

APLA



Health

HIV and Aging In Los Angeles – The Healthy Living Project

Jeff Bailey, APLA Health

Dr. Matt G. Mutchler, APLA Health & CSUDH

Keshav Tyagi, APLA Health

Outline

- HIV and Aging Statistics
- The *Healthy Living Project*
- Results (Complete and Preliminary)
- Challenges and Rewards
- Recommendations

HIV and Aging – Los Angeles (end of 2016)

- Of the estimated 58,000 PLWHA in Los Angeles County
 - 45% are ages 50 and over (~24,000 PLWHA)
 - This number will increase by 30% by 2025 based on current statistics

Priority Populations	Number out of older PLWHA (%)
Gay and Bisexual Men (MSM)	17934 (~75%)
Cisgender Women	2670 (~11%)
Transgender Women	207 (<1%)*
Hispanic/Latino (all-inclusive)	8223 (~34%)
Heterosexual Men	3169 (13%)

**this figure includes only documented cases, and may not encompass the total and complete number of older transgender female PLWHA*

APLA's Response – The Healthy Living Project

- Funded by Gilead Sciences Inc.
- Collaborators – California State University, Dominguez Hills & the AIDS Coordinator's Office of the City of LA
- Project Aims
 - To learn about where and what type of services older adults living with HIV receive in LAC and how to disseminate program information to them.
 - Understand barriers and challenges older adults living with HIV/AIDS experience in LAC;
 - Understand experiences with HIV care and support services and identifying service gaps for this population in LAC;
 - Explore possible program activities/strategies that older adults living with HIV perceive will assist them with managing the psychosocial and physical complexities of aging with HIV.

The Healthy Living Project: Activities

- Focus Group Discussions
 - 3 focus groups for 5 priority populations (MSM, transgender women, cisgender women, heterosexual men and monolingual Spanish speakers)
 - 15 groups from October 2016-June 2017
 - Eligibility
 - At least 50 years or older
 - Living with HIV
 - Residing in Los Angeles County
 - A member of one of the 5 priority populations
- All participants received a \$50 gift card remuneration

Current Project Status

- MSM – groups and analysis complete
- Cisgender women – groups and analysis complete
- Heterosexual men – groups complete, results being analyzed
- Transgender women – open for recruitment
- Monolingual Spanish-speakers – open for recruitment

Results - MSM

- Overall, MSM participants grateful to have survived the AIDS crisis and still be alive
 - Primarily concerned with affordable housing, finances, and being alone as they get older

“If I accept that I’m getting older then it’s the older gay dilemma which is you don’t have a house or kids who will march to your rescue so I’m more comfortable being like a kid rather than acting like an adult because I don’t want to think about the larger gay aging issue because it’s kind of a dead end.”

Results - MSM

- What they want – advocacy and assistance for affordable housing and financial counseling services

“I think part of the issue here is that we lost a generation. So we don’t have anybody to model from as to what it’s like to be older and gay. And we’re now sort of the generation that has to create our own...to create our lives at this point and decide what we want to do in our formative years...there’s no manual, no book. We haven’t gone down this road before and we don’t have anybody really to talk to about it.”

“I think housing is a huge issue if you want it affordable. It’s not available on the income that we’re on. Anything that is realistic has a 3-10 year wait. How many places have service for seniors, let alone seniors with HIV and AIDS? It doesn’t exist as far as I know...”

Results – Cisgender Women

- Cisgender female participants reported that after many years of caring for families and putting their health second, they are now looking to prioritize themselves and their lives as they get older
 - Nonetheless participants expressed gratitude for any and all assistance they were given, and for their lives in the present

“But my independence, I am just getting into what it is that I am going to do with myself, because I am like this lady here, I have been a caregiver for over 30 years, taking care of Hospice patients and seniors and all this kind of stuff you know and I don’t want it to be that, oh now it is my turn somebody come take care of me.”

Results – Cisgender Women

- What they want – more services targeting women with HIV, transportation assistance, child care, and social support groups for HIV+ women.

“And transportation, ever since I have been around and living with this transportation has always been an issue. That is why a lot of females don’t go to the doctors, transportation is not provided.”

“I hope we have more groups, so we can get it out to the community and older women, especially older women. We need more groups like this to let women know they are not alone.”

Preliminary Results – Heterosexual Men

- Heterosexual male participants reported that they found a sense of pride in maintaining their health, and that exercise and pursuing health related knowledge gave them purpose and kept them busy.
 - Struggles with substance abuse were discussed more heavily among this group, and a lot of their approach to life revolved around maintaining their sobriety and keeping themselves occupied and away from negative stimuli.

“Also, that’s why I like to come to places like this because first thing I do I go see what the reading material is what they got. Like here, they talk [about] all the latest medications...what it does, give you the breakdown on all of it and it gives you helpful information that you normally wouldn’t get nowhere else...Seeing what they talk about or what the subject—I didn’t know that [before]. Let me check and see, you know, my case manager about providing it—if they do this here.”

Preliminary Results – Heterosexual Men

- What they want – care specifically on chronic diseases other than just HIV, and support groups where HIV+ heterosexual men with depression can speak candidly and openly about their struggles

“Maybe too, a lot of people with HIV have depression problems and I think like you have a group that maybe has that problem, with depression and you hear something from him, something from him, it might click, you know. Maybe, well, maybe one might be feeling like this, you know?”

If you don't tell the doctor you are having this problem, he will never know...they should be helping you with this instead of sending you all over. They didn't tell me that with this disease, I would have all these problems growing older...so yeah screening would be helpful.”

Preliminary Results – Transgender Women

- Overall, transgender women participants reported high levels of trauma and severe experiences of stigma with regards to the combination of their gender identity and HIV status
 - The participants did not feel represented or accepted in LGBT circles or HIV service organizations, aging did not appear to be a concern because they were dealing with many other challenges.

“In the downtown area or slum-ish areas of Hollywood or something like that, is very much, there’s not unity with the gay society, transgender society, HIV society, stuff like that. There’s no unity...I think that it’s very ugly ’cause I feel like everybody, this and that, under that rainbow should be able to unite because society is against us. So why are you, you know?”

Preliminary Results – Transgender Women

- What they want – educational programs for the community to reduce discrimination, job opportunities for transgender women, housing in areas where they don't feel unsafe, and more transgender employees in service organizations

“I want a job, I want to be around—I want to help other transgenders. I want to do good things. I’m just tired of being in my...car, I’m tired of not being able to work with transgenders, I’m tired of places like this not having job openings for us out here...It just irks the hell out of me.”

HLP Challenges and Rewards

- Challenges
 - Recruiting transgender women and heterosexual men specifically over 50 and living with HIV
 - Ensuring a geographically representative sample
 - Loss to follow up
- Rewards
 - Gratitude for providing a safe space for this community to come together and support one another
 - Appreciation for having such a project that emphasizes their needs as aging PLWHA
 - Gaining an understanding of the diversity of aging PLWHA in LAC

Recommendations to the COH and DHSP

- Medical and social service providers should be trained to understand HIV and aging simultaneously, and how they interact with one another
- Understanding of aging services in LAC
- Future programs should be
 - Include older PLWH in the planning of programs
 - Geographically accessible
 - Inclusive programs
 - Targeted for those between ages 50-65
 - Economically considerate
 - Collaborative between organizations and clients

QUESTIONS?

APLA



Health