



STAFFORDSHIRE
Buddies

Guide to Services

Introduction

Who is this Guide for?

This is a guide to the services that Staffordshire Buddies provides to adults and children living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. If you are living with or affected by HIV/AIDS in Staffordshire and you need something that isn't covered by this guide please do contact us as we are happy to discuss individual needs.

Where Are We?

The Staffordshire Buddies main centre for HIV Services is based in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. We also have a centre in Lichfield. To help ensure confidentiality for people who use our services we do not publicise the addresses of our two centres.



Getting in Touch

To access any of the services in this guide please contact our main office and ask to speak to a member of the HIV Services Team.

Our telephone number is:

Tel: 01782 201251

or you can write to us at:

**P.O. Box 474
Hanley
Stoke-on-Trent
ST1 3HX**

or visit our website:

www.staffordshirebuddies.co.uk

We are a Registered Charity, No.1047375.

Individual Help and Support

Professional Help and Advice

We recognise that people living with HIV are a diverse group of individuals living in very different circumstances. Our experienced staff will undertake an individual assessment with you to determine which of our services can best meet your needs. Where appropriate we can refer you to other specialist agencies for help.



We offer information and advice on welfare benefits, debt, employment, housing and all aspects of living with HIV. We hold the Community Legal Services quality mark for General Help in relation to advice on benefits, housing and debt.

Buddies

Buddies are trained volunteers that can provide individual help and support in your home or in the community. Buddy volunteers can provide:

- Information on all matters related to living with HIV.
- Emotional support.
- Assistance with accessing essential services.
- Help to make informed choices.

Transport

We can offer a volunteer based transport service to help you get to essential appointments if you cannot manage by yourself.

This service is available to people with insufficient income to afford public transport or to those unable to use public transport due to health problems.

If you are fit enough to use public transport

Individual Help and Support

but have insufficient income we may be able to give you a bus pass. If you are unfamiliar with public transport we can arrange for a volunteer to accompany you on your journey. If your main need is related to health problems and/or limited mobility we may be able to offer a volunteer driver.

Condoms and Lubricants

A range of condoms are available free to clients at our Hanley and Lichfield Centres. Condoms can also be sent by post to people living with HIV who are unable to travel to our centres.



Complementary Therapies

A range of complementary therapies are offered by qualified professional therapists to relieve stress and improve health and wellbeing. Clients undergo an initial assessment and are allocated a set number of sessions after which effectiveness of the

therapy is reviewed. Complementary therapies are currently available at the drop-in services at both our Hanley and Lichfield Centres and also during our outreach sessions at Burton-on-Trent Genitourinary Medicine Clinic. If you are too unwell to travel therapists may be able to make a home visit.

The therapies currently on offer include:

- Aromatherapy Massage
- Reflexology
- Reiki

Emergency Fund

The Staffordshire Buddies Emergency Fund makes small grants to people living with HIV in times of exceptional financial need. Crisis payments can be made at short notice and typically pay for food and daily living expenses for clients on low/no income. Applications have to be in writing and are decided against a set of qualifying criteria. Contact us to apply.

Children and Families

Positive Families

"Positive Families" is a service offering help and support to families and children affected by HIV. Our experienced



staff can undertake an holistic assessment of a family's needs to determine which of our services can best help. We attend the regular family clinics at the hospital and work in partnership with those that run them. We recognise that families affected by HIV may have particular issues around relationships and disclosure of HIV status to children. We have ten years experience of working with children and families affected by HIV/AIDS and we are one of the few local HIV charities in the UK to offer a specialist service of this kind.

Children's Activities

Part of our "Positive Families" service is the provision of an after school club and activities during school holidays. This service is

available to children living with HIV or to children of negative or unknown HIV status who are cared for by an adult or adults living with HIV.

We recognise that young children may be unaware of their reason for attending the service and we will respect the parents/guardians wishes in this regard. However, where adults do wish to disclose HIV status to children we can provide help and support working jointly with HIV Counsellors and clinicians.

Our aim is to give both children and parents a break and where appropriate, to help build confidence and social skills.

Positive Teenagers Group

This is a group for older children with an HIV positive diagnosis. Growing up as a teenager living with HIV can be difficult and this group provides a space for young people to support each other and work through the various issues that they face.

Groups

Drop-in Service

The 'Drop In' service for people living with HIV provides a social space for people to meet and support each other. Sessions offer an opportunity for clients to exchange information and for staff to provide help in an informal group setting.

We offer a regular drop-in at our Hanley and Lichfield centres; please telephone for details.

Esprit

Esprit is a group for Women living with HIV. Some meetings take place on our premises but most are in the form of activities. Esprit provides a safe space where women can exchange information and support specific to their needs. A programme of activities aims to build confidence and strengthen support networks.



Asylum Seekers and Refugees Group

This group is for people living with HIV from overseas who have immigration issues. The group meets regularly and it aims to offer help and support around the particular issues faced by asylum seekers and refugees.

We also publish a regular newsletter for asylum seekers and refugees.

Gay Men's Group

The Gay Men's Group offers group sessions and activities for gay and bisexual men living with HIV. Some meetings take place on our premises but most are in the form of social activities. We

occasionally run respite days and/or residential weekends. As with all our groups, the Gay Men's Group provides a space for peer support and making new friends.



Groups

Social Activities for Mixed Groups

Our groups for women, heterosexual men, gay men, and asylum seekers and refugees all fulfil an important role but sometimes it is good to get together. With this in mind we offer occasional mixed social events including evening activities to meet the needs of clients working during the day.



Workshop/Respite Activities

If budget allows we occasionally offer overnight respite/workshop sessions for clients. Previously, the children have enjoyed activity breaks whilst the adults have benefited from HIV specific respite workshop weekends.

Information

Leaflets and Magazines

We stock a range of leaflets, books, magazines and other resources relevant to living with HIV and HIV health promotion at our Lichfield and Hanley centres. You can access these during drop-in services or by appointment at other times. If there is something specific that you want we can post it to you on request



Positive Lives Newsletter

We publish our own newsletter called "Positive Lives" currently on a quarterly basis, to keep people who use our services up to date about news and forthcoming events.

Internet Access

We have computers with internet access

Information

available for clients to use at both our Hanley and Lichfield centres. You can access these during drop-in services or by appointment at other times.

Training and Education

A group of volunteers can meet occasional requests from organisations seeking speakers to talk about Staffordshire Buddies or about issues relating to HIV/AIDS. Please contact the office for further information.

Policy Development and Campaigns

The charity engages with influencing policy through a range of consultations, primarily with the Department of Health, The Home Office, Local Authorities and local Health Trusts. We sit on a number of local forums and committees to represent issues for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and to inform the local sexual health agenda.

Useful Contacts

Staffordshire Buddies

Main Line: 01782 201251 - office hours

The Mesmen Project

The Mesmen Project is part of Staffordshire Buddies and is based in the South of Staffordshire at Lichfield. We provide HIV health promotion services to men who engage in sex with men. For more information please telephone **01543 411413**



GayLife North Staffordshire

Sexual Health Information Line
01782 425 969 (Mon-Fri 9am – 5pm)
Email: info@glns.org.uk
Website: www.glns.org.uk

THT Direct

HIV/AIDS Helpline National 0845 1221200
Opening hours: Mon-fri 10am – 10pm Sat &
Sun 12pm – 6pm

Useful Contacts

National AIDS & Sexual Health Helpline

0800 137437

Provides confidential advice and information
24 hours a day, 7 days a week from a team of
trained staff.

GUM Clinics – Staffordshire

Stoke on Trent 01782 554205

Stafford 01785 230260

Burton upon Trent 01283 593212

Tamworth 01827 263810



Community
Legal Service



© Staffordshire Buddies 2009