

# Counselling



**MESMAC**  
NORTH EAST

# Counselling

## For gay & bisexual men

This is a confidential service available to gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men from across the North East region. The counselling sessions are held at the two MESMAC offices in Newcastle and Middlesbrough City centres.

## What is counselling?

Counselling gives you the chance to talk with someone in a safe and supportive environment about issues that are concerning you. It enables you to explore and understand the emotions and situations you're having difficulty with.

The counselling team work in a way that accepts, understands and respects you as you share your thoughts and feelings.

## Counselling can offer:

- Skilled help and support in times of crisis.
- Help with issues, which can affect your overall well-being, both physically and emotionally, such as depression, anxiety and stress.
- Sometimes, difficulties you have in adult life can be the result of past, painful experiences, which have been left unresolved.

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## These can include:

- Things that happened to you when you were a child.
- Physical, emotional and sexual abuse.
- Bereavement or other traumas.

## How counselling works

**Humanistic counselling** believes that you have within yourself the resources for your own growth and healing. Therefore, our counselling team aims to help and support you so that you can seek your own solutions to difficulties you're experiencing.

You're most likely to benefit from counselling if you're willing to honestly look at and explore your feelings. And the counselling relationship can only become established if both you and the counsellor make a commitment to it. This means it's important to come regularly for sessions.

## How to make an appointment

You just need to contact us direct (all our contact details are at the end of this leaflet). Initially you will have a 30 minute appointment, or assessment, for both yourself and us to find out if Counselling is the right way forward for you. We try our utmost to see you for this assessment within 10 days of

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you first contacting us. Then, if counselling is for you, we will do our best to start your sessions soon after assessment but, at times of high demand, we might need to operate a waiting list, though we try to keep this as short as possible. You can ask what is the current waiting time if you are concerned that we might not be able to see you as quickly as you need.

Sessions last for one hour, and are usually held weekly. The number of sessions you have will be discussed between yourself and the counsellor. However, usually a second assessment will be made after six sessions in order to clarify the issues, evaluate the work to date and decide if counselling ends there or continues.

Counselling is **free** to North East gay and bisexual men.

## What is MESMAC North East?

We are a large project offering a wide range of services to North East gay and bisexual men. We have existed since 1990.

The counselling teams are trained in the Humanistic Approach, and they follow the Code of Conduct of the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists and also our own MESMAC North East

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Code of Conduct. Copies of these are available on request.

## Is what I tell you confidential?

All information shared within MESMAC North East is covered by our confidentiality policy. This means that **nothing** discussed in an assessment or counselling session will be told to anyone else **outside** this project without your express permission, and **only** discussed **inside** the project on a strictly '**need to know**' basis.

This applies **unless** you mention things that would require the counsellor to discuss it further with their Manager and/or other professionals.

## Such issues would be:

- Abuse or risk of abuse if you are under 18.
- Current or past abuse of other people, whatever their age.
- Possible self-harm in the future, including attempted suicide.
- Serious past, current or future crime. This doesn't include consensual sex offences (such as cottaging).

## Contacting MESMAC North East

### Newcastle Office

3rd floor, 11 Nelson  
Street,

Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 5AN

Tel: 0191 233 1333

Minicom: 0191 233 2112

### Teesside Office

4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Prudential  
House,

31-33 Albert Road,  
Middlesbrough TS1 1PE

Tel: 01642 804400

Minicom: 01642 732 392

Email: [all@mesmacnortheast.com](mailto:all@mesmacnortheast.com)

Website: [www.mesmacnortheast.com](http://www.mesmacnortheast.com)

MESMAC North East is responsive to members of the gay and bisexual community irrespective of gender, marital status, disability, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other factor upon which discrimination may be based.

MESMAC North East is part of Newcastle City Council's Social Services Directorate, and is funded by Primary Care Trusts across the region.

**This leaflet and others are available in other languages as well as in large print, Braille and on tape for people with visual impairment.**

To talk to a gay and bisexual men's worker contact your local service.

## NEWCASTLE

MESMAC North East: 0191 233 1333  
(MESMAC NE work throughout the region)  
(Minicom: 0191 233 2112)

## GATESHEAD

STAG Project: 0191 490 1708

## NORTHUMBERLAND

LGBT Worker: 01670 523 701

## COUNTY DURHAM

GAD: 01325 355 551  
Health Promotion (north): 0191 374 4131  
Health Promotion (south): 01325 746 141

## TEESSIDE

MESMAC North East: 01642 804 400  
(Minicom: 01642 732 392)  
Teesside Positive Action: 01642 254 598



# **MESMAC**

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For more information contact:  
MESMAC North East

### **Newcastle**

Phone 0191 233 1333  
(24 Hour answerphone available)  
Minicom 0191 233 2112  
Fax 0191 233 1551  
MESMAC text service:  
TEXT: MESMAC (space) MEN (space)  
Then your message to 60003  
Email [all@mesmacnortheast.com](mailto:all@mesmacnortheast.com)

### **Teesside**

Phone 01642 804400  
(24 Hour answerphone available)  
Minicom 01642 732392  
Fax 01642 809800  
Email: [enquiries@mesmacnortheast.com](mailto:enquiries@mesmacnortheast.com)  
Website: [www.mesmacnortheast.com](http://www.mesmacnortheast.com)

MESMAC North East is funded by Primary Care Trusts  
across the north east