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| Advocacy &
Services for
LGBT Elders

We refuse to be invisible

LGBT Older Adults: A Forgotten Population

LGBT Older Adult Population

2010: Between 1.6 and **2.4 million**

2030: As many as **7 million**

What makes LGBT older adults unique?

Women:

- Higher rates of disability & mental distress
- Higher rates of cardiovascular disease and obesity
- Less likely to have mammograms
- Higher rates of smoking

Men:

- Higher rates of disability & mental distress
- Higher rates of HIV
- Higher rates of smoking

What makes LGBT older adults unique?

- Nearly 1/3 have a disability

- 1/3 report depression

- Almost 2/3 have been victimized three or more times

- 13% have been denied or received inferior health care

- More than 20% do not disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to their doctor

*A history of discrimination leaves many LGBT older adults with a general **distrust** of mainstream institutions that many heterosexuals assume are in place to help them.*

What makes LGBT older adults unique?

*Many LGBT older adults **live alone** and rely on other older adults for support and **caregiving**.*

% of Older Adults

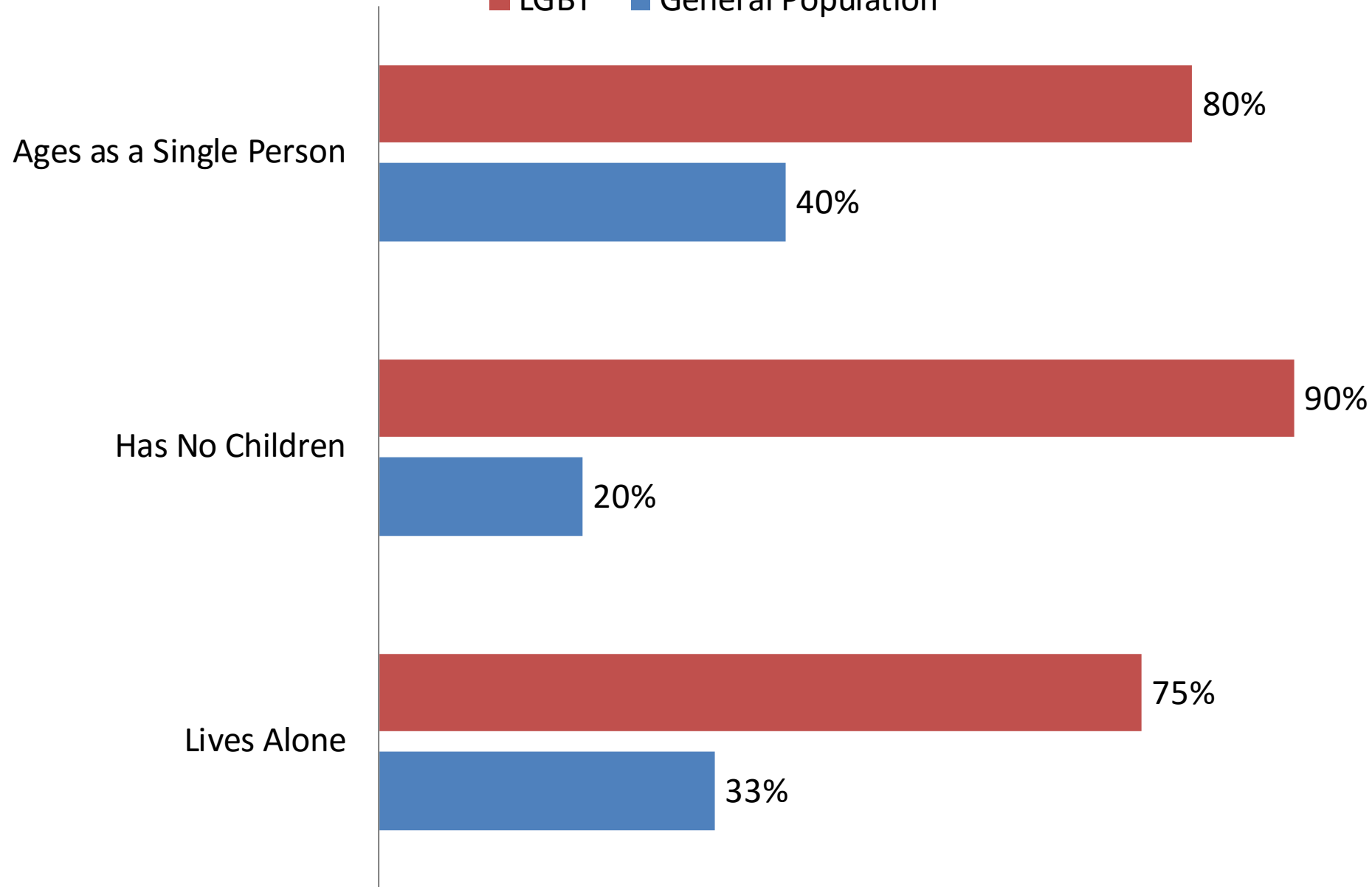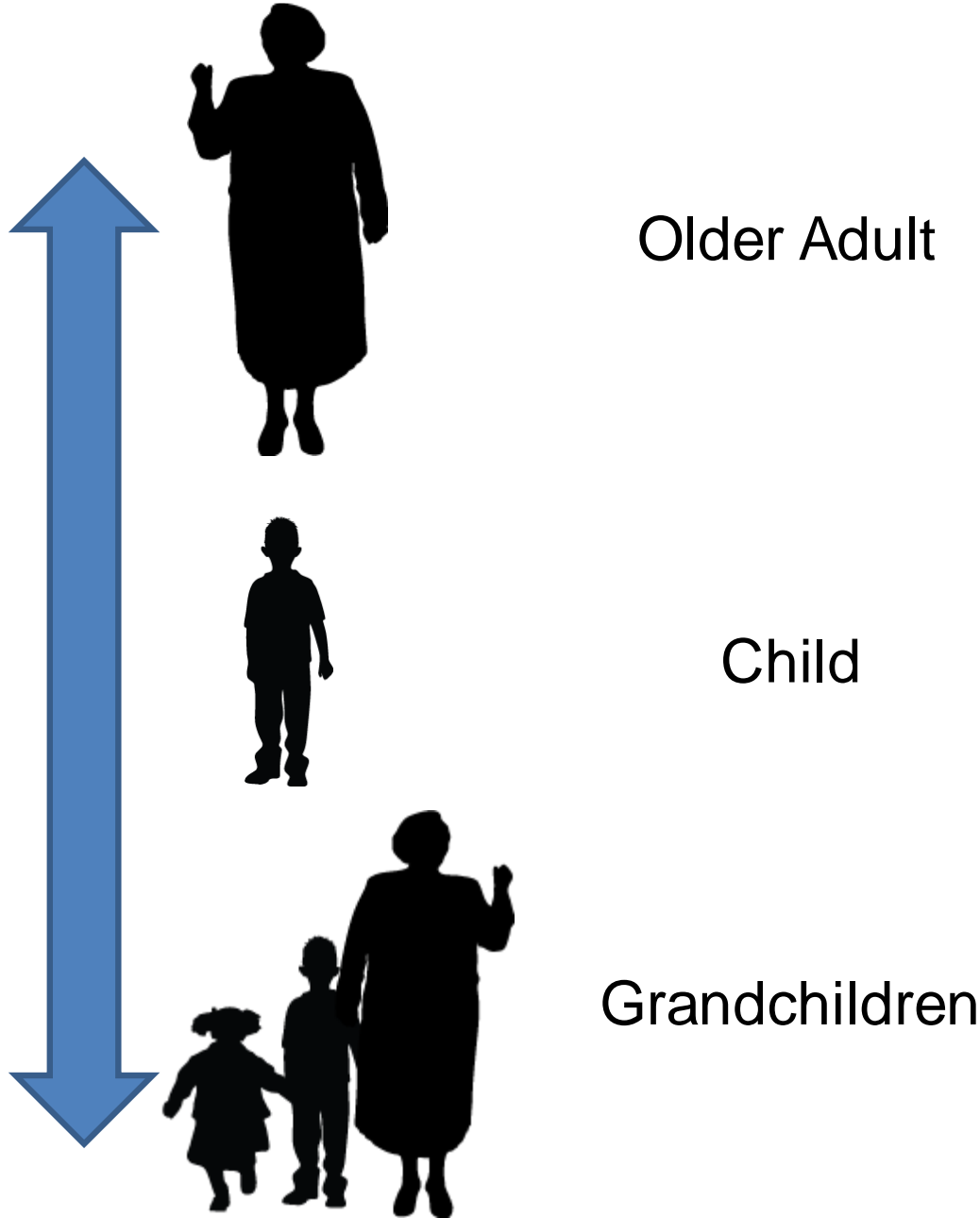**■ LGBT   ■ General Population**

Ages as a Single Person
- LGBT: 80%
- General Population: 40%

Has No Children
- LGBT: 90%
- General Population: 20%

Lives Alone
- LGBT: 75%
- General Population: 33%

**Vertical
Caregiving**

Older Adult

Child

Grandchildren
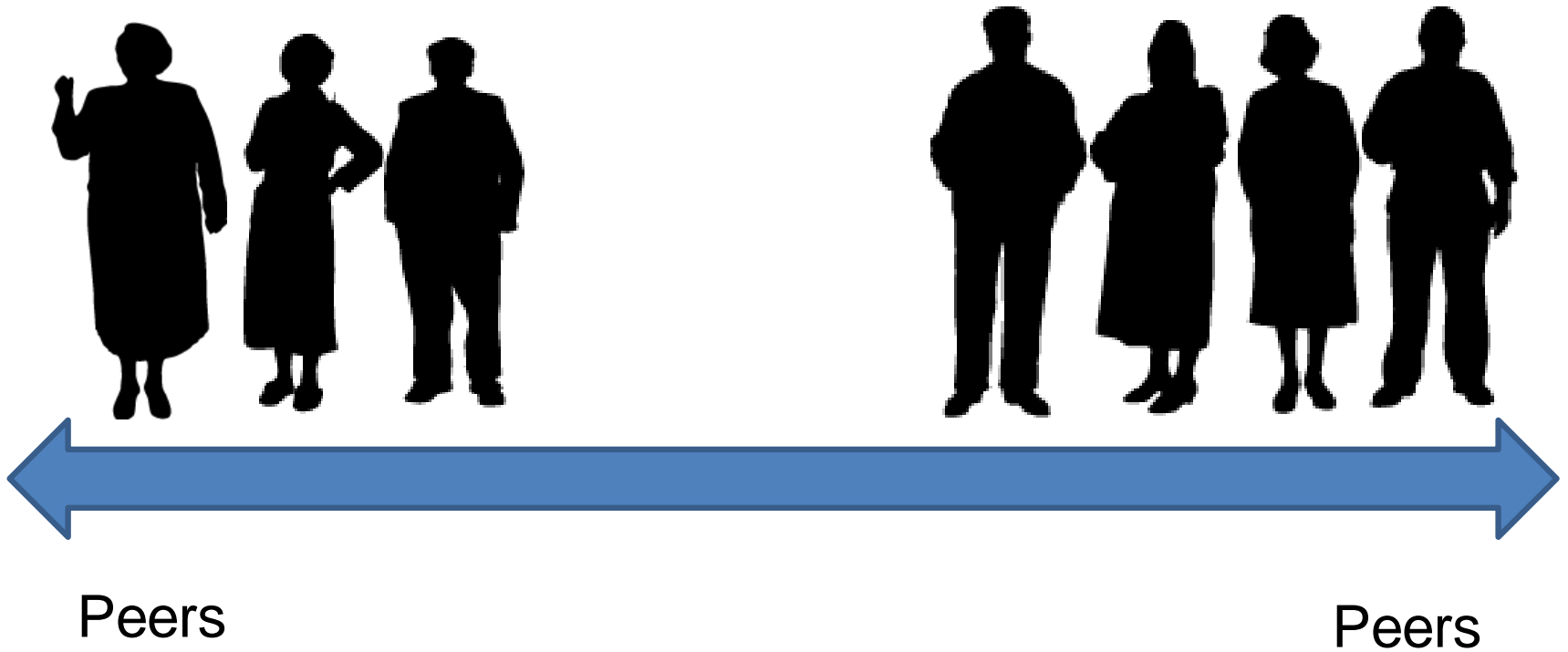
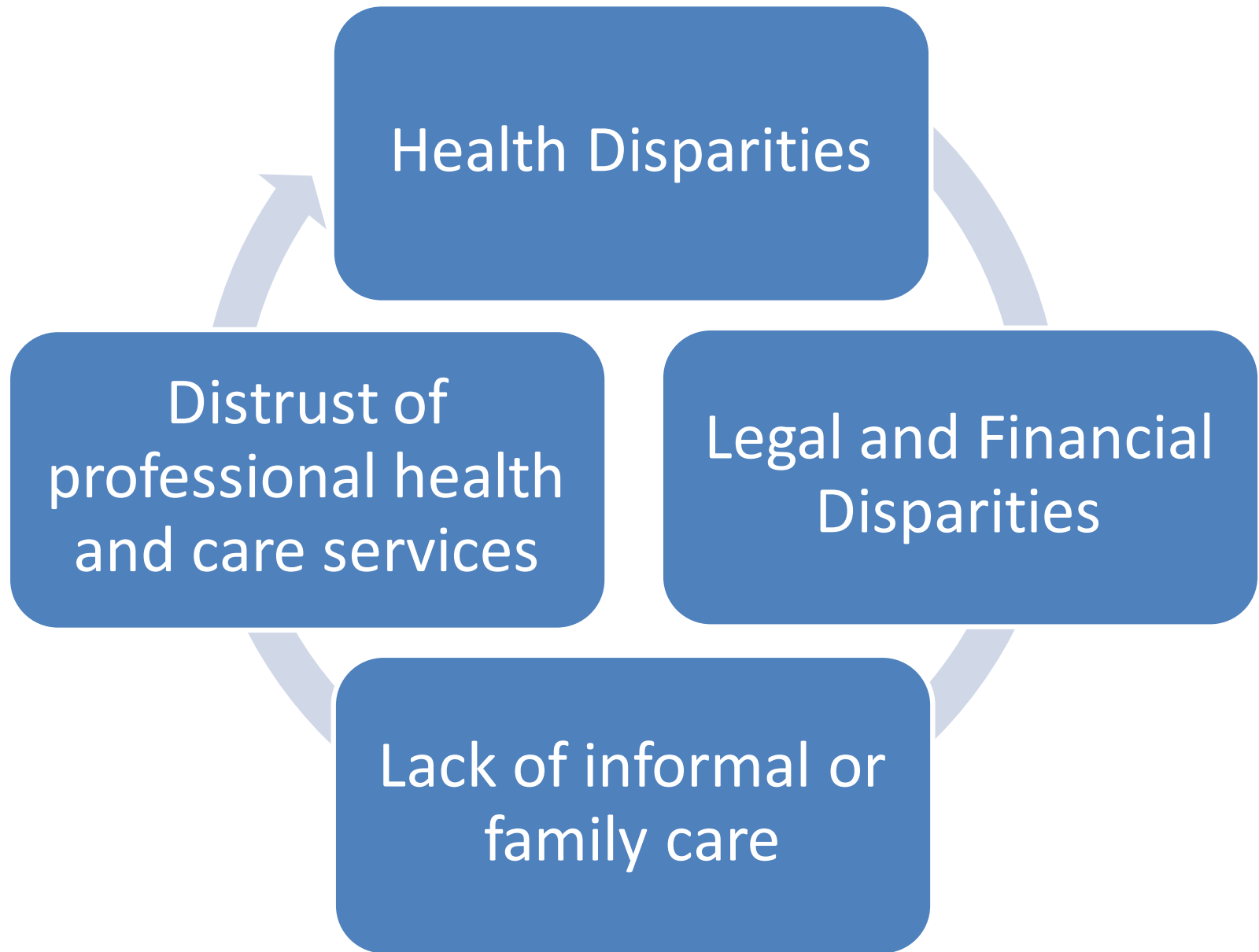# Horizontal Caregiving

Peers

Peers

What makes LGBT older adults unique?

*A **history of discrimination** leaves many LGBT older adults with a general **distrust** of mainstream institutions.*

Distrust of Mainstream Institutions

HOUSING

RELIGIOUS

MEDICAL

LAW ENFORCEMENT

MILITARY

FAMILY

Health Disparities

Legal and Financial Disparities

Lack of informal or family care

Distrust of professional health and care services

Coping with discrimination by…

- Becoming **invisible** or **closeted**
- Developing strong **self-reliance**
- Being open with a **limited circle** of supporters
- Making "**home**" an important safe-haven

Remember that the LGBT community is just as diverse as the general population.

We are all different combinations of race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, social or economic class and ability.

Terms to Avoid When Working with LGBT Older Adults

- Queer

- Homosexual

- Lifestyle

- Sexual Preference

Notes on Language

- Recognize that these terms evolve.

- Be sensitive to preferred terms.

- When in doubt, follow their lead!

Best Practices

Individual

- Don't assume everyone is heterosexual or cisgender
- Expand your definition of family
- Set a tone of respect

Organizational

- Commit to creating an inclusive environment.
- Train your staff.
- Collaborate with LGBT organizations.

Best Practices

- Always use preferred names and pronouns.
- Be clear about confidentiality and privacy policies.
- Change intake forms to ask questions about sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Incorporate photos of LGBT people and symbols (rainbow flag, pink or purple triangles, etc.) into promotional and informational materials, décor, and any programming announcements.

Inclusive Questions for Older Adults

A Practical Guide to Collecting Data on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

National Resource Center ON LGBT AGING

www.lgbtagingcenter.org

Remember, LGBT older adults may not come out right away, but if you set a tone of respect and acceptance they may feel comfortable coming out later on.

In-Person & Learning Management Trainings

- *Introduction to LGBT Aging* *(60 minutes interactive presentation)*

- *For Aging Service Providers* *(Intensive 4 hour training)* Our most popular training!

CEU's Available!

Request a training and get more information at:
www.sageusa.care

"What is one thing I can start doing differently to better serve LGBT older adults?"

Thank You!

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