

Transgender activism in Sweden: Implications for social work with older adults

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The study examines what social work can learn from Swedish transgender activism, to acknowledge and meet potential needs among older transgender adults. The study is based on in-depth qualitative interviews with six Swedish transgender activists and the collected material was analysed using the content analysis method. Social constructionism and performance theory was applied as theories. The analysis is structured around three themes: (1) Transgender activism, (2) Societal context, and (3) Development and change. The results indicate that a lack of knowledge about transgender issues and older adults can counteract or complicate change in this area. What factors that drive change are concluded to increased visibility and knowledge through advocacy work that takes place in the form of education and training. Implications for social work are suggested as identifying the own room for manoeuvre as well as a need for self-reflexivity and norm-critical approaches. Future research is recommended to include a larger sample where activists that are not connected to the larger LGBTQI organisations in Sweden are to be included to a higher degree.