



## Department of Health

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Joseph Kerwin, Acting Director  
New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute  
Empire State Plaza, Corning Tower  
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Joe Kerwin:

The New York State HIV Advisory Body (HAB) writes this letter to the AIDS Institute to support efforts to address the needs of People Aging with HIV (PAWH) over 50. As referenced in our August 2020 recommendation letter, the largest growing HIV infected population is adults aged 50 and older. This updated letter serves to highlight additional measures in programming to support the lives of those individuals and long-term survivors.

The HAB commends the AIDS Institute for implementing the following activities to address the needs and gaps in PAWH over 50:

- Implementing/coordinating the NYS HIV Aging and Long-Term Survivors Survey for both consumers and providers to assess gaps and opportunities for improving HIV care
- Convening the HIV+ Aging and Long-Term Survivors Subcommittee
- 2022 Call to Action Letter which shared information on the advancement of efforts to meet the needs of PAWH over 50
- Highlighting the theme, needs and barriers to care in the ETE Addendum report
- Peer Certification Concentration on PAWH and LTS
- Release of the People Aging with HIV (PAWH) RFA which will fund the provision of services to support the health of people living with diagnosed HIV over 50 years of age

The following updated recommendations are made with the continued understanding that PAWH over 50 face challenges of co-morbidities associated with aging and medication use. Maintaining good behavioral health for ongoing positive health outcomes can be difficult and needs support. The impact of COVID-19 also has exacerbated the need for mental health services to address existing isolation, depression, trauma, and stigma particularly in underserved populations within this population.

## **HAB Persons Aging with HIV Over 50 Recommendations**

### **Resource Development**

- Update the 2020 resource guide *Older Adults Sexual Health Plan: A Guide for Aging Service Providers* developed in partnership with Office of the Aging. Update with inclusion of information on the new sexual health model/framework, possibly through the development of a workgroup.
- Create a companion document to share information and resources on the importance of sexual health as well as providing resources such as websites, hotline numbers, or phone numbers that can connect clients to service providers in their area to meet their sexual health needs. Include information for community members on additional services on issues impacting social barriers to accessing sexual health care.
- Develop a Status Neutral Toolkit that includes imagery of older adults and supports the positive impact this would have on the sexual lives of long-term survivors over 50.

### **Address Digital Divide**

- Develop a platform to discuss the concept of the Digital Divide – its impact on older adults assessing healthcare, barriers to utilizing technology, the availability of technology resources, and available tools for clients.
- Continue to monitor challenges in collaboration with the DOH internal telehealth workgroup.

### **Develop FAQ**

- Develop an online FAQ possibly through an app to discuss aging with HIV, the effects of HIV medication long-term, information on engaging geriatric providers, and other concerns for people aging with HIV. The NY statewide survey conducted on the needs of older adults can inform the FAQ.

### **Update Resource List**

- Develop a resource list of non-HIV and geriatric providers to expand the existing AI Directory. The resource list should include information to access mental health services, Medicare, life insurance, geriatric care, and address co-morbidity health issues and other support services.
- Continue partnership with Office of the Aging to improve shared resources to address issues impacting the lives of older adults.
- Explore if the AI provider directory, the ADAP+ provider list, and the Office of the Aging directories can be linked for ease and use by consumers.

### **Quality Improvement Measures**

- Develop questions to be included in the case management intake process, to assess the need for resources among adults over 50.

- We encourage the AI to continue efforts to develop quality improvement activities around aging related screenings and assess mechanisms to capture data related to these screenings (e.g., AIRS).
- Develop a Quality Improvement project that will utilize the results from the NY statewide survey to inform future programs or programming for the delivery of support services.
- Create a client assessment tool in AIRS specific to identify the needs of People Aging with HIV.

Thank you for your attention to People Aging with HIV over 50. The HAB supports the AIDS Institute in the implementation of new approaches to address the challenges of this community.

Sincerely,

*Robert Forbes*

Robert Forbes  
Community Co-Chair

*Elys Vasquez-Iskan*

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Community Co-Chair