



# LGBT INCLUSIVE HOUSING FOR OLDER ADULTS IN CAMBRIDGE

PART I: A REVIEW OF THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF  
THE CAMBRIDGE HOUSING AUTHORITY

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## OVERVIEW OF STUDY

As the population of older adults continues to increase, the Cambridge GLBT Commission seeks to understand how this population can age in dignity and respect with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Since 2014, the GLBT Commission's projects have focused on the assessment of two major services that LGBT older adults rely on: healthcare and housing. In this study, Part I of an ongoing assessment of LGBT inclusive housing options for older adults in Cambridge, the GLBT Commission examines the extent to which the practices and policies of existing senior housing in Cambridge are inclusive, welcoming and affirming for LGBT older adults.

Our study examines LGBT inclusion within the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), which provides rental housing and rental assistance to low-income seniors, families, and persons with disabilities. CHA owns and manages 12 housing properties in Cambridge, which are designated for elders and persons with disabilities. An elderly resident must be at least 60 years old, and a disabled resident must have either a physical or mental impairment that significantly limits a major life activity; residents must have a household income that does not exceed 80 percent of the area's median income (See *Appendix*).<sup>1</sup>

The findings of this study are derived from survey responses of CHA's staff regarding their opinions of the following three key areas for creating welcoming, affirming agencies for LGBT older adults:

1. Data collection
2. Organizational Culture
3. Training

The goals of this project are to:

- Understand CHA staff opinions regarding LGBT inclusivity in its Senior Housing.
- Learn about the current policies and practices of the CHA's Senior Housing with regard to the aforementioned key areas for creating affirming, inclusive LGBT housing.
- Provide a list of recommendations for best practices that CHA can adopt to further enhance and support LGBT inclusive senior housing for older adults in Cambridge.
- Develop a relationship with CHA management to serve as a resource for information regarding local events and professionals working to support LGBT older adults.

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<sup>1</sup> *Housing Options for Older Cambridgeans*. June 2010. City of Cambridge: Cambridge Community Development Department.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## KEY FINDINGS

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### DATA COLLECTION

- The majority of staff respondents either strongly agree or agree that there are LGBT elder residents currently living in CHA's Senior Housing.
- A minority of respondents either strongly agree or agree that CHA should confidentially collect information about sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) from current senior residents.
  - Pursuant to HUD's 2012 Equal Access Rule (77 FR 5662), collection of SOGI demographic information is permissible if it is collected voluntarily and anonymously, and not used in any way to determine eligibility for housing or in making housing available, consistent with the recommendations of the GLBT Commission (a local government agency) for improving LGBT inclusiveness in elder housing. However, HUD funded or HUD insured housing programs are legally prohibited from asking current occupants or applicants for information about sexual orientation and gender identity and expression explicitly without ensuring anonymity or voluntary data collection methods. Thus, management of CHA should clarify and communicate the purpose of this SOGI collection, and privacy measures around the process of data collection.

### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- The majority (75%) of staff respondents either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a community culture in which residents can feel safe with each other and with staff.
- More staff respondents reported that they either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a welcoming environment and safe place to openly identify as LGBT for employees, than they believe it does for residents.

#### **About CHA Residents:**

- 41.67% either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a welcoming environment for senior residents who may identify as LGBT.

Equally, 41.67% neither agree nor disagree that CHA creates this environment for senior residents.

- 54.17% either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a safe living environment for senior residents to openly identify as LGBT, if they choose to do so. 37.5% neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

**About CHA Employees:**

- The majority (75%) either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a welcoming environment for employees who may identify as LGBT.
- The majority (79.17%) either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a safe work environment for employees to openly identify as LGBT, if they choose to do so.

Zero staff disagreed with this statement and zero staff believed this statement was not applicable to their work and/or position.

- The majority (75%) of staff either strongly agree or agree that CHA should sponsor an event related to LGBT aging, open to all senior residents and staff.
- CHA currently only includes the term sexual orientation in its anti-discrimination policy. It does not yet have the term gender identity included.
  - The majority (83.3%) of staff either strongly agree or agree that they are fully aware of CHA's written policies that address discrimination.

**TRAINING**

- The majority (62.5%) either strongly agree or agree that they would like their staff training to include information about the aging concerns and needs of LGBT seniors.
  - Less than half (42%) of staff respondents either strongly agree or agree that they have a strong understanding of the additional issues that LGBT seniors may face with respect to health and/or family. 29.2% neither agree nor disagree, and 25% disagree that they have a strong understanding of the additional issues that LGBT seniors may face.
  - The majority (66.7%) of staff respondents either strongly disagree or disagree that they have observed or heard about instances of LGBT discrimination. 16.7% responded this statement was N/A: not applicable to their position or role within CHA. 4.2% either strongly agree or agree with the statement that they have observed or heard about

instances of LGBT discrimination, and 12.5% reported they felt neutral about this statement.

- The majority (70.8%) of staff respondents either strongly agree or agree that they feel confident in their ability to address a complaint about LGBT discrimination voiced by a senior resident, regarding other residents, CHA staff, or outside service personnel. 16.67% of staff neither agree nor disagree with the statement, and 8.3% of staff disagree that they feel confident in their ability to address this sort of complaint voiced by a senior resident.

## MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Best Practices to adopt:

- Include LGBT cultural proficiency training into current Diversity training that all staff receive. If possible, provide this training to residents as well.  
(For a list of training resources, see pg. 27, *Resources: Training & Community Education*).
- Continue to create a safe and welcoming residential community for LGBT senior residents by:
  1. Sponsor, co-sponsor or promote LGBT programming and events available for all of CHA's senior residents and staff.  
(For a list of programming resources, see pg. 26, *Resources: Best Practices Guides*).
  2. Include "Gender Identity" as a protected class in CHA's current anti-discrimination policy, **and** post this policy in the Resident Handbook for new and current CHA senior residents, as well as in relevant online and published documents.
- Clarify among all staff the practices and policies for how to respond to a discrimination complaint voiced by a senior resident or staff member, with regard to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

- Collect SOGI information from current residents of CHA senior housing in a voluntary and anonymous way. SOGI information could be collected by adding questions to a program-wide satisfaction survey that is distributed to residents. The goal of adding SOGI related questions to an anonymous, resident satisfaction survey would be to assess and better understand the experiences of senior residents with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

(For a list of example SOGI questions, see pages 14-15, *Data Collection: Recommendations*).

- Continue to connect with the GLBT Commission for any support, questions or concerns about addressing and supporting the needs of LGBT older adults and creating a welcoming agency.

## GENERAL BACKGROUND

The population of older adults in the United States is at an all-time high, as is the number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) older adults. This population continues to increase, where in 2013 the population of people ages 65 and older was 44.7 million, or about 14.1% of the U.S. population,<sup>2</sup> and by 2030 is anticipated to constitute 20%.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, experts estimate that there are at least 1.5 million Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people aged 65 and older in the U.S., and that by 2030 this number will grow to 3 million.<sup>4</sup> While there are no exact estimates for Transgender older adults, this population is thought to be in the hundred thousands.

The older adult LGBT population is often referred to as “Gen Silent,” a title that speaks to the increased invisibility of LGBT elders who have retreated back into the closet as they age and enter mainstream aging services, for fear of discrimination. Many LGBT seniors face unique challenges with regard to their health and social supports as they age. While there is still a shortage of research about LGBT older adults, growing research shows that there are many factors that distinguish LGBT seniors from their hetero-counterparts as they age, which likely stems from a lifetime of experienced discrimination and stigmatization. Starting from childhood and throughout adulthood, many LGBT seniors lived in homophobic environments and in a society that promoted homophobia.<sup>5</sup> Many LGBT older adults remember a time when

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *A Profile of Older Americans: 2014*.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control. *The State of Aging and Health in America*. 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders. *Out and Visible*. 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Fredriksen-Goldsen, K.I. 2011. *Resilience and Disparities among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Older Adults*. Public Policy Aging Rep. 21(3): 3–7.

homosexuality was illegal and it was unsafe to openly be LGBT, and people were frequently fired from their jobs based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.

While many LGBT older adults experienced stigma and discrimination, many also were the first in the United States to organize collectively and fight for LGBT civil rights and against homophobia and transphobia.<sup>6</sup> Now the same generation of LGBT older adults who worked and fought for equity are hiding their LGBT identities as they age and enter mainstream aging agencies.

Quoting a study based in San Diego, California, “Trailblazing Generation: Housing and Related Needs of LGBT Seniors”:

*“Too often care systems fail to recognize the unique circumstances of LGBT senior lives — they are more often single; they are less likely to have had the opportunity to have or raise their children; they are more often estranged from a disapproving, unsupportive family of origin; they are more likely to have encountered losses of friends/partners to HIV/AIDS; they have been denied the right to legally marry, so if they are in relationship, they will often not have a legal spouse; and they have faced, and continue to face, discrimination within the broad health care system itself.”*

## Local: Seniors in Cambridge

In 2010-2011, three major reports were published by the Department of Human Service Programs, the Community Development Department, and the City of Cambridge Silver Ribbon Commission to analyze, highlight and discuss the needs of older adults in Cambridge, issues that ranged from supportive services and programs, to emerging demographic and housing trends.<sup>7</sup> Findings from these reports highlight that Cambridge is following national trends as its older adult population is increasing in number. From 2000 to 2010, older adults between the ages 55 and 65 increased by 34.69%, and many anticipate the older adult population will continue to grow as the baby boomer generation ages.

## Experiencing Discrimination

The full extent to which LGBT older adults face discrimination in housing and other aging services is unknown due to limited research and data collection. However, there have been

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<sup>6</sup> "LGBT Rights Milestones Fast Facts." Cable News Network, Wednesday May 2016. CNN Library. Web. 23 June 2016.

<sup>7</sup> *Aging in the Cambridge Community*. Community Development Department, Department of Human Service Programs. 2010.

*Housing Options for Older Cantabridgians*. Community Development Department. 2010.

*Creating a Vision: Cambridge as an Aging Friendly Community: Housing Options 2012-2030*. Silver Ribbon Commission. 2011.



anecdotal and quantitative studies done to highlight LGBT individuals' experiences of discrimination while searching and/or applying for housing. A national study conducted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) found that same-sex couples received significantly fewer email responses than heterosexual couples when emailing the same housing provider to inquire about advertised housing availability.<sup>8</sup>

In a study conducted by the Equal Rights Center in 2014, *Opening Doors: An Investigation of Barriers to Senior Housing for Same-Sex Couples*, 48% of same-sex couples who sought housing in 10 states reported that they found at least one form of adverse, differential treatment as compared to opposite sex couples when inquiring about housing. The differential treatment observed ranged from differences in availability, pricing, fees and costs, incentives to rent, amenities available, and application requirements.<sup>9</sup>

Another national study regarding discrimination in housing against people who are transgender and gender non-conforming, *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*, found that 19% of participants reported having been refused a home or apartment and 11% were evicted because of their gender identity/expression.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, 19% reported experiencing homelessness at some point in their lives because they were transgender or gender non-conforming. In seeking a bed at a homeless shelter, 55% were harassed by shelter staff or residents, and 29% were turned away.

Similarly, research indicates LGBT older adults continue to fear and experience discrimination within residential or non-residential healthcare organizations, such as hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities.<sup>11</sup> A national study in 2010 by Lambda Legal, the oldest and largest national legal organization for LGBT individuals, *When Health Care Isn't Caring*, showed 56% of LGB patients and 70% of Transgender or gender non-conforming patients who were surveyed had experienced some form of discrimination in healthcare. More than half of respondents reported that they had experienced at least one of the following types of discrimination by healthcare providers: refusal to touch them or use of extreme precautions, refusal to provide needed care, use of abusive language and physical contact, and blaming patients for their health status.

Research has shown that the LGBT population may have different health needs in comparison to their non-LGBT counterparts. With regard to health, disparities between LGBT

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<sup>8</sup> M. Davis and Company, Inc., et al. *An Estimate of Housing Discrimination Against Same Sex Couples*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2013, available at: [http://www.huduser.org/portal/Publications/pdf/Hsg\\_Disc\\_against\\_SameSexCpls\\_v3.pdf](http://www.huduser.org/portal/Publications/pdf/Hsg_Disc_against_SameSexCpls_v3.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> *Opening Doors: An Investigation of Barriers to Senior Housing for Same Sex Couples*. Equal Rights Center. 2014.

<sup>10</sup> *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011.

<sup>11</sup> *Improving the Lives of LGBT Older Adults*. Movement Advancement Project and SAGE. March, 2010.

individuals and their non-LGBT counterparts persist in three key areas: mental health, chronic physical conditions, and delay in accessing health care.<sup>12 13</sup>

## Limited Social Networks

Discrimination and stigmatization have had negative psychological and physical health impacts on many LGBT older adults. These negative experiences have also affected many LGBT seniors' abilities to have strong social networks to care for them as they age. LGBT elders are less likely than their non-LGBT peers to have partners or spouses, children, or be connected to their families of origin, all of whom play a vital role during the aging process for all elders regardless of identity. Families of origin often provide a social network, become caregivers, provide shelter, and support daily activities for older adults as they age. Research shows that older adults who use formal services as they age are more likely to live alone, have poorer health and fewer economic resources than their counterparts who do not use mainstream services, such as public housing and elder service agencies.<sup>14</sup> As LGBT seniors may be more likely than non-LGBT counterparts to rely on mainstream services while they age, it is important to understand how mainstream services both understand the needs of many LGBT seniors, and create welcoming agencies.

## Inclusive Policies

### *Federal*

The Federal Government's Fair Housing Act does not expressly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, which exacerbates many lived experiences of discrimination by LGBT seniors from housing providers. The Fair Housing Act is a federal law that prohibits discrimination in most private and public housing on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability and familial status. While gender identity is not a specific protected class, discrimination towards people who are transgender has been previously categorized under discrimination based upon sex, which is a protected class. Some state and local jurisdictions do provide protections that explicitly include sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

The Equal Access Rule implemented by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in March of 2012, is "intended to ensure that housing across HUD programs is open to all eligible individuals and families regardless of actual or perceived sexual

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<sup>12</sup> Wallace, Cochran, Durazo, & Ford. 2011. Policy Brief UCLA Center Health Policy Res.

<sup>13</sup> Krehely, Jeff. *How to Close the LGBT Health Disparities Gap*. The Center for American Progress, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Brennan-Ing, Seidel, Larson & Karpiak. 2014. *Social Care Networks and Older LGBT Adults: Challenges for the Future*, Journal of Homosexuality, 61:1, 21-52, DOI: 10.1080/00918369.2013.835235

orientation, gender identity, or marital status.”<sup>15</sup> The Equal Access Rule of 2012 followed a proposed rule in 2011 that “noted evidence suggesting that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals and families are being arbitrarily excluded from housing opportunities in the private sector. Such information was of special concern to HUD, which, as the nation’s housing agency, has the unique charge to promote the federal goal of providing decent housing and a suitable living environment for all.”<sup>16</sup>

### *State*

Massachusetts Housing non-discrimination laws protect people who are LGBT from being unfairly evicted, denied housing, or refused the ability to rent or buy housing. The Massachusetts non-discrimination policy includes protections both for sexual orientation and gender identity.<sup>17</sup>

### *Local*

Currently, the Fair Housing Ordinance of the City of Cambridge prohibits discrimination and includes housing protections based upon race, color, sex, age, religious creed, disability, national origin or ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, military status, or source of income.<sup>18</sup> Cambridge is in the process of revising its Fair Housing Ordinance to include gender identity as a protected class.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Informational Interview**

Information regarding policies and practices of Senior Housing for CHA was obtained from an in-person interview with Director of Property Management, James Comer, held on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015.

### **Self-Rated Survey Assessment for Staff**

Data was obtained from a survey that was distributed to the entirety of CHA staff by the Director of Property Management. The survey was open for completion from February 23<sup>rd</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> “Program Eligibility in Multifamily Assisted and Insured Housing Programs in Accordance with HUD’s Equal Access Rule” 2015. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Page 1.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2012. “Equal Access to Housing in HUD Programs Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity,” 5662, Federal Register, Vol. 77, No. 23.

<sup>17</sup> Movement Advancement Project, 2016. “Non-Discrimination Laws,” available at: [http://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/non\\_discrimination\\_laws/housing#sthash.ik2jcicx.dpuf](http://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/non_discrimination_laws/housing#sthash.ik2jcicx.dpuf)  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Attorney General of Massachusetts. *Housing Discrimination*. 2016. Website: <http://www.mass.gov/ago/consumer-resources/your-rights/civil-rights/housing/housing-discrimination.html>

<sup>18</sup> Cambridge Fair Housing Ordinance, Chapter 14.04, Cambridge Municipal Code.

through March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. There were 33 participant surveys in total, of which 8 were insubstantial due to incomplete status, resulting in 24 usable surveys.

The survey used a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, and added an option of Not Applicable (N/A) for staff participants who did not think the question applied to their job responsibilities or position. The statements that participants rated using the Likert Scale were randomized, to ensure that sequencing and placement of statements did not impact overall results.

## LIMITATIONS

It is important to recognize that the findings from this survey are based on a small sample size of CHA staff. Therefore, this study’s findings only represent a small portion of CHA’s staff and not the majority.

## DETAILED FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The survey portion of this report presents findings from a self-assessment survey taken by 24 then-current employees of Cambridge Housing Authority. CHA staff were asked to rate their opinion regarding 14 randomized statements that pertained to working with LGBT senior residents, and LGBT inclusive residential and workplace culture factors. The survey was created using a Likert Scale that ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Staff were also given the option to choose “N/A, Not Applicable, if the statement does not apply to your work and/or position.” For reporting purposes, the 14-items and corresponding results were split into three categories for LGBT inclusive care: Data Collection, Organizational Culture, and Training.

### Who Participated

The participants held a wide range of positions within the organization. For staff members who identified their position as “Other,” they specified the following positions: Senior Teacher-Counselor, Public Safety, Leased Department, Project Manager in Planning and Development, Community Relations, Executive Secretary, Planner, Planning and Development Department, Resident Services, Intern, and two Tenant Coordinators.

<b>What is your role / position in Cambridge Housing Authority?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Property Manager	4.2%	1
General Management	25.0%	6
Direct Care Provider	8.3%	2
Maintenance	8.3%	2
Other (please specify)	54.2%	13
<i>answered question</i>		<b>24</b>

The following sections are findings and recommendations for the three subsections of the survey: Data Collection, Organizational Culture, and Training.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

Under the HUD 2012 Equal Access Rule, it is prohibited for the owners and operators of HUD funded housing to inquire about the sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI) of applicants for, or current occupants of, rented or owned units of dwelling.<sup>19</sup> However, the Equal Access Rule does specify “that the prohibition on inquiries is not intended to prohibit mechanisms that allow for voluntary and anonymous reporting of sexual orientation or gender identity solely for compliance with data collection requirements of state or local governments or other federal assistance programs.” While there are currently no data collection requirements that mandate information about sexual orientation and gender identity be collected by the state of Massachusetts, the GLBT Commission, as an agency of local government, has been requested by the City Manager to obtain SOGI information from local elder housing providers, consistent with the HUD Equal Access Rule’s requirement for voluntary and anonymous reporting, which cannot be used for the purpose of determining eligibility for housing or for making housing available.

Therefore, it is legal for CHA to collect SOGI information voluntarily and anonymously from current senior residents, due to compliance with a local government agency’s request. However, it is important this is done so in a thoughtful and confidential manner. Intentions and guidelines for collecting voluntary and anonymous SOGI data from senior residents are outlined below in the section “Recommendations” of Data Collection.

After the Equal Access Rule passed in 2012, there was a request to make a change at the final ruling stage because of significant public pushback, from which one suggestion was to develop and enforce a national system that reports the sexual orientation and gender identity of those utilizing HUD housing programs. However, this final rule remained unchanged. As the Equal Access Rule explains, “HUD is not making the requested change to the rule because HUD needs more time to consider the feasibility of such a system and the issues it raises; foremost among them being maintaining the privacy rights of the individual who would be the subject of such reporting.” So while there is no federal requirement or system in place to collect SOGI information, CHA is able to do so under the City’s request in a voluntary and anonymous manner.

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<sup>19</sup> Equal Access to Housing in HUD Programs Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity, Federal Register / Vol. 77, No. 23 / Friday, February 3, 2012.

## FINDINGS

The majority of respondents (66.7%) either strongly agree or agree that LGBT elder residents are present in CHA's Senior Housing. A minority (16.7%) of respondents neither agree nor disagree if LGBT elders reside in CHA's Senior Housing, and no staff disagreed with the statement that LGBT senior residents are present in CHA housing.

For both sexual orientation and gender identity, a minority of staff respondents either strongly agree or agree that CHA should confidentially collect this information from current residents living in Senior Housing.

- For collecting information about the **sexual orientation** of residents who currently live in CHA's Senior Housing: the majority of staff respondents (58.3%) disagree that CHA should confidentially collect this information from residents. 25% neither agree nor disagree, and a minority of 12.5% are in agreement with this data collection.
- For collecting information about the **gender identity** of residents who currently live in CHA's Senior Housing: 41.7% of respondents neither agree nor disagree this information should be confidentially collected by CHA. 37.5% believe that this information should not be collected, and a minority of 16.7% are in agreement with this data collection.

Some staff may have concerns about asking senior residents to identify their sexual orientation and gender identity, as described in the following responses:

*"I have questions about the legality of asking persons to identify their LGBT identity or gender identity in light of HUD regulations and civil rights laws, even if kept confidentially."*

*"No one should have to identify their person style of living to get housing."*

*"It would be interesting to speak to some of the resident leaders about all this and see how they would react, if we began to inquire, even in a passive way on a form or something, to ask do you identify as LGBTQ, because we don't currently. What we do now on our forms is, for example, on an application if you were applying for housing you have the opportunity to list all the people in your household, and it is just your relationship to head of household that is the category. So you could fill in whatever you'd like to fill in. You know, husband and wife, significant other, partner... And similarly, gender is an open ended thing. It's not check male, check female. It is a box, and you can put in whatever you want to put in. So, it is kind of open ended in that regard.*

*It's more that we don't ask specifically because people can obviously volunteer that information about themselves. But when we ask, I don't think people would respond well to us asking about that, because really, it has very little relationship to what we are doing with them. We are housing whomever you are, and whoever you want to identify*

*as... So, philosophically, I don't have an issue putting something on our application, "Do you identify as this?" But our residents might react negatively to that, and think "Why are you asking that? Why does it matter? What are you trying to do? Are you trying to identify me to isolate me, or are you trying to identify me so that something negative can happen?" Certainly we would not want to have any interest in that sort of thing.*

*So if somebody were to volunteer and say, "I am gay and this is my partner," then wonderful! But we don't need to know, really. The way that relationships are defined for the purposes of housing, the term is called a "Relationship of Affinity." So in theory, that could be you and your best friend, you and your sister, it could be you and your wife, it could be you and whomever. As long as there is a demonstrated relationship of affinity, which is largely a self-declaration. You can say here is this person, here is my relationship to them, and we want to live together."*

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As highlighted in the above survey responses from participating CHA staff, and from an interview with the Director of Property Management, asking people who are seeking residency from a housing organization to identify their sexual orientation and gender identity raises legal and confidentiality concerns. While inquiring about sexual orientation and gender identity is generally prohibited under the HUD Equal Access Rule, collecting information for data purposes at the request of the GLBT Commission, an agency of local government, in a voluntary and anonymous manner is a way to assess the LGBT inclusiveness of housing programming and services.

### **Benefits of Collecting SOGI Information:**

1. Informs senior housing providers and programming coordinators about the experiences LGBT older adults are having with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity, and possibly with information for how to improve services and programming.
2. Sends a message from CHA to senior residents and staff that the experiences of LGBT older adults are important to understand, and improve if necessary.
3. Provides numerical evidence that LGBT older adults reside within CHA senior housing.

### **Ways to collect SOGI information:**

1. Ask anonymous and voluntary questions on program-wide assessments or surveys.

**\*It is important to not collect SOGI information in a way that could easily identify someone, for example surveys given to buildings with few residents.**

Questions could include...

## Sexual Orientation:

1. Do you think of yourself as:

- Heterosexual or straight
- Lesbian, gay, or homosexual
- Bisexual
- Different identity (please state): \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender Identity:** A two-step question approach is recommended by current research in the field for collecting data.<sup>20</sup>

1. What is your current gender identity?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender man
- Transgender woman
- I do not identify as male, female or transgender

2. What sex were you assigned at birth?

- Male
- Female

2. Inquire about LGBT older adults experiences using a routine, resident-satisfaction survey. If a program-wide satisfaction survey does not exist, one could be created to understand older adults' general satisfaction about their experiences with CHA's programming and services, with a portion tailored to learn of LGBT older adults' experiences and needs.

It is important to ensure anonymity while asking residents to identify their sexual orientation and/or gender identity or to give feedback regarding their experiences, so that residents feel safe and responses can be accurate and therefore insightful. In addition to anonymity, safety is ensured when there are LGBT nondiscrimination policies that are

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<sup>20</sup> Baker, K.E., Durso, L.E., & Ridings, A. (2016, March 16). How to Collect Data About LGBT Communities. *Center for American Progress*, 1-10.



clearly communicated to residents that include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

- Questions for LGBT older adults to understand satisfaction with CHA services, programing and policies:

If you identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender (LGBT):

1. Do you feel safe sharing your LGBT identity with any, or all, of CHA’s staff?
2. Do you feel safe sharing your LGBT identity with any, or all, of your fellow residents who currently live in CHA Senior Housing?

Answer Options:

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes
- N/A: I do not identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender

3. Circle or check off any that apply to you in the columns below: <sup>21</sup>

<b>Current Concerns:</b> What are your current concerns?	<b>Programs:</b> What programs would you like?
Social Isolation / Loneliness	LGBT Community Group
Cultural Support	Adult Coming Out Support group
Health Care / Insurance	LGBT Caregiver Support Group
Financial Planning	Healthy Aging Workshops
Home Care / Assistance	Information on Home Care Options
Spirituality	LGBT Friendly Visitor
Fear of LGBT Discrimination	Volunteer Opportunities
Relationship / Partnership	Bereavement Support Group
Transportation:	Educational Programs, such as:
Other:	Other:

<sup>21</sup> Arlington Council on Aging (CoA) LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) SURVEY 2016.

CHA currently provides an open-ended opportunity for applicants to specify their gender, instead of only offering traditional, binary categories such as “male” and “female.” As HUD has specified, this is important so that the decision about placement in single-sex facilities can be made based upon the resident’s gender identity.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, it is also a way for applicants to specify their gender identity on their terms, so they can identify as transgender in a voluntary way.

However, collecting information about gender identity for room assignment purposes may make someone who identified and transgender fearful or uncomfortable to self-disclose, if the reason for asking is not clearly communicated. They may fear it could be used in a discriminatory manner, especially if asked on an application or registration form. It may be helpful to include the purpose for which gender identity information will be used in the same section where this open-ended question is asked, to ensure more comfort in disclosing gender identity on behalf of the applicant.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

A main concern for many LGBT seniors entering new housing, whether it is public housing, assisted living facilities, or nursing homes, is whether they will be treated with dignity and respect by fellow residents and staff if they choose to disclose information about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. LGBT employees also need to feel safe and respected if they choose to disclose their SOGI status.

An organization can help foster a culture of support and respect for its LGBT residents and employees through intentional programming that addresses the needs of LGBT seniors. It also sends a strong message to every resident that CHA welcomes and supports all residents with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Welcoming Environment for Residents and Employees:**

The majority (75%) of staff respondents either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a community culture in which residents generally feel safe with each other and with staff. 20.8% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, and 4.2% disagreed.

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<sup>22</sup> *Equal Access for Transgender People: Supporting Inclusive Housing and Shelters*, HUD Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs, Equal Access Expectations Toolkit.

## **Residents**

When asked if they believe CHA creates a welcoming environment for senior residents who may identify as LGBT, less than half, 41.67%, either strongly agreed or agreed. Just as many staff reported they felt neutral about this, where 41.67% said they neither agree nor disagree that CHA creates this environment. 8.33% of staff respondents disagreed, and the same number of staff believed this statement was not applicable to their work and/or position.

## **Employees**

When asked if they believe that CHA creates a welcoming environment for employees who may identify as LGBT, more staff (75%) reported that they either strongly agree or agree than the 41.67% who were asked the same about senior residents. 20.83% reported they neither agree nor disagree, and one out of 24 staff reported disagree with the statement. Zero staff believe this statement is not applicable to their work and/or position.

## **Self-identifying as LGBT for Residents and Employees:**

The majority (54.17%) of staff reported they either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a safe living environment for senior residents to openly identify as LGBT, if they choose to do so. 37.5% of staff said they neither agree nor disagree with this statement, and 0% of staff were in disagreement. 8.3% said this statement was not applicable to their work and/or position.

More staff, 79.17%, reported they either strongly agree or agree that CHA creates a safe work environment for employees to openly identify as LGBT if they choose to do so, in comparison to 54.17% who reported the same for residents. 0% of staff strongly disagree/disagree with this statement, and 0% of staff believed this statement was not applicable to their work and/or position. 20.83% neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

## **Programming:**

75% of staff either strongly agreed or agreed that CHA should sponsor an event related to LGBT aging, open to all senior residents and staff. 17%, neither agree nor disagree. One staff out of 24 disagreed, and one staff out of 24 believed this statement was not applicable to their work and/or position.

*"I think we do a good job of highlighting the diversity that we have here, both in terms of our staff and our resident population, and being respectful of that. I know one of the things you're talking about is events and things like that, and residents do have a broad range of events, particularly seniors. They are welcome to use the community room for any purposes they would like. They do let us know what they want to do, and we approve it. But we have had different kinds of cultural events, certain ethnicities celebrate different holidays – all the above. We are certainly accepting and open to anything like that, provided that all folks are welcome. I think kind of in the day-to-day way we conduct our business, we make sure we reinforce that we do have a very diverse*

*resident population, and that we reinforce with those residents that who you are is going to be respected here; who you are is going to be protected here, no matter who that may be. It's a pretty simple thing. One of the basic standards we have is you allow your fellow residents to live in peace and quiet and enjoyment. So that can mean anything from making sure you don't have your radio loud, to not infringing on the way they live their life, and not engaging in speech or engaging in practices that are going to make people feel uncomfortable or making people feel like they are part of the 'other.' I think we do a pretty good job at policing that type of thing."*

### **Policies Regarding Discrimination:**

83% of staff either strongly agree or agree that they are fully aware of CHA's written policies that address discrimination. 12.5% of staff neither agree nor disagree, and one respondent disagrees with the statement they are fully aware of CHA's written policies that address discrimination. 0% of staff believe this statement is not applicable to their work and/or position with CHA.

Currently, CHA's anti-discrimination policy includes the term "sexual orientation" and "sex," but does not include the terms "gender identity" or "gender expression."

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The organizational and community culture of any senior housing should be an equally safe place for both senior residents and employees to be open about their identity with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as any other aspect of identity listed in CHA's protected classes.

### **Inclusive Policies:**

- Include the term "Gender Identity" in CHA's anti-discrimination policy, which currently includes inclusive language with regard to sexual orientation.
- Add CHA's updated anti-discrimination policy to the "Resident Handbook for Elderly and Disabled Public Housing."<sup>23</sup> This guide is given to all new residents, and the inclusion of the anti-discrimination policy sends a strong signal to all residents that discrimination on the basis of SOGI will not be tolerated.

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<sup>23</sup> <<http://cambridge-housing.org/about/policydocs.asp>> This resident handbook can be found on CHA's website under the section "About the CHA" within *Policy Documents – Public Housing/RAD/FPH Properties*.

- Include expectations regarding the anti-discrimination policy, as well as a contact name and number to whom residents can express grievances, in the handbook section, “Your Responsibilities as a Resident and Neighbor.”
- Issues such as noise, building security, and household member and guest regulations are addressed in the section “Respect Your Neighbors.” This section could also include expectations for respectful communication and cohabitation among tenants, with explicit reference to CHA’s anti-discrimination policy.

### **Inclusive Programming:**

- Provide small discussion groups led by tenants and/or the Tenants Council that meet regularly at specific elderly housing locations.
  - Some examples of existing discussion groups for LGBT older adults: Coming Out Later in Life; Older Lesbians; Older Gay Men; Transgender and Elder; LGBT Grandparents.
- Host one or more large events with a resident sponsor, either in collaboration with a local LGBT advocacy group or LGBT education organization, or local senior centers.
  - Movie screenings related to aging and being LGBT are a great way to bring people together and have thoughtful discussions. These events could be designed and led by Resident Service Coordinators, Property Managers, and/or Tenant Council members. More information related to creating LGBT inclusive programming and events, including movie titles and follow-up discussion questions, can be found in the guide *LGBT Programming for Older Adults: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide* co-authored by the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging Services, and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Elders (SAGE) (See *Resource List*).

For any inclusive programming, it is important that these small discussion groups are open to any and all residents, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Many ideas regarding inclusive events tailored to LGBT older adults can be created and designed by CHA staff themselves, as well as residents. One participant shared various ideas for inclusive programming in the open response section of the survey:

*“A celebration of historic LGBTQIA\* icons, especially those who have been in the movement for a long time and those who we need to memorialize. It'd be wonderful to have a resident panel or two discussing LGBTQIA\* identities and experiences throughout time, where folks can describe their given level of comfort and access at a certain moment in time. For example, many folks in previous generations participated*

*in heterosexual couplings/marriages, which is still not widely discussed and unpacked. Perhaps during Pride Month, a specific event can be put on to recognize LGBTQIA\* seniors, honoring them for living their truths.”*

Other suggestions in addition to programming are to make inclusive materials available to tenants and their families. If there are images on informational brochures, online or in communal areas of elderly individuals and couples, include images of LGBT older adults that also represent different racial and ethnic backgrounds. CHA could post an LGBT friendly sign or symbol, such as a rainbow flag or equality index symbol, on the window of Elderly Housing buildings and/or in CHA’s main office, in a visible location to tenants, their families, and the public.

## **TRAINING**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Observing or Hearing about Discrimination:**

Only one staff person out of 24 total responded that they agree to having observed or heard about instances of LGBT discrimination in CHA housing. The majority, 67%, or 16 out of 24, of staff either strongly disagree or disagree that they have observed or heard about instances of LGBT discrimination. Four out of 24 staff believe this statement is not applicable to their work and/or position, and three out of 24 staff neither agree nor disagree.

#### **Addressing Discrimination:**

70.83% or 17 out of 24 staff either strongly agree or agree that they feel confident in their ability to address a complaint about LGBT discrimination voiced by a senior resident. This could be discrimination by other residents, CHA staff, or outside service personnel. 16.67% or 4 out of 24 staff neither agree nor disagree with the statement, and 2 out of 24 staff disagree that they feel confident in their ability to address this sort of complaint voiced by a senior resident. One staff member out of 24 believed this statement was not applicable to work and/or position.

#### **Understanding Unique Needs of LGBT Elders:**

42% (10 out of 24) either strongly agree or agree that they have a strong understanding of the additional issues that LGBT seniors may face with respect to health and/or family. Seven out of 24 neither agree nor disagree, and one less, 6 out of 24, disagree that they have a strong understanding of the additional issues that LGBT seniors may face. One out of 24 staff believed that this statement is not applicable.

## **LGBT Inclusive Training:**

The majority, 63% (15 out of 24), either strongly agree or agree with the statement that they would like the training that all staff receive to include information about the aging concerns and needs of LGBT seniors. 29% (7 out of 24) neither agree nor disagree. One staff member disagreed, and one staff believed this statement is not applicable to their work and/or position.

CHA currently offers diversity training to all staff. The diversity training supports staff in developing and enhancing skills around their communication and interactions with residents on an ongoing basis. According to James Comer, the diversity training includes themes of respect for different cultures and communication styles. They meet regularly as a group, and include guest speakers who present on topics, such as elder abuse and elder bullying.

*“It is important to understand that there are a broad range of communication styles, there’s a broad range of personality types, and we need to be able to figure that out and work with people on their level. What we try to do is, at least for my folks – the folks that work out in the field – is everybody interacts with the same residents. So management, maintenance and support staff all get trained similarly. So we just went through a whole cycle of diversity training that is part of an ongoing customer service process that we are trying to work through. So there are different modules of training that we are going to undergo. We just finished with the first round of training, and I think it went pretty well.*

*One of the things I stress with my staff, and that I think is really important, is to approach interactions with people by trying to understand their perspective, and what they are bringing to the table that you might not be aware of... You have to have some sensitivity and have some awareness that whomever we are dealing with is a low-income individual... They are constantly having to go and reveal personal information to strangers to get benefits or to qualify for certain things. It is very invasive and very uncomfortable. And in a real sense, we are physically in their homes. It’s weird, it is not a normal job for people to have. Especially for maintenance, who may be in people’s homes multiple times for work orders or for another reason. We really try to give folks training to have a high level of sensitivity to your place in these folk’s lives. That you are, despite all of your best efforts, in some ways an intruder and invasive, in a way that people who don’t live in public housing don’t have to deal with. So be conscious of that, be aware of what you are doing in your interactions with people, and be aware that how they may be perceiving you is not necessarily how you are representing yourself, but they may just be seeing the uniform, and they may just be seeing the person in authority that they don’t want to deal with. So we really try to have that ongoing dialogue and have that manifest itself in our work... We meet regularly as a group and we bring in guest speakers, and different folks. It’s an ongoing learning experience.”*

In the open response section of the survey, when asked to provide any suggestions for how CHA Senior Housing can best serve LGBT elders, one respondent wrote, “Continue our diversity training sessions.”

Furthermore, in the open response section that asked participants to voice any questions, comments or concerns, a couple of staff expressed concerns:

*“CHA has Service Coordinators who work in our senior buildings to serve all residents, both corporately and individually to address specific concerns. I see no reason for singling out one group for community-wide training. CHA had a great inclusiveness training in 2015 which fell under the umbrella of diversity training. The way it was done, to emphasize inclusiveness for all, without special targeting of race, gender or specific ethnicities, I thought was extremely effective.”*

Another staff member responded, “We don't discriminate against anyone, no matter what.”

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cambridge Housing Authority, in its mission to be inclusive and welcoming to everyone, provide training that focuses on how to support LGBT residents in key areas of its programming and policies. This could be done by incorporating LGBT focused training into the already existing diversity training that is provided.

Training serves as a great resource for staff to increase their knowledge, comfort, and communication around issues that many LGBT seniors may face with regard to sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Additionally, the majority of staff respondents from the survey said they would like the current training that all staff receive to include information about concerns and needs of LGBT seniors.

While CHA has Service Coordinators who address specific concerns of all residents and work inside CHA’s senior housing buildings, many staff in other positions with CHA work closely with and support residents. It is important that *all* staff know how to support residents if they were to experience any sort of discrimination, whether it is knowing how to address a resident’s concern directly, or knowing who they can direct a resident to for further support if necessary.

### **LGBT Inclusive Training will allow:**

- CHA staff to better understand the unique experiences that many older LGBT people have had and continue to have



- CHA staff to practice using inclusive language and review how to confront and address possible bias towards LGBT older adults by other residents and staff
- CHA management to clarify how staff can address discrimination if it were to arise, either among residents, between staff and residents, or between staff.
  - While the majority of respondents either strongly agree or agree that they feel confident in their ability to address a complaint about LGBT discrimination voiced by a senior resident, some staff, 4 out of 24, reported feeling neutral about their abilities, and 2 out of 24 staff disagree that they feel confident in their ability to address this sort of complaint voiced by a senior resident.
- Clarify CHA’s anti-discrimination policy and how it applies to their work with residents and other co-workers, specifically how it addresses LGBT discrimination under its protected classes, “sexual orientation” and “sex.”
  - It is strongly recommended that CHA include “gender identity” and “gender expression” as protected classes in its anti-discrimination policy.
- CHA training to include guest speakers who are experts in LGBT inclusive care, especially as it relates to housing.

There are local groups that lead training workshops for agencies working with older adults, to support staff in providing and creating LGBT safe and welcoming residential and work environments. The LGBT Aging Project through Fenway Health is a key local organization that provides training. Another key resource for training is SAGE, which has centers across the nation and also provides literature to support welcoming agencies across areas of housing and healthcare (See *Resource List*).

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The GLBT Commission seeks to understand the current state of LGBTQ+ inclusivity, particularly for older adults and youth, in the key areas of housing, healthcare, and out-of-school programming. Part of the process for creating LGBTQ+ inclusive and culturally proficient organizations that support older adults and youth is the formation of partnerships.

### **CHA Follow-Up**

Following the release of this report, the GLBT Commission’s researcher and co-chair met with various members of CHA’s management to discuss our findings, best practices, and the current state of LGBT inclusion within its Senior Housing. Members present at our meeting from

CHA: the Deputy Executive Director, Executive Director, Director of Operations, Director of Human Resources, and Assistant General Counsel. From this meeting, the following best practices outlined in this report are being strongly considered for inclusion within CHA's practices and policies:

- Provide LGBTQ+ cultural proficiency training for staff and voluntary residents.
- Include voluntary and anonymous SOGI questions in a Resident Satisfaction Survey (which is currently being developed by a third party organization) to assess the experiences of LGBT older adults.
- Include "Gender Identity" as a protected class in CHA's current anti-discrimination policy, to reflect current language of the Massachusetts Antidiscrimination Law.
- Include LGBT friendly and affirmative visuals, such as the Human Rights Campaign equality sign or rainbow sticker, or LGBT individuals and families in informational, promotional or online materials.

In addition to the recommendations highlighted in the report, other ideas were developed to support LGBT older adults in CHA:

- The GLBT Commission researcher and co-chairs will share the report with active Tenant Councils to discuss LGBT inclusive housing with residents.
- Using inclusive signage for Gender Neutral bathrooms in each Senior Housing building.

## **Continued Work**

In addition to supporting the Cambridge Housing Authority, the Commission hopes to extend similar analysis to all senior housing options in the City. We are currently working on creating a Best Practices Guide for LGBTQ+ Inclusive Housing, to serve as an educational resource for housing providers to create LGBTQ+ inclusive options for current and future residents of Cambridge.

The Commission's previous report, *The Need for LGBTQ Inclusive Health Care for Seniors in the City of Cambridge*,<sup>24</sup> analyzed the policies and practices of various healthcare organizations with regard to LGBT inclusivity for older adults. This report and its recommendations have been shared with all healthcare organizations in the City to help support their work in creating LGBT affirming and inclusive healthcare practices and policies. We

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<sup>24</sup> Chandler, Elysia. 2015. *The Need for LGBTQ Inclusive Healthcare for Seniors in the City of Cambridge*. The Cambridge GLBT Commission, available at: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/glbtc>

continue to meet with providers within healthcare organizations, senior centers, assisted living facilities and nursing homes to support LGBT inclusion across agencies.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

\*The terms listed below were derived from: “Age-Friendly Inclusive Services: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming LGBT Organizations,” by SAGE’s National Resource Center on LGBT Aging; Glossary of “Greater Boston Parents, Families, and Friends of LGBTQ People,” <https://www.gbpflag.org/Glossary>, and from World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH).

**Bisexual:** A person who is physically, romantically, and/or emotionally attracted to both men and women (the attraction does not need to be equal). People may experience being bisexual in differing ways and degrees throughout their lifetime.

**Gay:** A term used to describe someone who has primary physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to someone of the same sex. This word is predominantly used to describe men, and is commonly preferred over “homosexual.”

**Gender Expression:** How someone expresses their gender identity on the outside. This can refer to how someone dresses, talks, walks, etc. Usually transgender people match their gender expression with their gender identity, instead of their sex assigned at birth.

**Gender Identity:** The gender you feel you are. This can be man, woman, both, or neither. For transgender people, their gender assigned at birth and their personal sense of gender identity are not the same. Additionally, gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Example: A transgender woman, who was assigned a male gender at birth and is attracted to other females.

**Gender Non-Conforming:** The extent to which a person’s gender identity, role or expression differs from the cultural norms prescribed for people of a particular sex

**Gender Dysphoria:** Refers to levels of discomfort or distress that is caused by the discrepancy between a person’s gender identity and that person’s sex assigned at birth.

**Heterosexual:** A term used to describe someone who has primary physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to someone of the opposite sex.

**Lesbian:** A woman whose primary physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction is to other women. (The term gay can also be preferred).

**LGBT/Q:** Acronym for: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender / and Queer.

**Sexual Orientation:** A person’s primary physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex.

**SOGI:** Acronym for: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

**Transgender:** An umbrella term used for people who transition from one gender to another, and includes people whose gender identity and/or expression defies societal expectations of how they should look or act based on the sex they were assigned at birth, and conventional expectations of masculinity or femininity.

## RESOURCE LIST

### BEST PRACTICES GUIDES

The SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) National Resource Center on LGBT Aging has authored “Best Practices Guides” to support healthcare organizations with providing LGBT inclusive care to elders. The guides are listed below (in order of publishing date):

- a. “Age-Friendly Inclusive Services: A Practical Guide to Creating Welcoming LGBT Organizations.” (2015).
- b. “LGBT Programming for Older Adults: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide.” (2015).
- c. “Inclusive Questions for Older Adults: A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.” (2013).

URL link to resources listed above:

<https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resources.cfm?s=35>

### LOCAL EVENTS + PROGRAMMING:

1. Cambridge Café @ Ryles: Monthly dinner for LGBT seniors. Flyer with location details at following link: < [https://eldercare.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/LGBT\\_MealSiteFlyer.pdf](https://eldercare.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/LGBT_MealSiteFlyer.pdf) >
2. Somerville Cambridge Elder Services (SCES): [www.eldercare.org](http://www.eldercare.org) ; 617-628-2601
  - Offers older adults resources, information, advice and services.

- Developed a comprehensive LGBT Resource Guide: < <https://eldercare.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/LGBT-Resources-Guide.pdf> > that includes information about meal programs, support and social groups, faith communities, legal services, and other resources for LGBT older adults in Cambridge and the Greater Boston Area.

## **TRAINING + COMMUNITY EDUCATION:**

### **1. LGBT Aging Project:** <http://fenwayhealth.org/the-fenway-institute/lgbt-aging-project/>

The LGBT Aging Project is a local organization, whose work is focused in Massachusetts and on LGBT issues related to aging. This organization provides both Cultural Competency Trainings and Consultation, as well as Community Education Seminars, tailored specifically to mainstream elder service providers and healthcare organizations to help support their work.

### **2. SAGE's National Resource Center on LGBT Aging:**

SAGE provides in-person and online-webinar trainings, created to support staff within healthcare organizations learn the best ways to provide a welcoming environment for LGBT senior patients and residents. Further information can be found at the following URL:  
**<http://www.sageusa.org/lgbthousing/>**

## APPENDIX

**Table 1: CHA staff survey responses – 5 pt. Likert Scale**

Category	Statements	Strongly Agree or Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	N/A
<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	There are LGBT elder residents in CHA's Senior Housing.	66.7%	16.7%	0%	16.7%
	CHA should confidentially collect information about the gender identity (e.g. male, female, transgender female-to-male, transgender male-to-female) of senior residents who are currently living in its Senior Housing.	16.7%	41.7%	37.5%	4.2%
	CHA should confidentially collect information about the sexual orientation (e.g. lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, other) of senior residents who are currently living in its Senior Housing.	12.5%	25.0%	58.3%	4.2%
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE</b>	CHA creates a community culture, in which residents feel safe with each other and with staff.	75.0%	20.8%	4.2%	0%
	CHA creates a welcoming environment for employees who may identify as LGBT.	75.0%	20.8%	4.2%	0%
	CHA creates a welcoming environment for senior residents who may identify as LGBT.	41.7%	41.7%	8.3%	8.3%

	CHA creates a safe work environment for employees to openly identify as LGBT, if they choose to do so.	79.2%	20.8%	0%	0%
	CHA creates a safe living environment for senior residents to openly identify as LGBT, if they choose to do so.	54.2%	37.5%	0%	8.3%
	I am fully aware of CHA's written policies that address discrimination.	83.3%	12.5%	4.2%	0%
	CHA should sponsor an event related to LGBT aging, open to all senior residents and staff.	75.0%	16.7%	4.2%	4.2%
<b>Category</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Strongly Agree or Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree or Disagree</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>TRAINING</b>	I feel confident in my ability to address a complaint voiced by a senior resident about LGBT discrimination. This could be discrimination by other residents, CHA staff, or outside service personnel.	70.8%	16.7%	8.3%	4.2%
	I have observed or heard about instances of LGBT discrimination in CHA housing.	4.2%	12.5%	66.7%	16.7%
	I have a strong understanding of the additional issues that LGBT seniors may face with respect to health and/or family.	41.7%	29.2%	25.0%	4.2%
	I would like the training that all staff receive to include information about the aging concerns and needs of LGBT seniors.	62.5%	29.2%	4.2%	4.2%

**Table 2: List of Elderly/Disabled Housing for Cambridge Housing Authority**

<b>CHA Building Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
45 Linnaean Street	45 Linnaean Street
116 Norfolk Street	116 Norfolk Street
Burns Apartments	30-50 Churchill Avenue
John F. Kennedy Apartment	55 Essex Street
Lyndon B. Johnson Apartment	150 Erie Street
Frank J. Manning Apartment	237 Franklin Street
Millers River Apartment	15 Lambert Street
Putnam School	86 Otis Street
Truman Apartments	25 Eighth Street
Leonard J. Russell Apartment	2050 Massachusetts Avenue
St. Paul's Residence	34 Mount Auburn Street
Weaver Apartment	81 Clifton Street

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

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**Nancy Schlacter** – Executive Director, Cambridge Human Rights Commission  
**Taha Jennings** – Assistant to the City Manager  
**Richard Rossi** – City Manager, City of Cambridge  
**Lisa Peterson** – Deputy City Manager, City of Cambridge  
**James Comer** – Director of Property Management, Cambridge Housing Authority  
**And All Participating Staff from Cambridge Housing Authority**