

# Openhouse

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## CDEP Purpose, Description and Implementation

### Program Purpose, Goals, and Focus

LGBTQ+ older adults experience isolation and mental health disparities at rates 2-3 times higher than their heterosexual peers. Openhouse's Community Defined Evidence Practice (CDEP) addresses these disparities through culturally competent, integrated programming that successfully reduces isolation, improves mental health, and builds authentic community. The Openhouse CDEP aims to reduce social isolation, improve mental health, and address social determinants like housing insecurity.

### Target Population

The program serves LGBTQ+ older adults, including low-income seniors, transgender gender-nonconforming and intersex (TGNCI) individuals, LGBTQ+ people of color, and adults with disabilities.

### Key Program Components

Includes Mental Health Program, TGNCI community programming, Club 75 Adult Day Services, and cultural competency trainings.

### Community-Driven, Affirming Approach

Utilizes trauma-informed, community-informed "no wrong door" model affirming intersecting identities to foster trust and engagement.

## Evaluation Design and Methods

**Mixed-Methods Approach:** The evaluation combined quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews for a comprehensive program assessment.

**Data Collection Techniques:** Quantitative data included surveys on mental health and loneliness; qualitative data included focus groups and interviews.

**Cultural Knowledge Integration:** Centering participant voice and contextualizing data ensured evaluation reflected LGBTQ+ older adults' realities.

**Evaluation Period:** May 2022 - May 2025

## Results

### Reduced Social Isolation

Programs **reduced social isolation and stress** among LGBTQ+ older adults and their caregivers, promoting community connection.

### Improved Mental Health

Mental health improved with **fewer poor mental health days and decreased loneliness** across all measured domains.

### Cultural Competency and Trust

**Cultural competency and trust** were identified as key drivers of the program's positive impact and effectiveness.

### Training and Empowerment

Training **increased caregiving confidence and capacity** to counter discrimination among participants.



### Mental Health Program

! 33% LESS poor mental health days

↑ Coping Skills ↓ Loneliness

! Cultural competency + community-based delivery model = success

### Club 75

LGBTQ+ Affirming Adult Day Program

! 100% Reduced Isolation  
! 100% Caregiver Stress Relief  
! 64% Improved Physical health

### TGNCI Programming

! Safe transportation = safe access to affirming programming  
! Create authentic spaces that felt like a family atmosphere  
! Increase in quality and quantity of program: evolved Openhouse from service provider to community builder

### Cultural Competency Training

! 82 - 87% Increased ability to serve LGBTQ+ Older Adults  
! Practical skills gained  
! Deeper knowledge and understanding gained

**"Openhouse was the first place that made me feel accepted [as intersex]. Staff were helpful with locating housing when I had knee surgery and Openhouse provided education to the Salvation Army regarding what it was to be intersex when I faced some bias because of who I am. I owe my life to Openhouse."**  
- Openhouse Participant

## Next Steps and Key Takeaways

### Culturally Affirming Models

Community-based models improve mental health and reduce isolation among LGBTQ+ older adults through cultural affirmation.

### Access and Engagement Factors

Transportation and trust-building are critical for improving access and engagement with community services.

### Future Implementation Recommendations

Future work will focus on continuing to prioritize high levels of communication, expanding outreach, maintaining quality, reinforcing training, and ensuring sustainable transportation.

### Sustainability and Systems Transformation

Openhouse's intentional growth of programs supports equity, sustainability, scalability, and systems transformation in LGBTQ+ affirming aging services.

Openhouse's models can be scaled in other communities with intensive training from and partnership with Openhouse.



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