

We Live and Learn Together

The Social Benefits of an Online Symposium on HIV and Aging Well

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01 Background

Aging and older people living with HIV are vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness, as a result of intersecting forms of stigma, social circles compromised by loss, and financial insecurity.

COVID-19-related public health responses have exacerbated these risks, pushing previously in-person events and services into virtual arenas.



02 Methods

HIV and Aging **WELL**: **WE** Live & **L**earn Together
The 3rd Canadian HIV & Aging Symposium



Theme 1:
Social Priorities and
Service Access



Theme 2:
Biomedical & Clinical



Theme 3:
Diverse perspectives
on aging with HIV



Theme 4:
Considerations of
Gender

HIV and Aging **WELL**: **WE** Live & **L**earn Together
Virtual Community “UnConference”



The UnConference held space for older people living with HIV to meet and learn from peers through skills-building and self-care workshops.

03 Outcomes



Community Engagement

Aging and older people living with HIV were engaged as members of the Symposium and UnConference Planning Committee
>50% of event hosts, speakers and workshop facilitators were people living and aging with HIV
80% of people who completed the post-event evaluations identified as having living expertise of HIV

142 unique participants across the three-day event



Knowledge Mobilization

Modest increases in knowledge across all four symposium themes (12-23%) were recorded among participants
95% of all evaluation respondents indicated they would apply new knowledge in at least one way
Policy, practice, and research priorities to optimize well-being for aging and older adults living with HIV identified



Community Connections

"Virtual meet and greet to close the day was really a great way to wrap up the conference." (UnConference participant)
86% of UnConference participants reported meeting someone new by participating

04 Conclusions

In the era of COVID, virtual events can still facilitate knowledge *exchange*, not just dissemination.

By centering those with living expertise, creating opportunities for interaction, and building in informal social activities, a research event increased knowledge and fostered **community-building** among aging and older people living with HIV.

