AGING
THROUGH THE
SOCIAL WORK LENS
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NASW
National Association of Social Workers
Older Adults Living with HIV/AIDS: 
*Moving from Stigma to Support*

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Session Overview

• A growing number of people are aging with HIV/AIDS or are being diagnosed with HIV/AIDS later in life. This session will address demographic changes in HIV/AIDS prevalence and incidence, resources available to older adults living with HIV/AIDS, and tips for culturally competent practice with older adults living with HIV/AIDS.
Agenda

• HIV & AIDS- Brief Overview
• HIV/AIDS among Older Persons (prevalence and incidence)
• Special Populations
• Culturally Competent Practice
• Resources
• More than 1.1 million people in the U.S. are living with HIV today, and 1 in 7 of them don’t know it.
• 6-5-2017 We’ve changed our name from AIDS.gov to HIV.gov!
A 70-year-old white man visited his primary care provider (PCP) for symptoms of weight loss and fatigue. He reported a weight loss of 20 lb and increased fatigue over the past 6 months. After undergoing neurologic testing, psychiatric testing, and routine laboratory testing to rule out cancer and thyroid disease, he received a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease. When the patient needed a postoperative blood transfusion several years later, his activated Power of Attorney consented to an HIV test, and the patient was found to have AIDS-related dementia, rather than Alzheimer’s disease. The PCP, however, had never taken the patient’s sexual history, assuming he was not at risk for an STD because of his age.

http://www.consultant360.com/articles/sexually-transmitted-diseases-aging-population
HIV Basics

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. The virus can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or AIDS if not treated. No effective cure currently exists, but with proper medical care, HIV can be controlled.
Purpose

Process
Knowledge
Skills
Values & ethics

GOOD PRACTICE
Demographics that tell the story

• By 2015, it’s estimated that nearly half of all people living with HIV in the US will be over the age of 50.
• People aged 55 and older accounted for 26% of all Americans living with diagnosed or undiagnosed HIV infection in 2013.
• People aged 50 and older have the same HIV risk factors as younger people, but may be less aware of their HIV risk factors.
• Older Americans are more likely to be diagnosed with HIV infection later in the course of their disease.
Video-Alice

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=7eIMIAdFLBg#t=161
Discussion

• What are the contributing factors to Alice contracting HIV?
• What are the myths about aging that become clear in her story?
• How did the medical profession address her?
• What contributed to her quality of life?
• What is a message that resonates with you regarding Alice and HIV prevention and intervention for older women in particular?
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Disparate Impact

Racial and ethnic minorities account for over one-half of the people who have died of AIDS since 1981, and represent approximately three-fourths of the almost 1.2 million people living with HIV in the United States today.

New HIV Diagnoses in the United States for the Most-Affected Subpopulations, 2015

- Black MSM: 10,315
- White MSM: 7,570
- Hispanic/Latino MSM: 7,013
- Black Heterosexual Women: 4,142
- Black Heterosexual Men: 1,926
- Hispanic/Latina Heterosexual Women: 1,010
- White Heterosexual Women: 968
Behind Bars with HIV
Practice Guidance

• AIDS awareness training is critical
• Medication compliance is important
• Mental well-being is vital
Practice Guidance

• Stigma
• Social Isolation
• Social Support
• Caregivers
Practice Guidance

• Fluctuations in symptoms
• High levels of poverty and complex needs
• Active listening
Cultural Competence

- “Knowing general cultural norms can help inform how you initially approach a patient … The idea is to address a person’s culture from their individual experience, not as a stereotype. You may become competent in one or a dozen areas over time; but you’ll never become completely culturally competent. It is an ideal you’re always striving for.” Lucy Bradley Springer
**MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING**

**RESIST** telling them what to do:
Avoid telling, directing, or convincing your friend about the right path to good health.

**UNDERSTAND** their motivation:
Seek to understand their values, needs, abilities, motivations and potential barriers to changing behaviors.

**LISTEN** with empathy:
Seek to understand their values, needs, abilities, motivations and potential barriers to changing behaviors.

**EMPOWER** them:
Work with your friends to set achievable goals and to identify techniques to overcome barriers.
Where Do We Go From Here?

- Routine testing
- Education, Research, and Training
- Educational and Behavioral Interventions
What next?

• **Sept 1** - National HIV and Aging Awareness Day
• **October 15** – National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day
• **December 1** – World AIDS Day
• **February 7**-National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
• **March 20**- National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
• **May 19**- National Asian and Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
• And more….
SELECTED RESOURCES & CREDITS

• HIV, AIDS, and Older People

• National Association of HV Over Fifty
  http://hivoverfifty.org/about/hof/national.html

• Black Women’s Health Imperative
  http://www.bwhi.org/issues-and-resources/black-women-and-hiv-aids

• Department of Health and Human Services. Older Adults and HIV/AIDS Toolkit retrieved from

• National Association of Social Work. The Aging of HIV retrieved from

• Cultural Competency
When it comes to sex...

Age is not a condom

Talk to your doctor about your sex life.
Learn more. Be safe. Get tested.
NYS 800-541-AIDS   NYC 800-TALK-HIV
800-541-2437      800-825-5448

ageisnotacondom.org

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