Policy recommendations

- Epidemiology
- Prevention
- Prevention and healthcare providers
- Comorbidities
- HIV and elders in a social context
- Older American Act
- Social services
- Veterans benefits
- Healthcare
The CDC should:

- Improve epidemiological surveillance systems and data collection to provide specific data delineated by age and risk category.

- Collect data on gender identity in addition to transmission categories. This would provide national level data on HIV among trans people.

- Better knowledge re: prevalence of HIV among older gay men, trans women could inform more culturally competent care.
CDC, state and local health departments should target prevention efforts at older adults, including gay men, MSM, women, and African Americans. They should also target high-risk sexual behaviors (such as unprotected anal, vaginal sex) whether between opposite-sex or same-sex couples.

Both HHS and the CDC should fund social marketing campaigns challenging HIV stigma and anti-gay stigma.
Policy recommendations: Prevention and health providers

- Healthcare professionals should proactively assess older patients for sexual health risks and test for HIV.

- Doctors should be encouraged to talk with their patients regarding sexual behavior/orientation and make clear that such conversations are confidential.
Policy recommendations: Comorbidities

- More clinical research with HIV+ 50+
  - Explore how treatments for comorbidities interact with anti-retroviral medication and what effects these interactions may have on older adults.
  - Increase understanding of NARCs among HIV+ 50+.

- Standards of care for older adults living with HIV should call for screenings for comorbidities.

- Doctors treating cervical, anal cancer etc. should offer their patients an HIV test.

- HIV medical providers should screen for depression and refer to mental health treatment.
Policy recommendations: HIV+ elders in social context

- ASOs, LGBT community centers, other CBOs should encourage community caregiving for elders living with HIV (like “buddy programs”).
- Should Ryan White of other funding streams fund caregiving assistance for PLWHA to assist with ADLs?
- Staff at nursing homes, long-term care facilities, and senior centers should be trained in the particular experiences and needs of HIV-positive elders to ensure culturally competent and non-discriminatory care.
- Home healthcare aides should be trained in the particular experiences and needs of HIV+ elders and LGBT elders to ensure culturally competent and nondiscriminatory care.
Older Americans Act

- Funds community planning and social services, research and development projects, and personnel training in the field of aging.
- Available evidence that senior centers are not adequately serving LGBT elders.
- Need for staff training re: gay elders, HIV+ elders.
- The upcoming 2011 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act presents unique opportunities for change that could impact HIV positive older adults.
Policy recommendations: Senior services

- HHS should fund social marketing campaigns that challenge HIV stigma and stigma related to homosexuality.

- OAA could list HIV+ elders, LGBT elders as vulnerable populations (2011 reauthorization); could identify funding for training, research, targeted services.

- Researchers should study the experiences of older HIV positive and LGBT populations in congregate living facilities.

- Senior center staff, volunteers and nurses should be trained on HIV, sexuality, social isolation and other factors that affect older HIV+ clients.
Policy recommendations: Same-sex partners

- Marriage equality should be enacted to allow same-sex partners access to many health related benefits.
  - In the meantime, Medicaid regulations should be changed to provide same-sex partners the ability to remain in their homes without jeopardizing their partners’ right to Medicaid coverage.

- Same-sex couples should be treated the same as opposite-sex married couples under Social Security policy.
Policy recommendations: Veteran’s Benefits

- VA should expand outreach efforts in order to enroll more veterans and eligible family members.

- “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” policy applies only to those serving active duty, so gay and lesbian veterans can openly access VA benefits.
Policy recommendations: Healthcare

- Family Medical Leave Inclusion Act pass to modify 1993 FMLA to allow employees to take unpaid leave to care for same-sex partners; state laws should also be changed (except CA).

- Geriatric workforce not at all prepared to accept growing number of older adults living with HIV. Very few medical schools even have a geriatric focus.
Thank you!

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Thank you for your work and taking time today

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