



National Alliance on Mental Illness Help Line
1-800-950-6264 <https://www.nami.org/help>
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800.273.TALK
Translifeline 877.565.8860
Veteran's Crisis Line 800.273.8255 *press 1*
Pastoral Care—Pastor Jim Alexander 623.792.5295
<https://thepalms.org/Tools2Thrive>

Substance Use Disorders & Substance Misuse in LGBTQ+ Older Adults

Substance use disorder is an issue growing in prevalence among the older adult population in the United States. Substance use disorder will be used in this fact sheet to describe any excessive, compulsive, or harmful use of a substance, whether prescribed or recreational. The number of older adults that need treatment for substance use disorder is increasing annually. It is expected that LGBTQ+ older adults will make up a notable group of those needing substance use treatment in later life due to increased exposure to risk factors.

- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults over 50 are at increased risk for substance use when compared to their heterosexual counterparts, due to a combination of environmental, social, and health-related factors.
- Transgender older adults are also likely to have many risk factors associated with substance use in older adulthood.
- Substance use disorder is an issue that should be addressed by those that serve all older adults, and special attention should be given to the LGBTQ+ population which is more at risk for substance use disorder in older adulthood.

Major Risk Factors for Substance Use Disorder among LGBTQ+ Older Adults

Chronic Stress and Trauma: LGBTQ+ older adults are likely to have experienced a lifetime of discrimination, which lead to experiences of trauma, chronic stress, exclusion from families of origin, or weakened social circles. Trauma, chronic stress, and social isolation are risk factors for substance use disorders in older adulthood; all of which occur more often in older LGBTQ+ groups.

Mental Illness and Complicated Grief: Mental illness and complicated grief are psychological conditions that are risk factors for substance use disorder in older adulthood. LGBTQ+ people are more likely to experience mental illness and might have experienced more loss in their lives than heterosexual counterparts, putting them at an increased risk for substance abuse.

Chronic Conditions and Pain: Older adults are at risk for self-medicating with substances to cope with chronic conditions and pain, leading to substance abuse. LGBTQ+ older adults are more likely than their cisgender, heterosexual counterparts to have chronic conditions and pain, also leaving them more at risk for substance use.

Taking Many Medications: It is common among older adults to be prescribed several different medications from numerous sources due to chronic conditions and pain. This can lead to abuse

and misuse of substances in older adults due to a lack of oversight by the uncoordinated provided care. LGBTQ+ older adults are more likely to experience chronic conditions than non-LGBTQ+ older adults, putting them more at risk for accidental and intentional misuse of prescription medications and harmful drug interactions. Often times, substance use disorder could be related to underlying health conditions, mental or physical, that are impacting the overall wellbeing of the older adults. If you or someone you know need support regarding substance abuse or mental health concerns, here are some helpful resources:

SAGE National Hotline: 1.877.360.5428
LGBTQ Senior Hotline 1.888.234.7243
Crisis Text "HELLO" to 741714
Substance Abuse and Mental Health 1.800.662.4357

VISITOR INFO

Do you have questions about Church of the Palms? You are invited to join us Wednesday, June 22, at 3:30 p.m.

The Evangelism and Growth Team is enthusiastically offering another Information Session to be held in King Hall on Wednesday, June 22, 2022 starting at 3:30 pm. You will have the opportunity to meet Pastor Jim Alexander and gain valuable church information verbally, through printed material or via a short slide show. In addition, you will have the chance to meet some other active church leaders so you can ask individual questions, get answers and discover the many opportunities available at the church. A guided tour of the church will be provided, followed by a light supper with fellowship and a photo session. All visitors wishing to just learn about our church or those contemplating joining as members are most welcome.

New members will then be introduced to our congregation at the following Sunday, June 26, 2022, service.



A Note from the Church Office

We are a leaner team than usual here in Ye Olde Church Office. And so we humbly ask you to practice patience with us until we're back to normal staffing levels.

- **Got questions?**
We've got answers, but we may not be able to get back to you right away. Please allow some lead time for us to answer your phone calls and emails.
- **Need to see Pastor Jim?**
Please make an appointment via email at manager@thepalms.org, or call and leave a message at 623.977.8359
- **Need to schedule a meeting on Bridges or at the church?**
Please fill out a Calendar Change slip in the Church Office or email us at manager@thepalms.org.

We appreciate your assistance and thank you for being the Church!