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Nationally, adult day services (ADS) were forced to closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The forced closure of ADS programming consequentially impacted the services provided to clients. Many ADS continued to provide telephonic/remote services to clients, despite limited reimbursement from national and state sources for these services. Using data from ADS sites participating in the ADS-Plus Program (n=22), this presentation examines the effects of COVID-19 on ADS closures and programming provided during the closure. About 86% (n=19) of the centers reported having to closed due to COVID-19. One-hundred percent of the sites reported offering telephone support to clients. Nearly 45% (n=10) of the centers reported not being reimbursed for this service. As ADS is a vital community-based resource for many families, it is important to demonstrate the crucial services provided by ADS to inform policymakers of the essentiality of day centers.

#### ADULT DAY SERVICES AND COVID: A CRISIS IN OHIO

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An Ohio Executive Order forced adult day service providers across the state to close from March 24, 2020 until September 21, 2020 due to COVID, resulting in significant hardship for providers and families. In fact, 65% of programs reported laying off or reducing staff and 83% of directors reported participants had to move to higher and more expensive levels of care such as nursing homes and assisted living. Programs reported that 74% of caregivers had to choose between working and taking care of their family members. Ninety-one percent of ADS program directors in Ohio reported their caregivers were experiencing an increase in stress and anxiety. This paper explores the experiences of Ohio adult day providers during the COVID epidemic, and identifies the challenges and opportunities to coalition building to educate policy makers about day services and the crucial care centers provide.

#### ADULT DAY SERVICES AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE AND SUPPORT

Joseph Gaugler,<sup>1</sup> Katherine Marx,<sup>2</sup> Holly Dabelko-Schoeny,<sup>3</sup> Lauren Parker,<sup>4</sup> Keith Anderson,<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Albers,<sup>1</sup> and Laura Gitlin,<sup>6</sup>  
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Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the significant challenges and gaps related to the care of older people in the

U.S. were made distressingly apparent. This summary presentation will consider the effects of COVID-19 and associated shutdowns on older persons who use ADS programs, their family caregivers, and programs/staff themselves. Among recommendations to consider are the classification of adult day services and similar community-based long-term care providers as essential (and clarifying their difference from senior centers). In addition, considering new financing approaches and utilizing ADS or similar community-based programs as incubators of evidence-based innovation are options to consider to better align ADS with optimal dementia care.

#### Session 1425 (Symposium)

##### INNOVATIVE POPULATION AND INTERVENTION RESEARCH FOR LGBTQ+ OLDER ADULTS WITH DEMENTIA IN A COVID WORLD

Chair: Charles Emler

Co-Chair: Karen Fredriksen Goldsen

This past year, the lives of vulnerable older adults, including those within the older LGBTQ+ community have been disrupted dramatically, as has the research agendas designed to improve their lives. Older people, including LGBTQ+ older adults with dementia, have been placed at increased risk for social isolation and mental health issues during COVID, making viable interventions even more crucial. Additionally, how research is conducted within these communities needed to be adjusted in order to preserve viability. This symposium draws upon data from the National Health Aging and Sexuality/Gender study, the first longitudinal study of LGBTQ+ older adults in the United States, as well as data from Aging with Pride: IDEA (Innovations in Dementia Empowerment and Action), the first randomized controlled trial (RCT) designed to improve quality of life of LGBTQ+ adults living with dementia and their care partners. (1) Kim and Fredriksen Goldsen examine modifiable behavioral and social factors that can improve quality of life among LGBTQ+ older adults with cognitive impairment. (2) Fredriksen Goldsen, Teri, Emler and colleagues present initial efficacy findings from the IDEA study and how the intervention needed to be altered to be viable in a COVID world. (3) The importance of Motivational Interviewing (MI) as part of a LGBTQ+ sensitive intervention designed for LGBTQ+ older adults with dementia and their care partners is discussed by Petros, Fredriksen Goldsen and Teri. As COVID continues to impact vulnerable populations as well as research and service delivery, identifying new and innovative strategies will become increasingly important.

##### THE FIRST INTERVENTION STUDY FOR LGBTQ+ OLDER ADULTS WITH DEMENTIA AND CAREGIVERS: COVID-19 LESSONS LEARNED

Karen Fredriksen Goldsen,<sup>1</sup> Linda Teri,<sup>1</sup> Hyun-Jun Kim,<sup>1</sup> Charles Emler,<sup>2</sup> Ryan Petros,<sup>1</sup> Charlotte Brown,<sup>1</sup> Glenise McKenzie,<sup>3</sup> and David La Fazia,<sup>1</sup>  
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LGBTQ+ older adults face significant health disparities with higher rates of cognitive impairment and social