

**Introduction to
Volunteering with
Yorkshire MESMAC
Group of Services**

Yorkshire MESMAC

www.mesmac.co.uk

Welcome from the Director - Tom Doyle

Thank you for thinking about giving your time to Yorkshire MESMAC Group of Services. I want your involvement with the organisation to be rewarding to you and useful for service users, as I know time is precious.

I want you to know that all the trustees, staff and managers of Yorkshire MESMAC are committed to working with and supporting volunteers and that your personal and professional development are important to us.

I want you to know that we value your ideas and thoughts; that volunteers are valued in the organisation and that volunteers are involved at every level of decision-making.

I want you to know that you will be joining what I believe is an amazing charity, made up of people who care about our work, each other and our communities.

To end, I would like to thank you in advance on behalf of all the service users whose lives you might make better by giving up some of your time.

Welcome from the Board of Trustees

We would like to welcome you, as a new or potential volunteer, to Yorkshire MESMAC. The Board of Trustees recognises the valuable role that volunteers play, supporting many of our areas of work, contributing wide-ranging skills and helping us to continually develop and improve our services.

In return, the Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring that all of our volunteers have the support, training and advice they need to perform their roles fully. Thank you for your time and for your interest in volunteering with us.

What YM is and does

Yorkshire MESMAC was founded in 1994 to help address the sexual health of Gay and Bisexual men and men who have sex with men, offering support and information. Our work has developed hugely over the years, along with the diverse range of people who access our services, and we are proud to be an organisation that promotes community development and community participation.

Our work includes the provision of a wide variety of social and support groups, youth projects, counselling, telephone helplines, community testing for HIV, Urethral Gonorrhoea, Chlamydia and vaccinations for Hepatitis B, support for people living with HIV, work with boys and young men exploited through prostitution, PRIDE events, training and consultancy.

Role and value of volunteers

Our large number of volunteers have a huge impact on the quality of our work and the range of services we can deliver. As well as supporting our members of staff, volunteers bring fresh insight, skills and experiences.

Volunteering allows people to develop new skills, to receive training and to make valuable contributions to our communities. By widening participation and providing opportunities for involvement, volunteering and Yorkshire MESMAC's community development principles go hand-in-hand.

We are pleased to offer a wide range of volunteer roles and would be pleased to consider other ideas for volunteer involvement.

What you as a volunteer can expect from YM

- A safe and supportive volunteering environment
- The support to develop new skills
- Opportunities to meet other volunteers and workers
- To make a positive contribution by supporting our services and service users
- Initial induction and a comprehensive training programme available
- To work within your comfort zone and be able to review your role
- Advice, support, supervision and all the information you need
- Not to be out of pocket
- To be able to contribute ideas about the development of Yorkshire MESMAC

What YM expects from volunteers

- Commitment to the organisation's values, projects and service users
- Support for our work and ethos and an understanding of the volunteer policies and procedures
- The core skills and experience to perform their role
- Commitment and enthusiasm
- An interest in developing skills and making the most of relevant training and supervision
- To be able to work alongside other volunteers and staff

What volunteer opportunities are on offer

There are a variety of opportunities for volunteering within the Yorkshire MESMAC group of services.

- **Being a telephone operator for Leeds LGB Switchboard.**
- **Helping with The Fruitbowl or BLAGY, our youth groups and youth projects**
- **Supporting the Community Testing programme and providing information on the commercial gay scene**
- **Influencing the direction and policy of Yorkshire MESMAC as a member of the Board of Trustees**
- **Fundraising**

These are just a few examples. Different roles are available from each Yorkshire MESMAC office and new ones are being developed in individual projects.

We'd be happy to talk to you about how you could get involved and to think about any ideas you have for volunteering.

How do I get into volunteering?

The easiest thing to do if you think you may be interested in becoming a volunteer is to drop us an email or to give us a call.

admin@mesmac.co.uk

0113 244 4209

You can download volunteer role descriptions from our website www.mesmac.co.uk

When you first get in touch with us we'll send you some information about volunteering with us, copies of volunteer role descriptions you may be interested in and information about Yorkshire MESMAC and how to find us. We'll also arrange a time with you to come and have a chat with us.

It's important that you feel confident about the role you could play within Yorkshire MESMAC and to understand how we work, what you can expect from us and for us to make sure that your skills and interests match what we want in a

Once you've decided to volunteer

If you're happy to volunteer with us and we feel you're someone who could make a positive contribution, we'll arrange for you to have a supervisor who will meet you and explain our induction process. We'll give you a detailed handbook covering everything you need to know including our training events, some of which will relate to your volunteering role.

You'll be able to observe other volunteers before you start and will be able to meet your supervisor regularly to chat about your role.

All volunteers automatically become members of the Volunteer Advisory Group and are warmly invited to come to its bi-monthly meetings. The group's role is to support volunteering in the organisation, develop good practice and policies and provide a forum for volunteers to raise issues and make suggestions.

Contact us

The contact details for the Yorkshire MESMAC offices and Group of Services are on the back of this booklet. If you wish to contact an individual member of staff by email the addresses are very easy to work out. They all follow the same format.

The initial of the first name followed by a full stop and then the surname followed by @mesmac.co.uk

For example Joe Bloggs would be:
j.bloggs@mesmac.co.uk

This booklet is also available in large print please contact admin@mesmac.co.uk or call 0113 244 4209

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