FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW REPORT FROM GRANTMAKERS IN AGING EXPLORES EXPERIENCES AND UNIQUE AND UNMET NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW REPORT FROM GRANTMAKERS IN AGING EXPLORES EXPERIENCES AND UNIQUE AND UNMET NEEDS OF OLDER PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS Is Now an Aging Issue but Aging, Medical, and Social Services Must Listen and Adapt to Support this Fast-Growing Population

Washington, DC – (September 12, 2019) – For years, it seemed unlikely that most people living with HIV or AIDS would live long lives, but much has changed and HIV/AIDS must now be regarded as an aging issue. Thanks to advances in treatment, the ability to live for decades with HIV has become a remarkable success story and half of all people in the US living with HIV/AIDS are now age 50 or older – a number that is expected to rise to 70% in the next ten years, as more long-term survivors get older, and more older people acquire new infections.

In a new report, Aging Positively: Bringing HIV/AIDS into the Aging Services Mainstream: An Introduction for Funders, Grantmakers In Aging (GIA), a national membership organization of philanthropies, examines the unique needs and experiences of this resilient, diverse, and courageous group of people, and offers insights into how aging services and HIV/AIDS specialty services, as well as philanthropies of all types and sizes, can begin to work together to help meet the needs and improve the quality of life for older people living with HIV.

Download the full paper at bit.ly/Aging-HIV-Funding-Guide.

An Emerging Challenge and a Role for Philanthropy
About 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV/AIDS, and about half are 50 or older (50+). While 50+ may seem young for aging services or geriatric medicine, many people living with HIV experience a cascade of other health challenges, including classic geriatric syndromes, even when their HIV is well-controlled, and need aging- and geriatrics-expert help at much younger-than-usual ages. Yet HIV preparedness in mainstream primary, specialty, and geriatrics care settings is often lacking, which can be jarring and even traumatizing to older patients.

Stigma remains a huge obstacle, as fear of being rejected or “outed” in unfamiliar care settings can drive people living with HIV into isolation and depression, dangerously sabotaging their ability to remain in care.

Good care also requires far more than medicine. Social support and attention to the social determinants of health are critical, as many people living with HIV are on low or fixed incomes, or unable to work, and maintaining housing and food security, mobility, and social connection can pose a daunting challenge.

“People aging with HIV are some of the most vulnerable, stigmatized, and systematically excluded people in our society. This issue should feel relevant to many different kinds of funders,” says John Feather, PhD, CEO of Grantmakers In Aging. “Whether you work on social determinants of health, clinical research, mental health and social services, or social justice issues, we need to work together to ensure that people entering late life with HIV have access to care and services to meet their complex needs.”

This report was supported by a grant from Gilead Sciences.

About Grantmakers In Aging
Grantmakers In Aging (GIA) is an inclusive and responsive membership organization comprised of all types of philanthropies with a common dedication to improving the experience of aging. GIA members have a shared recognition that a society that is better for older adults is better for people of all ages. For more information, please visit GIAGening.org.