



UNIVERSITY
OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover™

The latest of 3 snapshots in time reveals how far community has come, and fallen short, in addressing the needs of LGBTQ older adults over the last 30 years

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL (06/06/2022) — Minnesota is a great place to age well and live well; however, this is not necessarily true for all communities. LGBTQ older adults were coming into adulthood at a very different time in the U.S. than today's young adults. To gain insight into these experiences, a collaboration between Rainbow Health and the University of Minnesota's Northstar Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program completed research for the [2022 LGBTQ Aging Needs Assessment](#). This report shares the findings from this assessment, which sought to learn more about LGBTQ individuals as they age.

Ten researchers from collaborating organizations conducted this survey with support from the Minnesota Department of Human Services Live Well at Home and U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration. This report continued research from 2002 and 2012 and illustrates how societal changes and community work have affected the concerns and perceptions of the aging LGBTQ community.

"This year marks a major milestone, passing over 1 million older Minnesotans (defined here as 50 years old and above) in our state. Older Minnesotans today are more diverse than they have ever been. Our study provides critical insights into a subgroup of this population who are often overlooked as they age — LGBTQ older adults," said [Rajeen Moone](#), PhD, study lead for the University and associate director of education at the Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation in the School of Public Health.

With outreach help from community collaborators, 485 individuals responded to the survey, either online or by paper. Of those, 354 met the inclusion criteria of geographic region (Minnesota-based zip code) and age (50 years old and above) and are included in the results.

Possibly one of the most striking changes the study identified in the last decade is that 85% were confident that they would receive sensitive services, such as family planning and sexual health screenings. While in 2012 only 18% and in 2002 only 9% expressed the same confidence. In addition, overall respondents continue to desire services that are welcoming, but serve all older Minnesotans including non-LGBTQ peers rather than ones that only serve LGBTQ older adults.

The study also found that, compared to the general population, LGBTQ older adults are more likely to live alone and serve as a caregiver. They are less likely to have a caregiver, have children, or feel they have enough close friends. Given what we know about how these factors impact aging, LGBTQ older adults are more at risk for social isolation and nursing home placement. Though there having been major improvements in some areas, there remains much work to be done, especially around supporting BIPOC and transgender elders, people living alone, and caregivers.



UNIVERSITY
OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover™

“Knowing that 42% of gay men in our study live alone, and 37% of bisexuals, more work has to be done to reach out to our solo older adults. That’s why we are so excited about programs like the first Twin Cities Elder Pride Brunch, happening June 25th, which is a chance to bring our community together to celebrate and reconnect after two very tough years.” Maren Levad, Rainbow Health’s principal investigator and Aging Advocate for Rainbow Health.

To view the full report, visit <https://rainbowhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022-MN-LGBTQ-Aging-Needs-Assessment-Report.pdf>

The research team wishes to thank the community collaborators that distributed the survey and the individuals who participated in the survey for making this project possible. Some of the collaborators include AARP Minnesota, East Side Neighborhood Services, Hope House, Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly Minnesota Leadership Council on Aging Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, Out in the Valley, Prime Timers Minneapolis-St. Paul, Ramsey County, Senior Community Services, Southeast Seniors Trellis.

About Rainbow Health

[Rainbow Health](#) envisions a Minnesota where people from diverse gender, sexual and cultural communities experience health and wellness in powerfully inclusive environments. Formed by the joining of Minnesota AIDS Project and Rainbow Health Initiative, our mission is to lead the work to achieve health equity for diverse gender, sexual and cultural communities.

About the Minnesota Northstar GWEP

The purpose of the [Minnesota Northstar Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program](#) is to improve the health and healthcare of older adults across Minnesota. It is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the primary federal agency for improving health care for people who are geographically isolated and economically or medically vulnerable. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government. The Minnesota Northstar GWEP is also supported by the Otto Bremer Trust Foundation, the University of Minnesota Medical School and the Office of Academic Clinical Affairs.

Contacts

Rajean P. Moone, PhD, LNHA/LALD, FGSA, University of Minnesota, moon0060@umn.edu, (651) 235-0346

Maren Levad, Aging Advocate, Rainbow Health, maren.levad@rainbowhealth.org

Kat Dodge, Media Relations Manager, Medical School, University of Minnesota, kdodge@umn.edu

Allie Bean, Public Relations, University of Minnesota, abean@umn.edu