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**Volunteer Role Description

Counselling E-Outreach**

**Background information**
The Counselling E-Outreach Project has been established since February 2014. The overall aim of this project is to use social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, ‘other’ Apps) and the internet in general (henceforth referred to as the ‘sites’) to offer information and support with regard to the sexual, mental and emotional wellbeing of individuals living with and affected by HIV, gay, bisexual and men who have sex with men and the wider LGBTQ community.

**Core Role**

Counselling E-Outreach volunteers will work alongside staff to:

* Network with and develop relationships with appropriate ‘site’ providers
* Set up and maintain accounts on the ‘sites’ - ensuring our use of these ‘sites’ conforms to their terms (i.e. conditions of use)
* Provide a presence on these ‘sites’ and offer information about Yorkshire MESMAC services – including the promotion of Yorkshire MESMAC’s website, HIV and LGBTQ social and support groups, counselling/therapy and ‘other’ support services, including links to self-help tools / information / guides etc
* Monitor activity on these ‘sites’

**Other opportunities for development** In addition to the standard and expected duties, Counselling E-Outreach volunteers are actively encouraged to explore their own choice of workload in connection with the project and pursue any avenues of enquiry that are of particular interest to them with the guidance and supervision of a worker. Some possibilities of extended work could include:

* Researching funding opportunities (could include researching ‘need’ and assisting with the application process)
* Contributing to project planning and development
* Developing the projects policies and agreements
* Helping to network with other similar projects in and around the region
* Devising new publicity and marketing material for the project
* Supporting new volunteers

**Qualities, Skills and Experience**

Counselling E-Outreach Volunteers will be:

* Reliable and trustworthy
* Equipped with a good understanding of issues affecting gay, bisexual and men who have sex with men, those living with and affected by HIV and the wider LGBTQ community
* Sensitive when dealing with these issues
* Clear about boundaries and know when to refer on or sign post users to a worker or another service
* Good communicators
* Have good organisation skills
* Non-judgemental and respectful of people’s opinions and decisions
* Positive in their attitude towards all people who seek advice
* Have a working knowledge of Yorkshire MESMAC’s website and services

Counselling E-Outreach Volunteers will have:

* Personal experience of issues that affect gay men, bisexual men and men who have sex with men, those living with and affected by HIV and the wider LGBTQ community
* Experience of using some of the sites used by the project

**Training, Induction & Supervision**

All volunteers will undergo a general induction covering boundaries, confidentiality, equal opportunities and a brief history of Yorkshire MESMAC and the services it provides.

Role specific training will include:

1. Basic Knowledge of the internet & computers
2. An understanding of the aims of the project
3. An understanding of the services Yorkshire MESMAC provides and referral procedures
4. An orientation session on Yorkshire MESMAC’s website
5. An understanding of the boundaries of their role and when and how to refer someone on
6. Understanding of ‘site’ terms & conditions and agreements
7. Monitoring procedures for the project
8. An understanding of safeguarding and Fraser guidelines

For the first six months, volunteers will meet regularly with their supervisor to discuss their volunteer role and progress. After the initial period supervisions will be every three months.

Yorkshire MESMAC offers a wide range of training for volunteers. Training sessions relevant to the post could include:

* Working with Gay men, bisexual men and men who have sex with men
* Working with the wider LGBTQ community
* Dealing with Vulnerable People
* Coming Out – Disclosure of Sexuality
* Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence and Prostitution
* Self Harm
* HIV Awareness
* Topic specifics e.g. Confidence Building, Stress Management, Dealing with Anxiety, Risk Behaviours

Volunteers are encouraged to consider attending other training sessions throughout their time as a volunteer.

**Availability**

Yorkshire MESMAC is happy to negotiate with volunteers as to when they will attend sessions to suit both their own personal circumstances and the project. Yorkshire MESMAC would encourage volunteers to liaise and meet with the counselling Co-ordinator regularly i.e. at least once a month in order to ensure project aims are met and specific campaigns / topical issues / services / events etc are promoted.

## Location

Counselling E-Outreach volunteer roles are currently available to be based in Bradford at this point in time.