

2.5 Human Rights Advocacy

What	Advocacy
Purpose	To help learners understand the advocacy role of LGBT+ older people
Target group	Teachers and trainers in vocational education and their students
Level	Level 2-3-4 in vocational education.
Execution	Extra support from the teacher might be necessary depending on the ability of the students to work independently
Sources	Internet access to the following two webpages i) https://www.gaystarnews.com/article/return-closet-scotland/#gs.ox0neo ii) https://www.channel4.com/news/lesbian-gay-bisexual-old-age-care-homes-abuse-video

Introduction

Historically, 'homosexuality' (as an all-encompassing term) was considered unlawful, deemed sinful or immoral and categorised as a mental illness. As a result, many LGBT+ older people grew up in an environment where they were pathologised, criminalised and demonised, facing heterosexism, homophobia and stigmatisation. This, in turn, led to discrimination and disempowerment within the school, work and wider society. For many, it also meant marginalisation from family and community. Considering this context, it is hardly surprising that some LGBT people, for safety and economic reasons, hid their sexual orientation and gender identities. However, despite this, others became campaigners, advocates and lived their lives fighting for their human and legal rights.

As advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that is to influence decisions within political economic and social systems and institutions many LGBT+ older people want to continue in this role by improving older age services and encouraging positive attitude to LGBT+ older people.

Activity 1

Using the internet search for LGBT community advocacy groups for elderly in your country.

Activity 2

Identify who the champions for LGBT rights for elderly are within your country.

Activity 3

Visit the following webpages and identify what issues might LGBT+ older people be advocating for.

[Link 1](#) and [Link 2](#)

Activity 4

Individually or in groups, identify how you might support LGBT+ older people who want to continue with their advocacy role.

Keep on Learning

- Concannon L (2009) Developing Inclusive Health and Social Care Policies for Older LGBT Citizens British Journal of Social Work 39, 403–417
- Mertus J (2007) The Rejection of Human Rights Framings: The Case of LGBT Advocacy in the US: Human Rights Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 4 pp. 1036-1064 URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20072835>
- Rogers A et al (2013) Older LGBT Adult Training Panels: An Opportunity to Educate About Issues Faced by the Older LGBT Community, Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 56:7, 580-595, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2013.811710>