

3.1 Identities and Intersectionality Introduction activities

What	Identities and Intersectionality
Purpose	To give basic introduction to the intersectionality and practical activities for teachers to explore topics of identities and intersectionality as part of their teaching.
Target group	Teachers and trainers in vocational and higher education and their students
Level	Level 2-3-4 in vocational education
Execution	Extra support from the teacher, outside quest (e.g. member of an LGBT NGO) or person with experience is advisable (depending on the ability of the students to work independently).

The purpose of this activity is to make an introduction to the concept of diversity within LGBT+ older people by using personal stories of LGBT+ older people. Through these stories the students learn how individuals' circumstances impact daily lives of older people and begin to develop a sense for a more individualised and personal care. Below are examples of personal stories of LGBT+ older people. Besides the video you can also invite an LGBT+ older person to share their life story with the students.

The stories used as introduction activity present just a few examples of diverse life stories of LGBT+ people; in these cases specifically the topics of sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity and mental health intertwine. One of the essential topics that needs to be addressed when talking about intersectionality is the disbelief of care workers or service providers, when it comes to intersectionality. For example, a religious person can also be same-sex oriented and practice his faith, but due to our own prejudice and preconceptions, we might assume some identities are not compatible. Another topic that can be identified is that of mental health problems, which in the past have been proved to occur more often in older people and LGBT+ people, due to the lack of social network and accessible LGBT+ friendly services. LGBT+ older people are especially at risk of loneliness as in many cases they do not have children, who could be of support and company at old age.

Introduction activity 1

If available, invite an LGBT+ older person to share and discuss with students how his/her/their life experiences as LGBT+ older people intertwine with other possible circumstances (such as being a refugee, having a disability or mental health problems, dementia, being homeless, having substance abuse problem, experiencing stigma due to their gender expression etc.). It is advised that you make contact with the local NGO's working with LGBT+ people and find possible connections in this way. Before inviting an older LGBT+ person into the classroom, [safe space should be established](#).

Assignment

Some starting points for discussion could be:

- His/her/their strategies of overcoming multiple discrimination,
- Positive experiences and strengths (personal and collective resources),
- His/her/their possible experiences with social and health care, if any,
- What would, in his/her/their view, good inclusive care include etc....

If such guest is unavailable, or if you plan to include him/her/them later in the training as a part of practical training, then you might choose alternative introduction options below.

Introduction activity 2

Sources

<https://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/1222pv384.htm> (4min)

In this video we hear the story of Khakan, a gay Muslim man, whose counsellor had problems believing that there are gay Muslims and how those two identities are even compatible. Khakan talks about the inadequate service provided to him, and how he decided to start a new network to support people identifying as gay and Muslim.

<https://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/1220pv384.htm> (3min)

This video presents the story of Jayne, who struggled with stress due to her same sex sexual orientation and at the same time being a committed Christian. This led to years of loneliness and an emotional breakdown. She later found a way to both accept her sexuality and her religion.

<https://www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0816pv384.htm> (6min)

This video is narrated by a trans woman whose life's journey until transition was a rocky one. The social, cultural and legal obstacles led her to drug use, sex work and suicide attempt. After receiving support and therapy, she managed to start the recovery process and now knows much better what her needs in terms of care and services are.

Assignment

Watch any of the above videos together and then let the students discuss in small groups how the personal stories touched them, which identities and circumstances the subjects mentioned or talked about.

Discuss the following questions:

- What did you learn from the story?
- What were the examples of good/bad care and services presented in the stories?
- Based on the needs of the people presenting their stories, how should the given care be improved to better address their needs?
- What are the resources to support older trans, gay, lesbian and bisexual people in your country?
- Based on the stories, what would constitute an inclusive good care?

Introduction activity 3

Source: Aging as LGBT: Two Stories <https://www.justiceinaging.org/aging-as-lgbt/>; <http://lgbtmap.org/file/lgbt-older-adults-infographic-aging-lgbt-lp.pdf> (infographic of the two stories).

In this video clip, we can observe how cumulative impact of discrimination over a lifetime leaves LGBT+ older adults at increased risk for poverty. First, systemic discrimination, especially in housing and employment, and a long-term lack of legal and social recognition combine to create deep economic insecurity for LGBT+ elders.

Assignment

Discuss the following questions:

- How does the story apply to the reality of LGBT+ older people in your country?
- In what ways multiple discrimination impacts the fact that the LGBT+ older adults are less likely to access necessary social and health services and decent accommodation?
- Not all the LGBT+ people are poor. In your opinion, what are other possible factors or circumstances that put LGBT+ older people at greater risk of becoming poor and have limited access to the necessary social and health services?
- Discuss these issues while thinking about different possible scenarios, such as a transgender older person living in a small town, an older gay man who just came to your country as a refugee, an older lesbian woman with the label of intellectual disability who still lives with her parents, LGBT+ older people who spent most of their lives in close types of institutions, and others.



Introduction activity 4

Growing Older As Me: Fran | My Generation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk7XZio686Q>

The #GrowingOlderAsMe series was a film series following contributors from the Trans Ageing and Care Project in Wales. This video presents a trans woman Fran (68).

Assignment

Discuss the following questions:

- What did you learn from Fran's story about "growing older as trans person"?
- What protective and risk factors that intersect the Fran story can you identify?
- What are the resources to support older trans people in your country?
- According to Fran's experiences, what should inclusive care involve?