

I got in touch with Gary, LGBT Worker via my GP after he had been contacted by A&E as I had been admitted on three or four occasions between October & December 2012. (Actually 22 attendances).

Being a heavy user of GBL, using approximately 70 to 100 mls through each 24 hour period, using both through the day and in order to sleep at night. Gary showed me very kindly how destructive my behaviour was to those around me, and I was swiftly both feeling guilty and more anxious than I had been previously. This was an extremely positive voice in an otherwise lonely existence. Having been unable or unwilling to leave my studio due to two burglaries and a low self esteem I really was at rock bottom. It shocked me that at 40 years old I had fallen so far

*(GBL user)*

When I first met Gary I was in the lowest darkest place I had been in my life, it was just after a suicide attempt. I was also self-harming and regularly injecting anything between 10 to 15 times daily. I was provided with many options of support, from one to one, to seeing a counsellor, using the things on offer like, holistic treatments, a lunch for people struggling with HIV to come and support each other together.

The LGBT workers approach was crucial and at no time did he tell me what to do or what to think he allowed me to come to the realisations of the things I need to face and change by myself, which empowered a long lasting self-confidence so that I would be able to stand on my own when fully recovered. Injecting amongst men in the gay scene is seeing a massive explosion of people using. I myself have seen this first hand and this is a problem that is only going to increase with tragic circumstances.

What the service offers is a place for people with these issues is to discuss and work their way out of the encompassing and isolating world of substance misuse, with someone who is not a user, but does not judge you, they become your link back to society.

*(Mephedrone user)*

I was referred to the LGBT service in April 2014 by my GP after I sought help for addiction for crystal methamphetamine.

After initial consultation and health tests I was allocated my key worker named Gary. We met for one hour every week at a time and location that was suitable for my needs. After a while I became more and more empowered to succeed in reducing my drug usage and I became positive about entering a detox unit to fully withdraw under clinical supervision.

Having someone to listen to me without judgment enabled me to discover the pain at the source of my dependency and that was the first step to my recovery.

*(Crystal Meth user)*