

News Release

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Contact: Elisa Williams, 503-509-9604, elisa.a.williams@dhsosha.state.or.us

Statewide survey aims to improve services for LGBTQ+ older adults

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) wants to hear from adults age 55 and older who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two Spirit and non-binary as well as sexual or gender diverse (LGBTQ+) to determine if services that support health and well-being are meeting their needs.

To collect this feedback, the ODHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities commissioned the first Oregon statewide survey of its kind. The confidential and anonymous survey is led by researcher Karen Fredriksen Goldsen, PhD, a national expert on aging in underserved communities at the University of Washington. It seeks detailed input from adults 55 and older and is designed to identify gaps in services, barriers to accessing programs as well as strengths within the state's various LGBTQ+ communities. Information gathered will be used for planning, program development, community education and advocacy.

“Older adults represent an increasingly large share of the state’s population, but the services available haven’t yet overcome decades of disparities,” said Jane-ellen Weidanz, administrator of Long Term Services and Supports for the ODHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities. “Hearing from Oregonians about their experiences will be enormously valuable.”

The survey has widespread support from community organizations and LGBTQ+ advocates. The Governor’s Commission on Senior Services, the Oregon LGBTQ+ Aging Coalition and SAGE Metro Portland were instrumental in advocating for the project. Other community partners supporting the research include: Aging Well of Cascade AIDS Project, Alzheimer’s Association, AARP Oregon, EngAGE NW, HIV Alliance - Douglas County, Metropolitan Community Church of Portland, Oregon Home Care Commission, Pride Foundation, Quest Center for Integrative Health and Zami Nobla Oregon.

“We want as many perspectives as possible across the diverse LGBTQ+ communities in Oregon so the survey results fully represented their varied needs and experiences,” said [Karen Fredriksen Goldsen](#), PhD, professor and director of The Goldsen Institute at the University of Washington. “With that information, Oregon will be well positioned to expand upon its rich history of developing services and options that are person-centered and responsive to existing needs.”

To learn more visit: [Oregon LGBTQ+ Older Adult Survey](#).