

Gender Identity Service Information Leaflet

There is a long wait to access the service and we are sorry for any difficulties this may cause for you. There are things that you can do whilst you are waiting that might support you with your transition. Please see below for useful information and contacts.

What NHS England will fund:

Our service **can** provide:

Hormone treatment,

Facial hair removal (8 Laser facial hair removal sessions or the equivalent in electrolysis), Genital hair removal prior to surgery if required, Voice and communication therapy with a speech and language therapist,

Time limited, internally referred, psychological support when a diagnosis has been given (we do not accept external referrals for psychological support).

We also refer on to surgical providers for mastectomy and related chest reconstruction for individuals assigned female at birth and genital reconstructive surgeries - vaginoplasty, vulvoplasty, phalloplasty, and metoidioplasty.

Local CCGs will also fund gamete storage. Cross sex hormones have an impact on fertility so you may wish to start thinking about whether you want your own biological children. If this is the case, you may wish to store your gametes (eggs/ sperm). If you wish to undergo gamete storage, it may be useful to start looking at local clinics and discuss your options with your GP.

More information including the care pathway and what to expect from our service can also be found on our website <https://www.leedsandYorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/gender-identity-service/>.

What NHS England does not fund:

Our service **cannot** provide

Breast implants,

Breast augmentation,

Voice/laryngeal/Adam's apple surgery,

Facial feminisation surgery.

Waiting Times

An overview of the current waiting times and numbers waiting for the service can be found on our website <https://www.leedsandYorkpft.nhs.uk/our-services/gender-identity-service/>.

Gender Outreach Workers

Leeds Gender Identity Service has a friendly and inclusive team of Gender Outreach Workers who offer peer support whilst you wait for your initial assessment. Workers can provide information about the Leeds Gender Identity Service Care Pathway ahead of your assessment. Gender Outreach Workers have lived experience of transition and work in partnership with Yorkshire MESMAC and Lancashire LGBT.

Workers are based in Yorkshire and Lancashire but are accessible by anyone on the Leeds Gender Identity Service waiting list, care pathway, or people thinking about referral in the NHS England area. Gender Outreach Workers provide in-person one-to-one, telephone and online video sessions. Peer support groups are available in-person and online. Workers are a simple phone call away.

The Gender Outreach Worker Information & Advice Line (**0800 183 1486**) is open Monday to Friday, from 10am-2pm, making peer support more accessible. You can make contact for information, advice, and book a one-to-one session at a more convenient time. Some of the support that they offer includes advice regarding social gender transition and documents, general transition advice, information about their own peer support groups, signposting to local sources of support and more.

Details of the Gender Outreach Workers groups and activities can be found on their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/GenderOutreachWorker/>

Contact Details:

You can call the Gender Outreach Worker Information and Advice Line on **0800 183 1486**. You can arrange a one-to-one session if you need more time to talk. You can also book onto peer support groups using this phone number.

You can also email genderoutreachworker.lypft@nhs.net with your name, date of birth, address, and telephone number. Please complete the enclosed email consent form and return the completed form to gid.lypft@nhs.net to enable email communication with the team.

What is Yorkshire MESMAC?

Yorkshire MESMAC offer services to various communities across Yorkshire including men who have sex with men, African and other BAME people, people misusing drugs, sex workers and LGBT+ young people and adults.

They have bases in Leeds, Bradford, Rotherham and Hull. They also run LGBT groups across the Yorkshire region. [Visit the MESMAC website](#) or call 01132 444 209 to learn more.

What is Lancashire LGBT?

Lancashire LGBT are a registered charity and their aim is to support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Trans people to be happier, healthier and well connected. Their core work is aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of LGBT people, reducing health inequalities and providing social and support activities to reduce social isolation.

Lancashire LGBT work to improve services for LGBT people as well as reduce the barriers many LGBT people experience accessing services. They regularly deliver awareness training to professionals and work in partnership with health, education and criminal justice sectors. [Visit their website](#) or call 07788 295 521 to learn more.

Transitioning/ Coming out

You can start your **Social Gender Transition** at any time, and you do not need a diagnosis of Gender Dysphoria to do this. Each person's transition is different. Some will come out to friends and family straight away; some will come out gradually to small parts of their lives. Some will come out online before transitioning in real life and others will decide to make the change over the space of one day. Coming out should be done at your own pace, there is no right or wrong way to do it. However, once you have come out you have little control about who will tell someone else and that is something to be mindful of. Coming out can be affected by a number of different factors. Make sure you have a plan of who to tell, what to say, and when, and potentially keep a journal as to who you have told and how that makes you feel. It is also useful to make a safety plan, more details about this can be found at <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/coming-out/coming-out-adult-1>

Although your **Social Gender Transition** should be done at your own pace, for lower surgery evidence is needed to show that you have lived in your gender role for at least 12 months and that you have changed your name.

Changing your name

Changing your name formally can often be an important moment in your transition journey. Some people will choose this point to come out or start living in their new gender, others will change their name but start to transition later if, for example, they have a gender-neutral name. Formally changing your name will give you the evidence that you need to have your new name on all of your legal documents (excluding Birth Certificate, for which you will need a Gender Recognition Certificate). There are two main ways of changing your name formally, by Statutory Declaration or Deed Poll, both have advantages and disadvantages you will need to pick the method that best suits you.

Statutory Declaration

A Statutory Declaration is a document declaring your name change. It requires one signature; however, this must be sworn in front of someone who is authorised to notarise it. This can be someone like a Solicitor. Statutory Declarations can be drawn up yourself using documents freely available online from places like the gov.uk website. Getting your documents notarised should cost between £5-20 if you have produced the documentation yourself. If you want to use a Solicitor to make the Statutory Declaration, they will charge you a fee to draw up the document, as well as fees for notarising the documents. *Both methods of Statutory Declarations will allow you to formally change your name.* You can also request to get certified copies as this will help you when you need to change your legal documents as your name change document may need to be sent to other organisations (however this may increase costs).

Deed Polls

You can change your name yourself by a Deed Poll. It is possible to buy a Deed Poll or make your own for free.

Free Deed Poll

There is nothing that states you have to purchase a Deed Poll for it to be formally recognised. It is possible to use a template and make your own, however, *you will need 2 witnesses to sign it in order for it to be valid.* With this method, there's a chance you may be questioned when trying to use it, and it can sometimes be difficult when changing other legal documents.

Purchased Deed Polls

You can buy deed polls from the internet, but ensure you are using a reputable website and check out reviews and trustworthiness before you buy. Here you will send off for your Deed Poll online and it will arrive in the post. With these services, you can also apply for a 'title change' for an additional fee, *you are legally allowed to use whatever title you want when changing your name, so there is no obligation to use these services.* Many places offer this service with prices in the region of £20-45. Like Statutory Declarations, Deed Polls can be created through Solicitors and some occupations may require an 'enrolled' Deed Poll. Details and costs of 'enrolled' Deed Polls are found here <https://www.gov.uk/change-name-deed-poll>

Mental Health

We understand that you may be struggling with mental health concerns and we would strongly encourage you to engage with your GP or local mental health service to address this. Having mental health issues does not automatically mean you cannot access treatment from a gender service. However, it is required that you are engaging with appropriate treatment and that you have been stable in your mental health for a reasonable period of time. This is to keep you safe and ensure that you are able to understand and consent to the life-changing treatments on the care pathway. Help is also available via <https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk> and <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Physical Health

In order to cope with and be safe during the life-changing treatments on the care pathway you need to be physically healthy. We understand that there may be aspects of your physical health that are a concern at this time however, it is important that you take responsibility for elements of this such as:

Weight

A healthy weight is needed for surgery. This is because surgeons will only operate when this is the case. Risks and complications of surgery and hormone treatment will also be reduced when your weight is in a

healthy range. Your time on the waiting list is an opportunity to lose or gain weight to achieve this. Help is available via your GP or at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/>

Health Screening

Access and invites for national health screening programmes for cervical screening, breast screening and AAA screening are currently linked to whether people are registered male or female with their GP practice. Changes to gender marker could impact on whether people are invited for correct screening. People can have a discussion with their GP or practice staff to ensure they receive invites for correct screening. The following link provides information about health screening programmes for gender diverse people in the UK. National screening programmes do not currently cover prostate health and people with a prostate can discuss any prostate related health concerns with their GP practice.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-population-screening-information-for-transgender-people/nhs-population-screening-information-for-trans-people

Smoking

It is advised that you stop smoking. This is because smoking may affect some of the treatments that you may wish to receive. Smoking can reduce or stop hormones working. Smoking also negatively affects the immune system, which can delay surgery healing, increasing the risk of infection at the surgery site. Smoking can also affect circulation which can lead to death of cells at the surgery site. Help with stopping smoking is available via your GP, local substance abuse services, or at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/nhs-stop-smoking-services-help-you-quit/> and <https://www.talktofrank.com/drugs-a-z>

Alcohol

Men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol per week on a regular basis (guidance on unit intake levels can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/calculating-alcohol-units/>). This is due to the impact that alcohol can have on physical wellbeing and making decisions regarding treatment. Help is available via your GP, local substance abuse services, or at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/> and <https://www.talktofrank.com/drugs-a-z>

Drugs

Misuse of drugs could affect your transition because of the mental and physical effects that they have. They can also affect your ability to give informed consent to treatment. If use is problematic or excessive it may impact on your care pathway progression. Help is available via your GP, local substance abuse services, or at <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/drug-addiction-getting-help/> and <https://www.talktofrank.com/drugs-a-z>

Self-Medication

We recommend that people do not use cross sex hormones that have not been given by a doctor. Any medication that you may already be taking needs to be monitored and discussed with your GP. If you do take medications not prescribed by your doctor you should inform them so they can make sure you are not causing yourself any harm.

Voice Therapy

Gender dysphoria secondary to the sound or quality of your voice is common during the process of transition. People may seek to engage in gender affirming voice therapy to support them to modify their voice. Speech and Language Therapy can support people looking for a feminine, masculine or non-binary voice through a variety of methods, with the goal being for your voice to reflect who you are. Sessions are primarily delivered through an online group model with our 3 Speech and Language Therapists.

Whilst waiting for input from Speech and Language Therapy, it may be of benefit to begin to explore and understand your voice. Although we do not recommend specific apps, there are many options available in app stores, and they may support you to tune your voice and pitch range to a point where you feel comfortable in your own voice. It is possible to explore your voice by seeing where your comfortable vocal range is by humming up and down a pitch scale, noticing where you feel your voice and identifying aspects of your communication you do not feel as confident about. This will help when establishing a therapy goal in future sessions.

The priority whilst waiting for input is to maintain a healthy voice and to ensure you do not strain or damage your voice. Some general tips re voice care would be:

- Drink more water; avoid caffeine
- Try plain water steaming occasionally to help hydrate
- Use a good posture, sitting upright and with open body
- Relax and rest your voice
- Don't shout where possible, avoid whispering
- Avoid clearing your throat, only coughing when you need to
- If you feel your voice straining, stop, take a break and try again without strain

If you feel any pain or discomfort when doing any voice techniques, please stop and wait for input from the service.

Emergency Contacts

111	Urgently needed medical help.
Your GP	
Your local crisis team	
Samaritans	116 123 – 24/7 support on phone/text https://www.samaritans.org
MindLine Trans+ Support Helpline	0300 330 5468 https://bristolmind.org.uk/help-and-counselling/mindline-transplus/
National domestic violence helpline	0808 200 0247 http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk
Galop national domestic violence helpline for LGBT people	0300 9995428 or 0800 9995428

UK Wide Support

Stonewall Housing	www.stonewallhousing.org - specialises in LGBT housing advice and support.
Trans bare all	contact@transbareall.co.uk www.transbareall.co.uk National organisation for trans people and their partners, which explores sex and intimacy, body positivity, and wellbeing. Runs yearly events and workshops.
Tranzwiki	www.tranzwiki.net
Gender construction kit	https://genderkit.org.uk – guide to changing things linked to gender.
Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs)	www.gires.org.uk Gender diverse charity for children, adolescents and young adults. Also offer groups for parents.
Wehappytrans.com	https://www.facebook.com/WeHappyTrans/ A place for sharing positive trans perspectives.
Press for Change	http://www.pfc.org.uk The UK's leading experts in transgender law.

Bradford

Leeds GIS Gender Outreach Workers	Provide one to one peer support and an InclusiviTy peer support and social group. Contact 0800 183 1486 to learn more and book https://www.facebook.com/GenderOutreachWorker/
Equity Partnership	01274 727759/79 finn@equitypartnership.org.uk Perkin House, 1 Longlands Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD1 2TP. Various Trans groups for various ages.
Bradford Trans Youth Group	finn@equitypartnership.org.uk Youth group ran by Bradford Council for trans young people aged 13-19.
BLAGY (Bradford)	01270 395815 bradford@mesmac.co.uk Support and social group for LGBT people under the age of 25. Meeting weekly

Leeds

Leeds GIS Gender Outreach Workers	Provide one to one peer support and an InclusiviTy peer support and social group, mental wellbeing group, Making Waves swimming session and more. Contact 0800 183 1486 to learn more and book https://www.facebook.com/GenderOutreachWorker/
TransLeeds	Regular support groups take place at Yorkshire MESMAC Leeds along with other social events and activities. Contact TransLeeds for more information transleedscontact@gmail.com ^[SEP] Facebook: TransLeeds
Gendered Intelligence Group	Leeds group for trans, non-binary, gender variant and questioning young people aged 13-25. The Leeds group meets at Mesmac (Leeds). fin.thorbrian@genderedintelligence.co.uk
Transtastic	Trans youth group for ages 13-18 run through the Leeds City Council Youth Services. Transtastic meet regularly in a central Leeds location. Samantha.Horsfield@leeds.gov.uk or 07712 214421 ^[SEP]
Proud 'n' Diverse	Group for LGBTQI people aged 18-30. Meet at Mesmac (Leeds). proudndiverse@outlook.com ^[SEP]
Out 2 18	LGBTQ group of young people aged 13-18 run through the Leeds City Council Youth Improvement Team. Meeting regularly in a central Leeds location.
Leeds Survivor-Led Crisis Service Trans Support Group	All groups are held at Dial House, 12 Chapel Street, Halton, Leeds, LS15 7RW, which is accessible on the 40, 163 and 19A bus routes. 18+
Leeds action for Trans health	Meet monthly at MESMAC leedsactionfortranshealth@gmail.com
Mesmac Testing Times - Trans & Non-Binary Sexual Health Drop-In	A safe and confidential health service including free HIV testing plus full non-gendered chlamydia and gonorrhoea screening. Not linked to medical records.

Dial House – LGBT Support Services at Leeds Survivor-Led Crisis Service	LGBT Group and Trans Group run at Dial House, 12 Chapel Street, Halton, Leeds, LS15 7RW www.lslcs.org.uk
Non-Binary Leeds	Support Non-Binary people aged 18+. Contact for more information Facebook: Non-Binary Leeds
Rainbow Family	For LGBTI Refugee & Asylum seekers https://africanrainbowfamily.org/contact-us-2/ Website contains various communication methods
SAGE	For older LGBT people aged 50+. Contact Yorkshire MESMAC to find out more. 0113 244 4209.

Selby

Trans and Non-binary social group	Meet in a safe central location. Contact cj.reay@mesmac.co.uk for more info. 18+
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Wakefield

TransWakefield	Meets regularly in city centre location. 01924 211116 Facebook.com/transwakefield 18+
2BU Wakefield	Regular LGBTQ social groups for Adults with Learning disabilities launched Wakefield, West Yorkshire #asafeplacetobeyou #2buwakefield twobeyouwakefield@outlook.com https://www.facebook.com/2buwakefield/
Link UP (Wakefield)	For people of all genders living with or affected by HIV. Meeting regularly at a safe and confidential Wakefield city centre location. 18+ Contact Mark Tyson for more information. 07955 005 113. Wakefield@mesmac.co.uk
The Fruit Bowl Youth Group (Wakefield)	LGBT and questioning young people aged 13-17. Meeting regularly in a central Wakefield location. Email: gviccarsdyas@wakefield.gov.uk

York

Generate	A Transgender peer support and social group meeting regularly in York. Age 18+ For information contact generatecontact@gmail.com You can also check out our website at www.generateyork.org
Gendered Intelligence	The group meets at Yorkshire MESMAC, 22/23 Blayds Yard, Leeds, LS1 4AD from 6pm-8pm. Ages 8-21 - 0207 832 5848
York LGBT Forum	Offering regular groups for the LGBT community in North Yorkshire www.yorklgbtforum.org.uk enquiry@yorklgbtforum.org

Lancashire

Leeds GIS Gender Outreach Workers	Provide one to one peer support and an InclusiviTy peer support and social group, local drop-ins etc. Contact 0800 183 1486 to learn more and book https://www.facebook.com/GenderOutreachWorker/
Lancs LGBT- LBT Meeting	Every 2 nd Thursday 6:30pm-8:00pm via zoom. Please contact Lancashire LGBT for advice on joining
Meet n Match: LGBT Learning Disabilities Pan Lancashire	Meet regularly, contact http://www.meet-n-match.co.uk/events.html
Preston Samaritans	Call: 116 123 Email: Jo@samaritans.org

Blackburn

Brook LGBT Group	Young People under the age of 25 Email: Natasha.morris@brook.org.uk
The Billy Project Gym	Services are available to girls and women aged 11+, no upper age limit! www.unit2fitnessforwomen.setmore.com/billyproject Website: www.thebillyproject.co.uk

Blackpool

UR Potential	Support young people up to 25 yrs old. Contact: lgbt@urpotential.co.uk & jade@urpotential.co.uk Text/ call: Nina 07445641768 & Jade 07453959567
Renaissance	https://www.ren-uk.com/

Burnley/ Pendle

POUT	Regular groups and activity Burnley Contact: Sophie Leach Email: Sophie.Leach@lancashire.gov.uk Tel: 07929 847448
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Non-LGBT Specific groups

Lancs Over 55 Groups- Health Watch	Runs once a month. Contact: dawn.allen@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk
Long Covid Group- Coffee and Chat	If you have long covid or a similar condition and would like to join the group then please email: cad@lscft.nhs.uk in order to get an online invitation to attend.

North West

<p>Lancashire LGBT Trans Support Service</p>	<p>www.lancslgbt.org.uk Information and support helpline Mon-Wednesday 10am to 4pm: 01772900260</p> <p>Lancashire LGBT Trans Support Service is for anyone who identifies as trans female/feminine, trans male/masculine, genderqueer, non-binary or is questioning/exploring their gender identity. The service offers a programme of activities including: Information & support helpline; Befriending service; Practical workshops; Annual trans residential weekend.</p>
<p>LGBT Foundation Manchester</p>	<p>http://www.lgbt.foundation</p>
<p>OutREACH Cumbria</p>	<p>2, Long Lane Carlisle CA3 8TA Helpline: 08003457440 E-mail: info@outreachcumbria.co.uk Web: www.outreachcumbria.co.uk</p> <p>Works with the statutory and voluntary sector providing equality advice and consultation on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.</p>

North East

<p>Be Trans Support and Development North</p>	<p>Contact via e-mail hello@be-north.org.uk Or via website www.be-north.org.uk</p> <p>Based in Newcastle upon Tyne. Working to improve the lives of trans and non-binary people throughout the North East and West of England. Provides a host of services including one to one support, peer support, advocacy and social events. Working directly with gender diverse people, their friends and family and employers. Provide help and advice around coming out, transitioning (social and medical), your legal rights, health and wellbeing and much more.</p>
<p>LGBT The FED</p>	<p>LGBT Federation North East Carnegie Building Atkinson Road Benwell Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 8XS Email: mail@lgbtfed.com Web: www.lgbtfed.com</p> <p>Working to unite LGBT individuals, groups, organisations and communities across the North East.</p>
<p>LGBT Unity Darlington</p>	<p>Gay Advice 9, Duke Street Darlington DL3 7RX Tel: 01325 954813 Web: www.lgbtunitydarlington.worldpress.com</p>

	<p>Community organisation set up on the back of the closure of GADD which seeks to improve the lives of LGBT people living and working in Darlington and the wider areas. Incorporating groups formerly run by GADD.</p>
LGBT North East – Humankind	<p>Sapphire House Horndale Avenue Aycliffe Business Park Newton Aycliffe</p> <p>Co Durham DL5 6DS NE Tel. 01325 731 160 (Option 2) E-mail: lgbt@humankindcharity.org.uk Web: humankindcharity.org.uk/service/lgbt-health-and-well-being-aged-15-25</p> <p>Provides a comprehensive support service in the North East for people aged between 15 and 25.</p> <p>A range of support options from 1:1 sessions and peer group support meetings to social outings and workshops.</p>
MESMAC (North East)	<p>MESMAC North East 3rd floor Nelson Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5AN</p> <p>Tel: 0191 233 1333 Web: www.mesmacnortheast.com Email: all@mesmacnewcastle.com</p> <p>Community support for gay and bisexual men. Information on many trans support groups.</p>
Northern Proud Voices	<p>Web: www.northernproudvoices.co.uk Email: northernproudvoices@hotmail.com</p> <p>The North East first and largest LGBT Choir. Allies welcome. No auditions necessary.</p>
TLS (The Local Spa) T-Birds Club	<p>Tel: 0793 248 8839</p> <p>Hotel/Spa - trans night with dressing room in Stanley, County Durham. Mention MESMAC as they are very security-conscious.</p>
Transgender Youth Support Service	<p>Emotional and practical support and information available about trans issues open to transgender, nonbinary, gender non-conforming people or those with questions about their gender identity who are under 26 years of age and living in the North East (including Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Gateshead and Sunderland). Also support for parents, carers and professionals.</p> <p>Contact Debs Walker for venues and dates of groups or for further information and referral procedure at debswalker@trinityyouth.org.uk or on 07415 104 559</p>

London

London Friend	Web: http://londonfriend.org.uk Info: Based in Kings Cross. Offer maximum 12 sessions of low-cost counselling. Regular trans and non-binary group
Elop	Web: http://elop.org Info: Based in Walthamstow. Offer 14, 28 or 42-week therapy contracts. Low cost services based on annual income.
Spectra	Web: https://spectra-london.org.uk Info: Offers counselling and group therapy. Spectra also offers Skype sessions for those not based in London.
Maytree	Web: http://maytree.org.uk/ Info: Based in North London. Maytree offer a four night stay for those feeling suicidal free of charge. Tel: 0207 263 7070

South

The Intercom Trust	https://www.intercomtrust.org.uk/about Helpline: 0800 612 3010 Intercom Trust is a lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans+ charity working across Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and the wider South West, providing: Help and support, advocacy, counselling, training, information, support groups, online directory, community surveys, conferences, and consultancy.
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