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LGBT Elder Initiative Thrivers Program Evaluation

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SKMC Class of 2022

LGBT Elder Initiative Thrivers Program Evaluation

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Introduction: Aging with HIV is a critical area of study, especially as the generation that was initially affected by the disease grows older. The LGBT Elder Initiative (LGBT EI) is an organization in Philadelphia that supports and advocates for older members in the LGBT community. The LGBT EI Thrivers program is a community group that meets monthly to discuss what it means to “thrive” with HIV. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the LGBT EI’s Thrivers program and determine what motivates older individual with HIV to become involved in this program and identify the impact of the program.

Methods: A questionnaire was handed out at the final Thriver’s meeting of the year in October of 2019. This questionnaire asked participants which meetings they attended, if they made any changes in their daily lifestyle based on those meetings, and what motivated them to attend. Participants were also asked what aspects of the program they would like to see changed or modified.

Results: 13 participants responded to the questionnaire. The results show that the average age of participants was 52 years. Overall, respondents were satisfied with the meeting location and time, and felt comfortable sharing their thoughts with the group. The questionnaire revealed that Thrivers attendees did make changes in their daily lives based on the meetings they attended.

Conclusions: The Thrivers program participants found the community discussion helpful and were motivated incorporate what they learned from the program into their daily lives. Multiple respondents disclosed that they have begun practicing gratitude after learning about it at Thrivers, and this discussion seems to have had the largest impact on attendees. We believe that future programs that incorporate new topics and expand upon previous topics will be beneficial to Thrivers participants.