



LGBTQ Aging and Abilities Support Network (LAASN) Supporting LGBTQ Seniors and Adults with Disabilities

Social isolation affects many LGBTQ seniors and adults with disabilities as they deal with stigma, discrimination, and lack of community in their daily lives and in our country's system of care. As a result, LGBTQ seniors and adults with disabilities are at risk of falling deeper into depression and further into isolation – conditions that have been proven to decrease overall health outcomes. These conditions are amplified among LGBTQ seniors and adults with disabilities who are low-income, physically frail, and among people of color and transgender individuals.

To respond to the growing population of LGBTQ seniors and a greater demand for support services, the LGBTQ Aging and Abilities Support Network (LAASN) was created in 2016. LAASN provides compassionate supportive services that address social isolation as well as emotional, behavioral, and health challenges faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer seniors and adults with disabilities.

LAASN services are designed to provide **emotional and practical support**, through care navigation, peer support groups, and Shanti Peer Support Volunteers; **client advocacy**, to assist with navigation through our social services system; **and supportive programming**, which enhances the emotional and behavioral well-being of clients.

Care Navigation and Client Advocacy

Care Navigators are the main point of contact for clients. Services include intakes and referrals, ongoing needs assessments, care coordination, referrals to vital support services, practical assistance, emotional support, support group facilitation, and matching and support of client/volunteer matches.

Peer Support Volunteers

Shanti Peer Support Volunteers, who are trained in the Shanti Model of Peer Support™, provide emotional support and practical assistance through regular interactions with clients on a weekly basis. Forms of support are based on each client's individual needs and include companionship through social visits, accompaniment to appointments or social events, and practical assistance.

Supportive Programming

In partnership with **Curry Senior Center**, LAASN offers connective social programs that support and enhance the emotional and behavioral well-being of underserved LGBTQ older adults. Support programs include individual emotional and behavioral support, peer support groups, social activities, and education.

Eligibility

To be eligible for LAASN services, clients must live in San Francisco, self-identify as LGBTQ, and be a senior (60+) **and/or** an adult (18+) with a disability.

For more information, contact Matthew Simmons, Program Manager at 415.852.0225 or msimmons@shanti.org.

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