Non-binary Trans* and genderqueer
  - People who identify either a neither male or female or both male and female.
Key Dates

- 1969 – Canada decriminalizes homosexuality
  ◦ (someone who is 80 now was 36 at the time)

- 1986 American Psychological Association removes homosexuality from it’s list of mental illness (DSM)
  ◦ (someone who is 80 now was 53 at the time)

- 1995 landmark Supreme Court Case established that sexual orientation constitutes a prohibited bases for discrimination
  ◦ (someone who is 80 now was 62 at the time)

- 2002 sexual orientation added to Canadian Human Rights Act
  ◦ (someone who is 80 now was 63 at the time)

- 2003 BC Legalizes Same Sex Marriage
  ◦ (80 year old now was 70 at the time)
“Aging Out” is a two-year public education and policy development project which will increase inclusion and belonging for lesbian, gay, transgender, and bisexual seniors in BC’s Health Care System.

This will be accomplished through:

- Conducting focus groups with LGT*BQ seniors and staff/management in residential care
- Conducting 20 training workshops for staff and management in residential care facilities
- Hosting a community policy dialogue forums with LGT*BQ seniors and service providers
- Developing a community driven policy document

This project is funded by Vancouver Foundation
Who are we working with

- Project Advisory Committee includes:
  - QMUNITY
  - Vancouver Coastal Health
  - Fraser Health Authority
  - Advisory Committee for the Transgender Health Program (VCH)
  - Hospital Employees Union
  - BC Nurses Union
  - Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
  - Haro Park Centre
  - West End Seniors Network
  - Seniors Hub
  - Plum Living
Focus Groups with LGT*BQ Seniors

- Focus groups facilitated by Meera Dhebar (MSW) – Aging Out Project Coordinator
- Participants
  - 25 participants
  - 2 Trans* people
  - 13 Lesbian
  - 7 Gay
  - 1 Asexual
  - 1 polysexual
  - 3 heterosexual

- Age Range 43 – 81 (only one participant was under 50 and that participant is currently residing in residential care)
  - Age 43 – 59 – 5 participants
  - Age 60 – 69 – 9 participants
  - Age 70 – 81 – 12 participants
In three focus groups we had three different group responses to what words we could use to describe their sexual orientation and gender identities.

- Group #1 asked to be referred to as “us” or “our community” without any use of LGT*BQ or the word queer.
- Group #2 asked to be referred to as queer.
- Group #3 asked to be referred to as LGT*B.
In what way has being an LGT*BQ person impacted your aging process?

- Dealing with intersecting oppressions
  - (age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethno-cultural background, ableism, sex, socio-economic status)
- No queer-specific services in healthcare
- Increased isolation/feelings of alienation
- Caretaking fatigue
- Increased resilience and coping mechanisms because of a lifetime of discrimination
If you had five minutes with the Director of Care in a Residential Care Facility what would you say?

- Increase management/staff education on LGT*BQ issues
- How many queer people are in their facility?
- Recruit and hire LGT*BQ staff and encourage them to come out at work
- Include a diversity statement in your: Mission, Vision and Values as well as patient handbook
Residential Care Facility Management/Staff Interviews

Preliminary Findings

- Broad themes
  - Emphasis on the importance of education
    - Participants expressed that they had received no training on LGT*BQ issues at their current place of employment
    - Overall failure to recognize seniors as sexual beings means that recognition of sexuality diversity gets obscured
    - Competing demands in healthcare; finite resource and time
Best Practices

- Provide queer and trans* competency training for your management team, staff and volunteers
  - Contact QMUNITY Generations for workshop information (604.684.8449) or generations@qmunity.ca
- Start an LGT*BQ committee and listen to their recommendations about how to make your space welcoming and inclusive
- Include LGT*BQ diversity statement in your residents and clients rights, mission, vision and value statements.
- Display written, graphic materials, images, artwork and signage welcoming LGT*BQ people into your facility
- Create strategic partnerships with Queer and Trans* organizations.
Thank You

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