



The LGBT Aging Project



The LGBT Aging Project is the leading organization in New England dedicated to ensuring that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender older adults and their caregivers have equal access to the life---prolonging benefits, protections, services, and institutions that their heterosexual neighbors take for granted. LGBT elders are more likely to lack traditional family networks of care, and thus are more likely to need formal care providers' services. However, LGBT elders also face significant barriers to accessing mainstream services and benefits, leaving many socially and financially vulnerable. The LGBT Aging Project works in three key areas. First, it provides training through the Open Door Task Force (ODTF), an innovative multi-session approach that educates mainstream elder service providers about LGBT cultural competency, helping agencies build their institutional capacities for creating and sustaining LGBT---welcoming environments. Second, it partners with mainstream service providers to develop community---building programs for LGBT older adults and caregivers. Third, the LGBT Aging Project works to enact policy and legislative changes to improve access to care and benefits for LGBT elders. Through these activities, the LGBT Aging Project ensures that LGBT older adults can live healthy, vibrant lives and age with dignity and respect.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Over the next two years, the LGBT Aging Project will require an investment of approximately \$600,000 in order to expand its reach to new markets of providers and to serve a greater number of LGBT older adults and caregivers.

THE NEED

It is widely accepted that the population of older Americans is growing rapidly. The number of LGBT elders is similarly on the rise, estimated at one to three million today and expected to double by 2030. Up to 75 percent of LGBT older adults live alone; 80 percent are single, and 90 percent don't have children. While most heterosexual seniors can identify an emergency contact, one in five LGBT seniors cannot.

- Because social isolation is a predictor for significantly poorer physical and mental health, LGBT elders experience a higher incidence of health issues—such as suicide attempts, depression, anxiety, and addiction—than their heterosexual peers.
- Fearing discrimination or abuse, LGBT older adults are often reluctant to utilize available resources. Many would rather go without, even when they are sick, than turn to service providers for help.
- Despite a willingness to be "welcoming," research and experiential evidence show that typical mainstream elder service providers have limited knowledge and understanding of the psychosocial, cultural, and economic issues facing LGBT elders and caregivers.

TWO-YEAR GOALS

- Increase the number of annual ODTF cultural competency engagements to 10
- Expand engagements to new markets of community-based and long-term care providers
- Hire a full-time ODTF cultural competency trainer
- Reach more LGBT older adults through new program collaborations
- Strengthen financial sustainability by increasing foundation and individual support and by launching a model to offer training on a fee-for-service basis
- Expand and diversify steering committee membership

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Evidence shows that elders' health and stability relies on access to institutions, programs, services, and benefits. By creating environments that are safe and respectful of LGBT elders, caregivers, and family members, mainstream service providers see increased utilization by LGBT elders. The LGBT Aging Project leads the field in helping mainstream aging service providers and the LGBT community to address the unique needs of LGBT elders, allowing LGBT older adults and caregivers to access the services and support they need.

- The LGBT Aging Project developed an innovative cultural competency program, the Open Door Task Force (ODTF), and has conducted these trainings with thousands of individual providers at elder service agencies across Massachusetts.
- Of those agencies participating in ODTF engagements, 80 percent have created LGBT social and educational programs on site, including meals, caregiver support, and bereavement groups.
- The LGBT Aging Project was featured in "Gen Silent," an award-winning documentary about LGBT aging that has been viewed by more than 1 million people worldwide.
- Executive Director Lisa Krinsky was a finalist for the 2011 Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader Award.

WAYS TO INVEST

- Financial**
- \$25,000 – Supports half the salary of a full-time trainer
 - \$2,500 – Funds a monthly LGBT support group for one year
 - \$1,000 – Funds one day of ODTF cultural competency training for up to 80 individual aging service providers
- In Kind**
- Steering committee members
 - Website development and social media expertise
 - Events to raise awareness about the organization and issues

"With the support of the LGBT Aging Project, we have made tangible efforts to ensure that the often overlooked older LGBT population is fully served."

—Paul Lanzikos, executive director, North Shore Elder Services



SOCIAL INNOVATION IN ACTION: THE LGBT AGING PROJECT MODEL

The LGBT Aging Project works to unite two otherwise disparate communities—mainstream elder service providers and LGBT people—to better the lives of LGBT elders and to improve the elder service systems of care by including the needs of the LGBT community.

The organization's three program areas allow it to create change at the individual, institutional, and policy levels.



The Open Door Task Force (ODTF):

In 2004, the LGBT Aging Project developed an innovative model for providing LGBT cultural competency training to mainstream elder service providers. Unlike other LGBT cultural competency trainings that stand alone, ODTF engagements provide ongoing technical assistance over a period of months, enabling providers to build their institutional capacity for creating—and sustaining—LGBT-welcoming environments. ODTF engagements focus on three areas:

- Evaluating current organizational and program policies
- Offering practice skills training for direct service workers
- Developing and delivering LGBT-welcoming programs and services to community partners and LGBT constituents

Participants come away with an understanding of the issues that are unique to LGBT elders and caregivers; new skills to engage LGBT elders in ways that recognize their identity and treat them with dignity and respect; and the ability to develop programming and services that reach out to this elusive population. ODTF is the only program of its kind in New England and one of only a handful across the country.

Over the past six years, the LGBT Aging Project has conducted ODTF engagements within the Massachusetts network of community-based providers, including Area Agencies on Aging and Councils on Aging. In this time, the organization has seen tremendous success in both creating long-term systems change in mainstream aging service networks, as well as building bridges between those service providers and the LGBT community to promote positive aging for LGBT older adults. Many ODTF participant organizations have built more dynamic diversity initiatives (including for populations aside from LGBT) based on their ODTF work.

The success of the ODTF training engagements in creating long-term systems change within mainstream elder service providers supports ODTF as a model for other organizations addressing the needs of LGBT elders nationwide.

Community Building:

In order to further engage LGBT elders in community activities, the LGBT Aging Project develops and launches programming in collaboration with partner agencies, typically organizations that have completed an ODTF engagement. These programs include:

- LGBT elder meal sites
- LGBT caregiver support groups
- LGBT bereavement groups
- Healthy Aging in the LGBT Community, which includes nutrition and memory fitness

These programs provide a vital social network of support to people who may otherwise be isolated as they age. Collaborative programming has become an essential way to support ODTF organizations in creating environments that are truly welcoming to LGBT elders. As an agency completes an ODTF engagement, the LGBT Aging Project can help the agency develop its capacity to engage with LGBT constituents. The LGBT Aging Project partners with these organizations to launch LGBT programming, assist with outreach efforts, and participate in the programs on site. These partnerships help participating agencies leverage the LGBT Aging Project's credibility to alert LGBT elders that the agency is a safe and welcoming environment.

Through outreach and community building activities, the LGBT Aging Project has launched six meal sites across the greater Boston area, providing a vital social lifeline for LGBT older adults and caregivers.

Civic Leadership:

In order to effectively sustain the changes happening at the organizational and individual levels, the LGBT Aging Project supports and promotes legislative policies that create equity for LGBT older adults and caregivers, as well as additional research that demonstrates the needs of LGBT people as they age.

Since its founding, the LGBT Aging Project has established itself as an authority on the issue of LGBT aging and caregiving, both nationally and locally. The only organization of its kind in the Boston area, it is a founding member of the first federally-funded National Resource Center on LGBT Aging. Through this partnership, the LGBT Aging Project brings its cultural competency training expertise to a wide range of agencies across the country. In addition, Executive Director Lisa Krinsky conducts speaking engagements and presentations with many audiences at both the national and local level.

At the state level, the LGBT Aging Project has been an advocate for policies that provide equal benefits to LGBT people and remove barriers to accessing programs and services. The organization was vital in engaging LGBT older adults in the fight for marriage equality in Massachusetts. With the LGBT Aging Project's support and endorsement, 2008 saw the passage of the MassHealth equality law, which provides Medicaid access to same-sex partners in the commonwealth of Massachusetts. The organization is currently supporting legislation that would require state-funded elder service agencies to receive LGBT cultural competency training. As members of the National Roundtable on LGBT Aging, the LGBT Aging Project also works for the inclusion of LGBTs in federal regulations and programs.

The LGBT Aging Project works to increase the visibility of LGBT older adults in both the mainstream and LGBT communities. The organization serves as an expert in the media and was featured in "Gen Silent," a documentary film about LGBT aging. The organization also brought older adults' messages of hope to the "It Gets Better" video campaign to fight teen bullying, clips of which were included in a national television ad for Google.

SUCCESS STORY: ELLEN, LGBT MEAL SITE PARTICIPANT

Ellen, an 80-year-old woman, had been married and had children, and carried a secret with her throughout her life. A battle with breast cancer in 1994 made her realize that she needed to begin the process of being honest with herself and come out as a lesbian. For a brief period, Ellen was able to connect with other members of the LGBT community, but because of her age the challenge of driving to LGBT gatherings in the city made her increasingly isolated from her newfound community. Ellen sank into a depression and had almost given up hope that she would ever be able to connect with LGBT older adults in her community. Meanwhile, the LGBT Aging Project completed an Open Door Task Force engagement with HESSCO Elder Services and the Sharon Council on Aging, and the two local agencies began plans for an LGBT meal site. Ellen, who already received services from HESSCO, was overjoyed when she learned about the Lakeside LGBT Café at the Sharon Adult Center. In an email she wrote to Jayne Davis, the Nutrition Manager at HESSCO and coordinator of Lakeside Café, Ellen called the new meal site “an answer to a prayer, and I had stopped praying for something like this.”

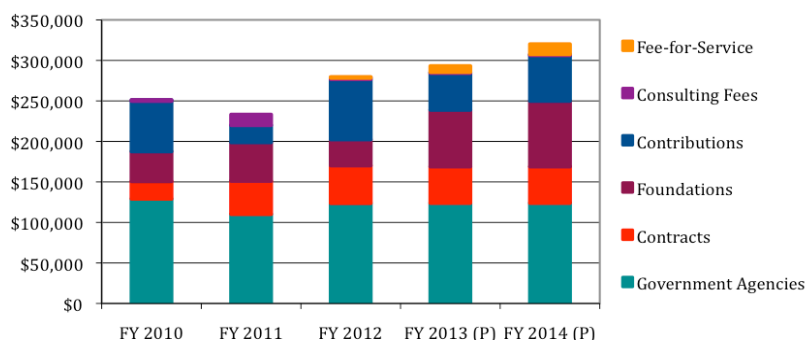


TEAM AND GOVERNANCE

Lisa Krinsky, executive director of the LGBT Aging Project, is a social worker with more than 20 years of experience in community-based elder services. She has been an active member of the LGBT Aging Project since its inception in 2001 and became the organization's executive director in 2004. Lisa developed the organization's ODTF curriculum and now conducts trainings with hundreds of individuals at mainstream elder service agencies each year. She is frequently invited to present locally and nationally on policy and practice issues with LGBT older adults and caregivers. Lisa is a leadership council member of the LGBT Aging Issues Network (LAIN) of the American Society on Aging and co-chairs the National Association of Social Workers Massachusetts Chapter's LGBT Shared Interest Group. Her colleague, Bob Linscott, oversees the organization's community building and program development efforts. Lisa and Bob have each been recognized in the community for their work with LGBT elders and caregivers.

The LGBT Aging Project's steering committee is comprised of individuals who are personally and professionally active in social justice causes. Many, such as co-founder and committee chair Dale Mitchell, are longstanding members of the LGBT Aging Project. Dale heads Ethos, a mainstream, nonprofit aging service agency serving thousands of Boston's elderly. All of the steering committee members are part of the LGBT community and active in numerous other issues, including elder homelessness, and faith communities. The LGBT Aging Project is expanding its steering committee to engage more allies of the LGBT community who will provide additional expertise to the organization.

Revenue by Source



from foundations and individuals make up the balance. In order to grow and sustain its success, the LGBT Aging Project aims to increase support from private sector sources. First, the organization plans to leverage relationships developed through its successful tenth anniversary celebration in FY 2012, which produced significantly increased revenue from individual and organizational donors. The LGBT Aging Project will cultivate individual donors and reach out to like-minded foundations for general operating and program funding. Second, the LGBT Aging Project has identified a wider market for its cultural competency training, including nearly 1,000 mainstream service organizations in Massachusetts, and plans to launch a fee-for-service model in FY 2013. By increasing private philanthropy and fee-for-service revenue, the LGBT Aging Project will enhance its financial sustainability and increase its capacity to achieve its mission in the future.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Over its 10-year history, the LGBT Aging Project has had significant accomplishments while working with few resources. Begun as a volunteer-based coalition of elder-care professionals, advocates, and ordinary citizens, the organization hired its first, paid full-time executive director in 2002. Additional funding in 2006 enabled the organization to hire a part-time outreach/education coordinator, who became a full-time assistant director the following year.

The LGBT Aging Project currently relies on revenue from contracts with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the city of Boston, along with a few private contracts, for more than half of the organization's budget. Philanthropic support

KEY INVESTORS

- The City of Boston
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Tufts Health Plan Foundation
- State Street Global PRIDE

“My eyes were opened to many areas that we may be unintentionally discriminating.”

—ODTF training participant

“This has greatly improved my understanding of individuals who are LGBT and [how] to create a better environment of support for them.”

—ODTF training participant



PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Program Performance and Organizational Health:

Below is a summary of the key measures that the LGBT Aging Project will track to demonstrate progress, capture lessons learned, and make course corrections. Note: Fiscal year is July 1 – June 30.

	FY 2012	FY 2013 (P)	FY 2014 (P)
Program Performance			
Number of ODTF agencies engaged per year	6	8	10
Number of fee-for-service trainings	0	Develop and launch	5
Number of LGBT elder meal sites running	6	9	12
Number of LGBT elder social and educational programs per year	10	12	14
Number of speaking engagements on LGBT aging and caregiving	50	60	70
Organizational Health/Capacity Building			
Add ODTF trainer	n/a	Search and hire	Retain
Add development contractor (part time)	n/a	Search and hire	Retain
Add steering committee members	4	2	Maintain 12
Total revenue	\$280,000	\$293,000	\$320,000

Social Impact:

The LGBT Aging Project measures the social impact of its trainings and programs primarily through participant evaluations. Every participant fills out a survey prior to the training program and then again at the program's completion. For many participants, their experience far exceeds their expectations. Another indicator of the organization's impact is the high number of agencies receiving training that then choose to engage in LGBT programming, either in collaboration with the LGBT Aging Project or independently. In addition to the data the organization has gathered, there is also significant experiential evidence showing that aging service agencies that have completed ODTF engagements are better at identifying the LGBT people among their clients. This demonstrates both a higher awareness of the issue as well as a greater effort to create welcoming environments.

Indicator	FY 2012
ODTF training participants who rate the value as high	78%
ODTF training participants who would recommend the program to others	77%
ODTF organizations that engage in LGBT social and educational programming	80%
LGBT bereavement group participants who rate highly the importance of an LGBT-specific group experience	85%

SUCCESS STORY: PAUL LANZIKOS, NORTH SHORE ELDER SERVICES

When North Shore Elder Services Executive Director Paul Lanzikos decided to engage with the LGBT Aging Project's Open Door Task Force, he had no idea how his life or his agency would change in the years that followed. He admitted to being a little nervous on the day the first article appeared in the Salem News announcing their plan to reach out to LGBT seniors on the North Shore. When the day came for their first community-wide event for LGBT seniors and caregivers, Lanzikos hoped for 15 attendees. Instead, nearly 100 people showed up, including LGBT seniors, faith and community leaders, allies, and friends. That night an alliance was born: the Old and Bold Coalition for LGBT Aging on the North Shore. Since that night, Lanzikos and the coalition have developed numerous social and educational activities for LGBT elders. Recently, in partnership with the LGBT Aging Project and Salem State University School of Social Work, Lanzikos launched the first annual LGBT aging conference, "LGBT Elders in a Changing World," which had more than 250 participants. Paul's commitment to providing services to LGBT older adults and caregivers has been recognized by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and he has been featured in a number of stories in *The Boston Globe* and on WCVB's *Chronicle*.

