



COMMIT TO
Connect

engAGED

The National Resource Center
for Engaging Older Adults

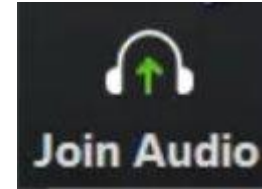
Promoting Social Connection Among Older Adults Living with HIV/AIDS

February 27, 2024

Housekeeping

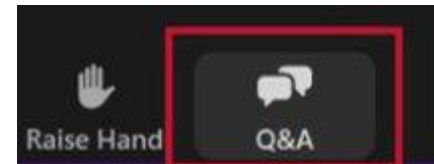
- **Audio Options**

- Use your computer speakers, OR dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
- All participants are muted.



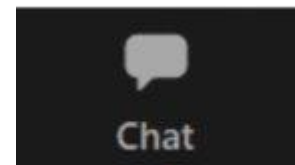
- **Questions and Answers (Q&A)**

- On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the Q&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.
- For any questions that we aren't able to respond to, you may follow-up at info@committoconnect.org.



- **Chat Feature**

- The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, co-hosts and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.



Accessibility and Support

- **ASL services are being provided today and will be pinned**
- **CART services are also being provided.**
 - Click on the CC Show Captions button or click on the link in the chat
- **Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter**
 - Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, “S”
- **To get our attention if you need tech assistance:**
 - Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y



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Commit to Connect Overview

Katie Clark

Administration for Community Living

Commit to Connect

- Aim is to connect people living with isolation and loneliness with programs and resources to build the social connections they need to thrive.
- Commit to Connect is funded primarily by the U.S. Administration for Community Living
- USAging serves as the Coordinating Center
- Visit www.committtoconnect.org



Strategy

- Increase awareness and availability of programs and strategies that address social isolation and loneliness and grow social connections
- Build and strengthen collaboration with current and potential partners to leverage our collective efforts, resources, innovations and activities to increase social connection in the U.S.



Key efforts include:

- Increase adoption of social connection programs throughout the United States
- Cultivate a Nationwide Network of Champions, an online networking platform, for passionate leaders and innovators dedicated to ending social isolation and loneliness
- Hold specialized events, such as the National Summit to Increase Social Connections
- Strengthen partnerships across national, state and local agencies addressing social isolation
- Develop and provide technical assistance resources that promote greater social connection and reduce social isolation and loneliness





Welcome to a Nationwide Network of Champions

Dedicated to Ending Social Isolation and Loneliness

[Become a champion!](#)



Connect

Connect with peers, expand your network, and make a difference.

[Visit the Member Directory](#)



Collaborate

Join in discussions, voice your opinion, and further your knowledge.

[Visit the Discussions Page](#)



Explore

Explore, share resources, and inspire the work in your community.

[Visit the Resources Library](#)



Learn

Learn more about the work Champions are doing to address SIL.

[Visit the Blog Page](#)



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Commit to Connect Resources



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ABOUT NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF CHAMPIONS PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES CONSUMER RESOURCES

Tools to Connect and Engage

Connecting People with Resources That Help Fight Social Isolation and Loneliness

Social isolation is an epidemic that poses serious health risks affecting millions of people in the United States.

To address this growing public health issue, the Administration for Community Living, in partnership with the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, established a cross-sector initiative, coordinated by USAging, to reach people who are socially isolated. The aim of the collaboration is to connect people living with isolation with programs and resources to build the social connections they need to thrive.

Strategy

- Increase awareness and availability of programs and strategies that address social isolation and loneliness and grow social connections
- Build and strengthen collaboration with current and potential partners to leverage our collective efforts, resources, innovations and activities to increase social connections in the U.S.

Commit to Connect is funded primarily by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, with additional funding support from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health.

- Visit the website and sign up for the newsletter at: <https://committtoconnect.org/>
- Learn about upcoming events and resources:
 - Webinars
 - Office Hours
 - Communities of Practice
 - Topical Guides
 - And more!



Overview of engAGED

- National effort that provides training and technical assistance aimed for Aging Network organizations (and partners of the Aging Network) to promote social engagement and reduce social isolation and loneliness among consumers
- Administered by USAging
- Learn more at www.engagingolderadults.org

Presenters

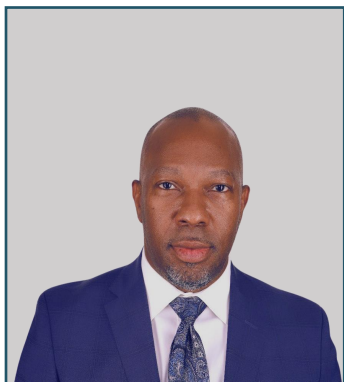


Dr. Paul Nash, CPsychol AFBPsS FHEA

Instructional Professor, Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, University of Southern California and Commissioner, Los Angeles County Commission on HIV

Fredrick Thomas, MPA, MPH

Project Manager, Detroit Area Agency on Aging



Paul Aguilar

Long-term Survivor Community Liaison with Aging Services at the San Francisco AIDS Foundation; Board Member & Resident of Marty's Place Affordable Housing Corporation; Co-Author of "*The San Francisco Principles 2020.*"

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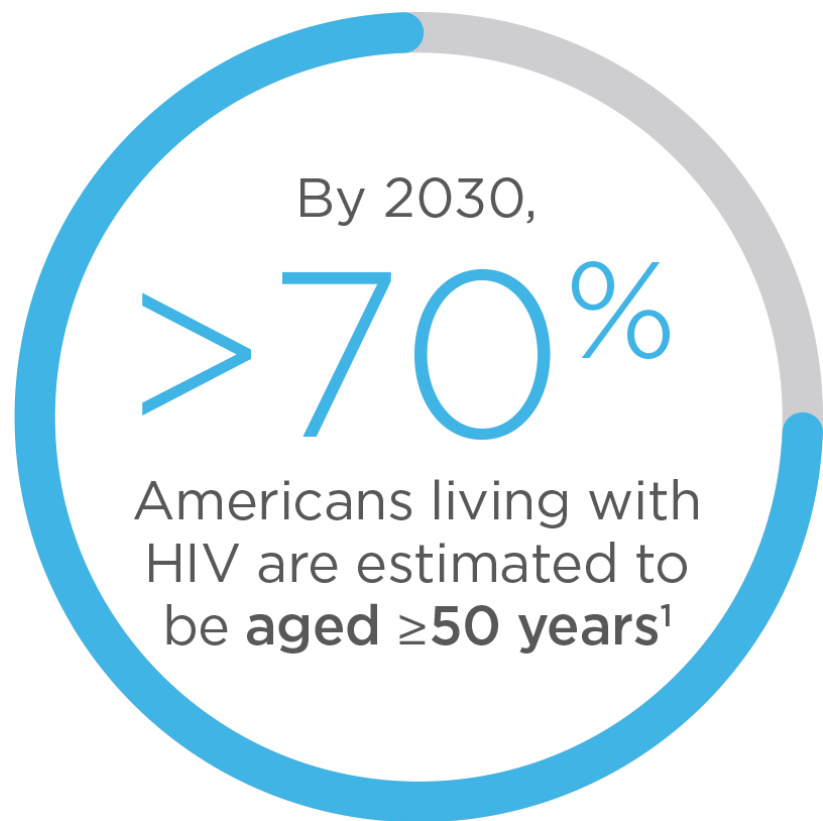
Promoting Social Connection Among Older Adults Living with HIV / AIDS

ACL Commit to Connect & engAGED
Online Webinar
February 27th 2024

Dr Paul Nash CPsychol, AFBPsS, FHEA
Email: pnash@usc.edu



A New Ageing Population



The vast majority of the population living with HIV will be older adults

What about the majority of the research?

Accelerated & accentuated ageing but what about non-biological specific challenges?



HIV and Stigma

Older HIV-positive adults often experience a “triple stigma” associated with ageism, public misconceptions about HIV/AIDS, and antigay prejudice, which can affect even heterosexuals living with HIV.

- Social Stigma pulls of stereotypes leading to direct & indirect prejudice
- Many experience “**social avoidance**”
- 96% reported experiencing HIV stigma itself
71% reported experiencing both ageism and HIV stigma
56% reported experiencing **rejection** from service providers, family, friends, church members, etc
(Emlet, 2006)





Consequences of Stigma

Shame; Guilt; Fear; Self-loathing

Older adults face this in terms of:

- **Loneliness**
- Physical Decline
- Cognitive Decline

Resulting in:

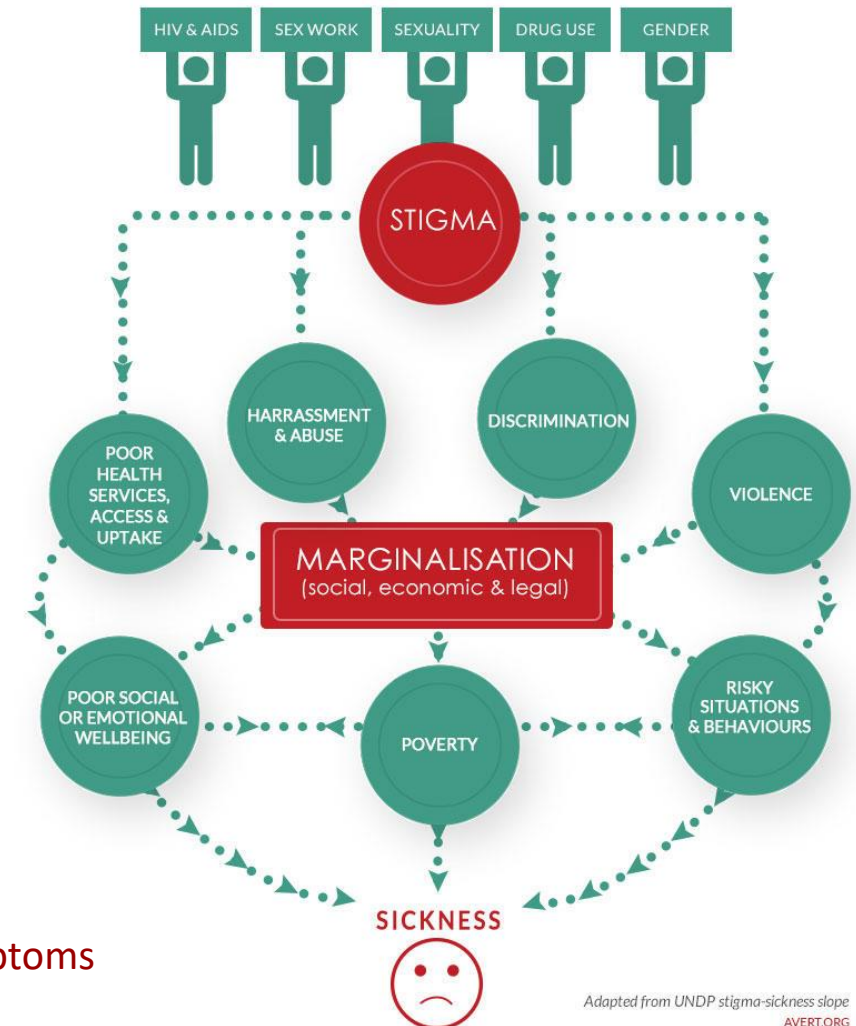
- **Reduced Social Networks**
- **Increased Social Isolation**
- Decreased Self-esteem, Image & Efficacy
- Decreased Functioning (Cog & Physical)
- Decreased Likelihood of Status Disclosure

People who experience HIV-related stigma are more likely to experience depressive symptoms, report receiving recent psychiatric care, and report greater HIV-related symptoms

Internalized HIV stigma contributes to depression, anxiety, and hopelessness.

HOW STIGMA LEADS TO SICKNESS

Many of the people most vulnerable to HIV face stigma, prejudice and discrimination in their daily lives. This pushes them to the margins of society, where poverty and fear make accessing healthcare and HIV services difficult.



Adapted from UNDP stigma-sickness slope
AVERT.ORG



Social Isolation & Loneliness

Loneliness

“Loneliness is a situation experienced by the individual as one where there is an unpleasant or inadmissible lack of (quality of) certain relationships. This includes situations in which the number of existing relationships is smaller than is considered desirable or admissible, as well as situations where the intimacy one wishes for has not been realised.”

(De Jong Gierveld . 1998)

Social isolation

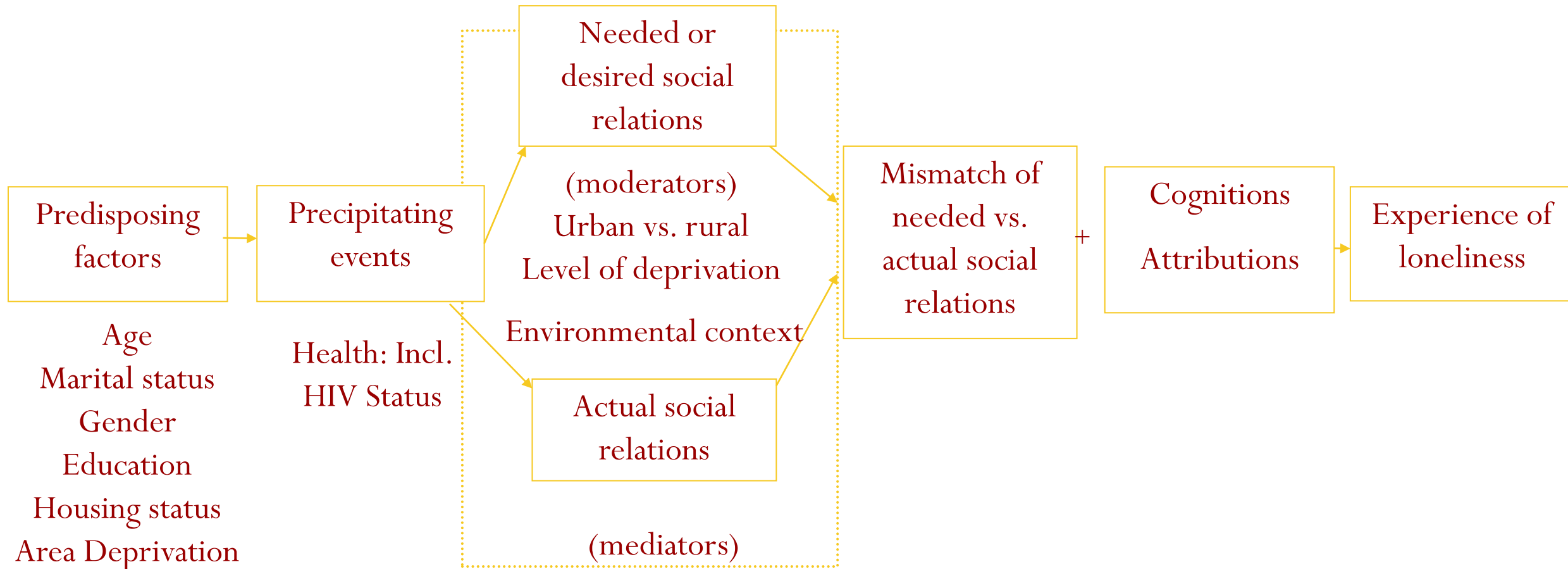
Social isolation is broadly defined as the absence of contact with other people
(Wenger et al., 2004)

Independent but not mutually exclusive





Pathways to Loneliness



Cognitive Discrepancy Theory



Loneliness as a Social Contagion

- ❖ Lonely people act in ways that discourage others from engaging and socializing with them
- ❖ Solitary older adults push people away and lack effort to engage with others
- ❖ People who engage with lonely adults are more likely to become lonely themselves and transgress to the outskirts of their own social networks
- ❖ Serious implication on health and social care wider than the lonely older person
- ❖ In 2016 the US Surgeon General warned that America is "facing an epidemic of loneliness and social isolation." with approx. 28% of older adults feeling chronically lonely





Is Loneliness Really Something to Worry About?

People who report routinely feeling isolated or lonely:

- Increased incidence of cardiovascular issues
- Increased dementia risk
- Higher levels of inflammation – more susceptible to disease
- Steeper decline in physical functioning and IADLs/ADLs
- Are 50% more likely to die prematurely
- More likely to require long term care
- Likely to engage in ‘risky behaviours’ – poor diet / exercise

- Regarding mortality, loneliness’ impact is comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day and **GREATER** than the risk of obesity





Cyclical Issues

People who are living with loneliness:

- Greater risk of depression
- Less likely to engage in self-care and hygiene
 - Reduced desire and acceptance for social engagement
- Experience physiological brain changes that make it difficult to form new social connections
- More likely to view others faces as threatening; making new connections becomes harder





Other Issues

- Social isolation increases risk of abuse
 - Cause or effect?
 - All forms of abuse
- LGBT community more at risk
 - Twice as likely to live alone
 - More likely to be single
 - Less likely to have children
 - More likely to be estranged from biological family



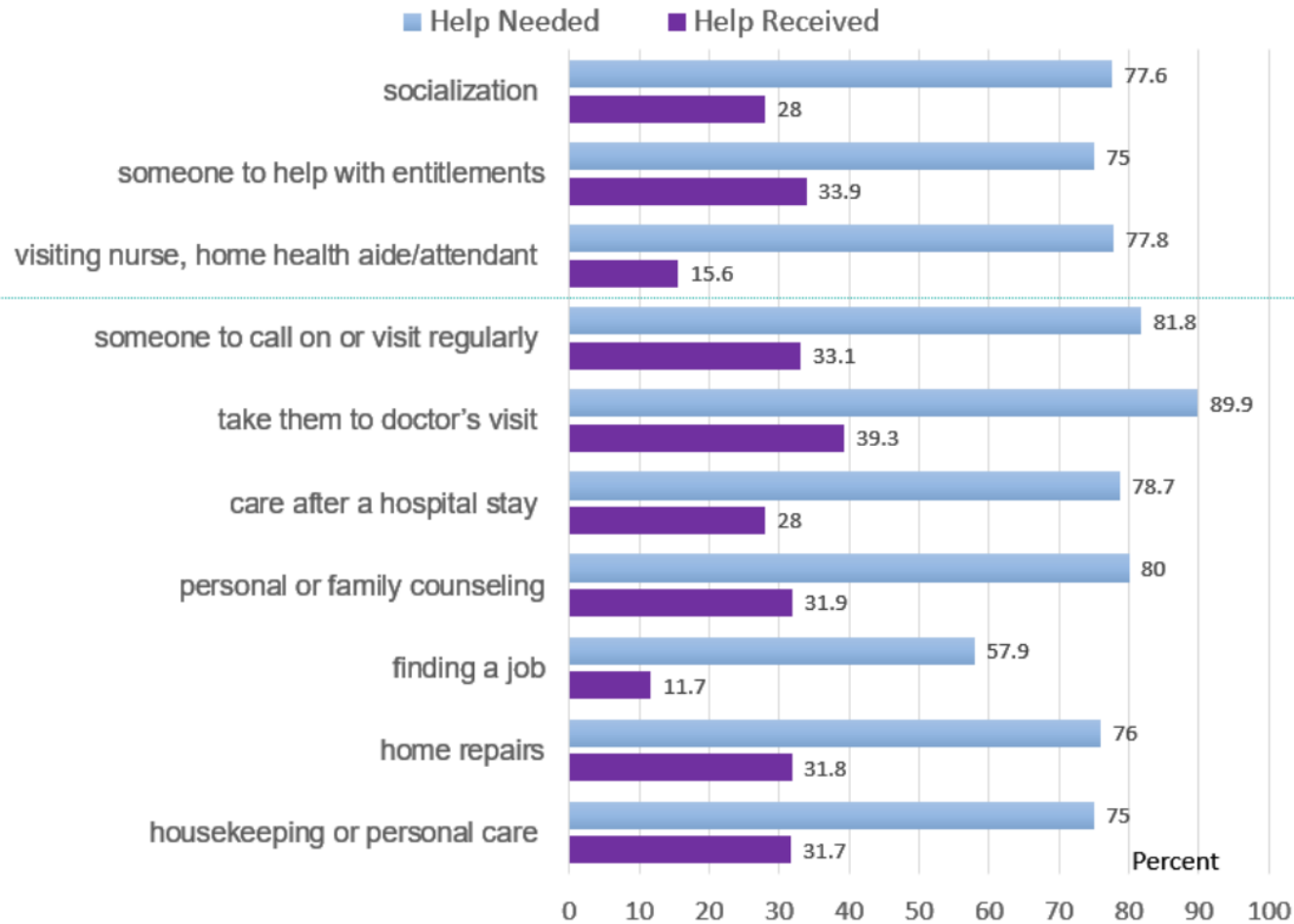
Projective pessimism

- Isolated individuals predict QoL will only decrease over 5-10 years
- Concerned about community support and ageing in place



Unmet Needs – ROAH (2.0), Oakland

Needs/Gaps in Last Year: Oakland ROAH 2.0 Sample



Less than half of any identified needs were met with adequate resources

77% required support regarding socialization and community engagement but only 28% received any help

With the identified consequences of loneliness, is it surprising the unmet health needs are so high?

(Nguyen, Nash, Brennan-Ing & Karpiak, 2019)



What Needs to be Done?

- Provide opportunities for flexible work to leverage the knowledge and expertise of the growing aging population.
- Connect individuals to lifelong learning experiences and opportunities, enabling them to be intellectually engaged and to remain integral
- Establish volunteer opportunities that benefit both retirees/older adults and society as a whole.
- Extend alumni outreach to allow individuals to maintain connections once they have left the organization.
- Work together to incorporate loneliness criteria into routine medical screenings and social outreach programs.





Person Centered Care - HIVE

HIVE is designed to improve the health and well-being of 50+ MSM by addressing stigma, social isolation & social support through connection and empowerment.

Discussion Groups

Providing spaces for safe conversation, building friendships, and emotional support.

Life Skills Support

Skills for daily living to enhance quality of life, like taking care of one's healthcare needs while managing Medicare and personal finances.

Health Education

Reflecting the issues that affect older men the most, like managing chronic medical conditions and the multiple medications used to treat them.

Community Building

Fostering community helping them become flexible, resilient, and confident in their abilities. This also increases their visibility in other communities and spreads awareness





Person Centered Care - SFAF

The Elizabeth Taylor 50-Plus Network is a social support network for gay, bisexual, and trans men age 50 and older, inclusive of people who are HIV-negative and living with HIV. 50-Plus offers a number of activities designed to foster connection that build community through social and civic engagement.

Social Activities and Events

Social, cultural and activity based scheduling to engage members with what interests them.

50-Plus Monthly Meetups

Meet-ups to catch-up, grow and meet new people, expanding the network and the support provided

50-Plus Planning Meetings

Community led and planned events ensuring no stereotyped unwanted activity

Giving Back

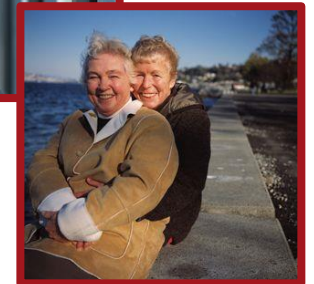
Opportunities to connect & give back to the community





What We SHOULD be Asking

- What is HIV doing to the self-esteem and efficacy of the older person?
- Is there access to appropriate person-centered medical support?
- What are the intersectional experiences and their impact on the older person?
- What impact is policy having on allowing the older person from living their desired lifecourse trajectory?





Many thanks for your time and concentration



Dr Paul Nash CPsychol, AFBPsS, FHEA
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Detroit Area Agency on Aging

FREDRICK THOMAS

EXECUTIVE PROJECT MANAGER





OUR VISION
 TO CREATE A COMMUNITY THAT CARES FOR THE VULNERABLE
 AND ADVOCATES FOR THE WELL-BEING OF OUR CONSTITUENTS.



FOOD
& **FRIENDSHIP**
Connections

2023 USAging
Innovations
Awardee



Serving Older Detroiters
Living with HIV

Commit to Connect Webinar
February 27, 2024

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Background/Context
- Key Outcomes & Outputs
- Program Barriers
- Lessons Learned

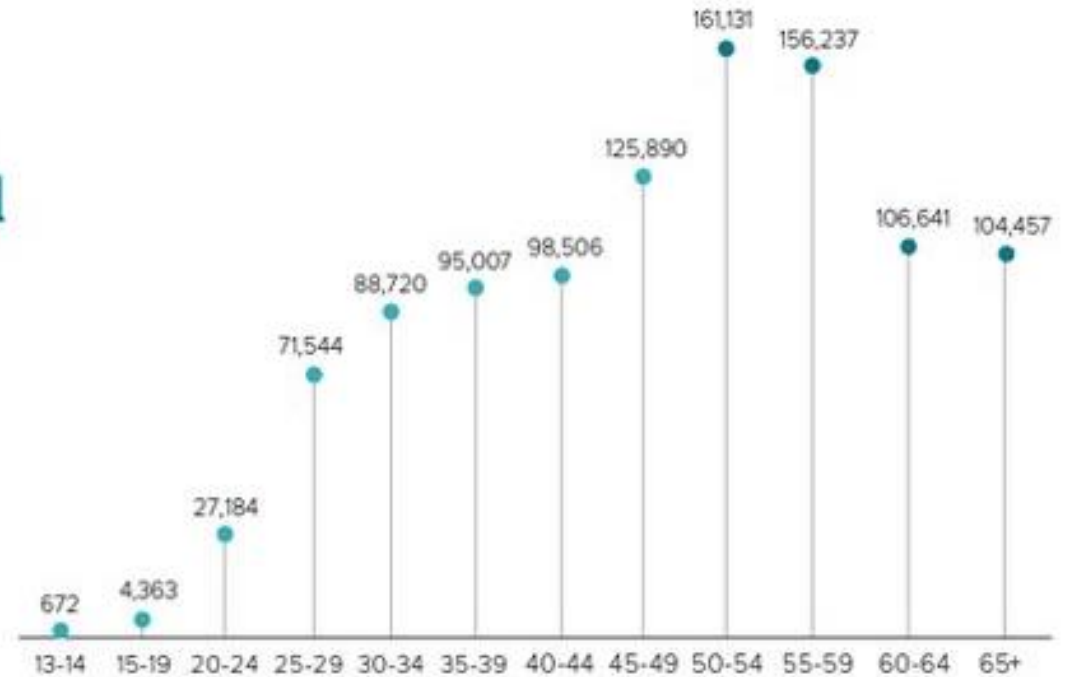


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Connections

75

Adults and Adolescents with Diagnosed HIV in the US and Dependent Areas by Age, 2018

Over half of people with diagnosed HIV were aged 50 and older.



Source: CDC. Diagnoses of HIV infection in the United States and dependent areas, 2018 (updated). *HIV Surveillance Report* 2020;31.

GOALS



- CREATE A SAFETY NET FOR OLDER ADULTS LIVING WITH HIV
- Target 75 – 150 individuals needing assistance
- Combat isolation, stigmatization and diminished health status

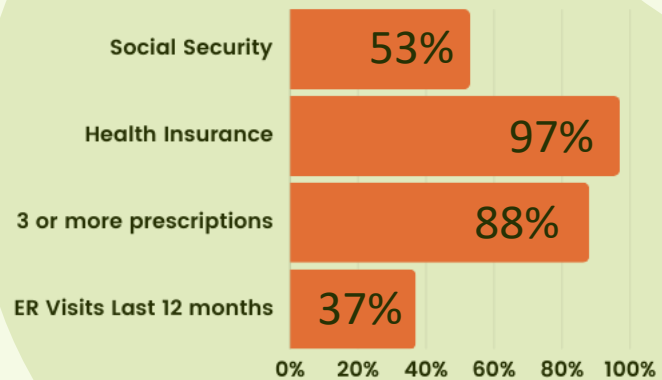
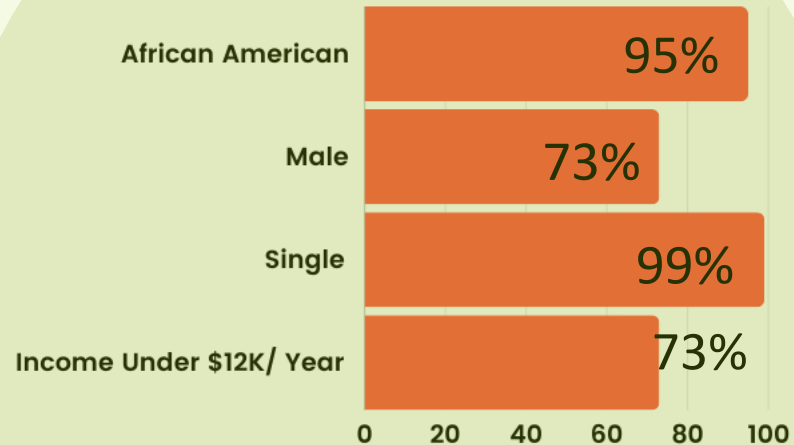
OBJECTIVES



- USE AFFINITY GROUP TO PLAN & IMPLEMENT SERVICES
- OFFER HOT AND FROZEN MEALS PLUS LIQUID NUTRITION
- ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS IN PEER SUPPORT GROUPS
- PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS
- PERFORM ASSESSMENTS & WELLNESS CHECKS



PARTICIPANT PROFILE





Wellness Checks



Provide Peer Support



Nutrition & Transportation

PEER SUPPORT
BENEFITS





Charles H. Wright Museum

Bringing in the Spring Event

Starters Bar & Grille

Dinner with Friends Event

Milliken Park

Early Fall Sprawl

Wicks Up Candle Co.

Candle Making & Conversation

PEER SUPPORT
EVENTS



PROGRAM STRATEGIES



- COLLABORATE WITH LOCAL GRASSROOT ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON HIV/AIDS SERVICES
- OFFER PROGRAMMING THAT IS COMPELLING, RELEVANT, AND UNIQUE
- SEEK FEEDBACK



PEER SUPPORT STRATEGIES



- ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS THROUGH ACTIVE LISTENING
- CULTIVATE A SAFE SPACE THAT ENCOURAGES RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
- FOSTER A COMMUNITY OF RESOURCE SHARING AND ACCESSIBILITY
- BE AVAILABLE



OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNED



PEER SUPPORT OUTCOMES



PROGRAM BARRIERS

LESSONS LEARNED



TESTIMONIAL

“I’ve gotten to know my peers, the same demographic of people which I really didn’t know existed,” Bridges says. “It’s helped me a lot and I found all of the information that I was seeking. And the peer support group was more relaxed, not so regimented as other groups I’ve been in.”



Participant



TESTIMONIALS

My grocery budget was very tight and the program helped maintain costs.

Home Delivered Meals is a great service and the delivery guy is consistent, funny and friendly.

Coming together as a group, always lifted my spirits.

-Participant





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2023 USAging
Innovations
Award



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www.DetroitSeniorSolution.org

Funded by:
MDHHS & Bureau of ACLS



Paul Aguilar



Long-term Survivor Community Liaison with Aging Services at the
San Francisco AIDS Foundation;
Board Member & Resident of Marty's Place Affordable Housing
Corporation; Co-Author of "The San Francisco Principles 2020."



Questions and Discussion

Please submit your questions or comments through the Q&A.

Thank you!

- Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes.
- The recording will be available on www.committotconnect.org
- For further questions, contact us at:
info@committotconnect.org

Join us for more discussion in the Office Hours!

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