The Rainbow Project

OUR SERVICES

Working for a better Northern Ireland for LGBTQIA+ people and their families

INTRODUCTION

Scott Cuthbertson
CEO

Nuala Devenny
Deputy CEO

Since 1994, The Rainbow Project has been at the forefront of supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and asexual plus (LGBTQIA+) people across Northern Ireland, providing vital and in many cases lifesaving services. We exist because inequality, stigma and discrimination continue to impact the health and wellbeing of our communities, creating real barriers to accessing support, feeling safe, and living well.

Our services are designed to respond to these challenges directly. Each year, hundreds of people access our co-cultural counselling, advocacy, sexual health, youth, cancer champions, trans family support and a range of workshops/events. All our services are delivered in ways that are inclusive, affirming and grounded in lived experience. Our approach is shaped by ongoing engagement with the communities we serve, ensuring our work remains responsive, relevant and accessible across both urban and rural areas.

Alongside supporting individuals, we work to address the root causes of inequality through training, partnerships and system change. By building understanding, strengthening services and influencing policy, we are committed to creating a future where LGBTQIA+ people are not just supported but fully included, valued and able to thrive.

ABOUT US

The Rainbow Project works for a better Northern Ireland for LGBTQIA+ people & their families. We change lives through our service provision which mitigates the impacts of discrimination, and we change society through our training, campaigning and policy work, which seeks to eliminate the root causes of that discrimination, delivering full social and legal equality for LGBTQIA+ people.

We currently employ 30+ staff members and a number of sessional workers, placement students and volunteers located across our three centres in Belfast & Foyle, and we deliver services and programmes across Northern Ireland. We value partnerships and collaborate on shared objectives with a number of LGBTQIA+ organisations including Cara-Friend & HERe NI and with other statutory and voluntary sector organisations.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Accessing our services

As a first step after you contact us, we will invite you to a health and wellbeing consultation with one of our staff members. At the consultation you'll be given a general introduction to all the services we offer here at the Rainbow Project and after the session you'll be referred to the service or services that can support you best.

The staff member will also be able to signpost you to partner organisations and services which could be better placed to help you or offer additional support.

Co-Cultural Counselling

Our Co-Cultural Counselling service is a little different in that we deliver counselling face-to-face and remotely to LGBTQIA+ people living in Northern Ireland, by qualified and training counsellors who are themselves also members of the LGBTQIA+ community. This means our clients know that their counsellors has lived experience to draw upon in addition to their formal training.

One-to-one counselling support and therapeutic group programmes are available for LGBTQIA+ people from age 12+. Common issues explored are sexual orientation, gender identity, internalised homo/bi/transphobia, healthy relationships, common mental health concerns, and much more.

Hate Crime Advocacy Service (HCAS)

Hate Crime Advocacy Service (HCAS) The Hate Crime Advocacy Service is delivered through an independent partnership coordinated by Victim Support NI.

Our Advocacy Service is here to provide support and information if you have been or are a victim or a witness to hate crime and/or incidents.

Our advocacy worker can:

- Advise you on the different choices and control over what happens next
- Support you in your disclosure and reporting of incidents
- Report your crime or incident on your behalf so it will be recorded
- Provide information about support and services available to you and your family
- Raise awareness of issues you have faced/are facing to improve services in the future
- Treat all matters with sensitivity and respect for your privacy

Ethnic Minority Advocacy Support

The Rainbow Project recognises and understands the impact discrimination has on LGBTQIA+ people, and especially those who face multi-layered discrimination due to other aspects of their identity.

The Gay Ethnic Group (GEG) is a peer support group for LGBTQIA+ minority ethnic people. We know that LGBTQIA+ people from ethnically diverse backgrounds can face additional struggles in exploring their sexual orientation and or gender identity. GEG aims to create safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ BAME people in Northern Ireland, to come together in a social capacity through a range of activities and events during the year.

LGBTQIA+ GROUPS

LGBTQIA+ Groups Foyle

LGBTQIA+ Men's Group

The LGBTQIA+ Men's Group is a peer-led social group for men within the community, based in our Foyle LGBTQIA+ Centre. Its aim is to offer support, build confidence and reduce social isolation. The group facilitates a range of activities and events throughout the year.

LGBTQIA+ Women's Group

The LGBTQIA+ Women's Group is a peer-led social group for women within the community, based in our Foyle LGBTQIA+ Centre. Its aim is to offer support, build confidence and reduce social isolation. The group facilitates a range of activities and events throughout the year.

Adult Drop-In sessions

Join us for our weekly drop-in sessions. We are open every Thursday afternoon from 1pm to 3pm in our Foyle centre. for LGBTQIA+ adults aged 18+ to hang out.

Drop-in is a social community space where you can connect with other LGBTQIA+ people, catch up, share stories and play games. This is an informal space to come together and take a rest from the outside world where there's always a cup of tea ready for you.

If you would like to find out more information on any of our services or to be referred into a service, please email **info@rainbow-project.org** or phone one of the offices...

Belfast **028 9031 9030**

Foyle **028 7128 3030**

Most of our services are available at our Belfast & Foyle LGBTQIA+ centres and regionally across Northern Ireland by telephone or using a secure online video call. Some services are location specific.

LGBTQIA+ Groups in Belfast and Foyle

BeU Peer Social and Support group

BeU is an 18+ peer social and support group based in our Belfast and Foyle LGBTQIA+ Centres for anyone who identifies as trans, non-binary and/or intersex, and those who may be questioning their identity. BeU offers a blended approach of online sessions and in-person meet-ups for people aged 18+. It's an opportunity to meet other trans and non-binary people, make friends and take part in workshops such as creative writing, yoga & meditation, trivia quizzes, picnics and more!

Note We are face-to-face only now, with no remote meetings taking place. Belfast BeU is now based in the Trans Resource Centre, and Foyle BeU is bi-weekly at Waterloo House.

Trans Swimming Sessions

Our regular Trans Swimming Sessions provide a safe, inclusive space for trans and non-binary people to have a swim without fear of judgement or discrimination. An entire swimming pool and changing rooms are booked for the group to ensure the privacy and comfort of all participants. Swimming sessions are run monthly at a venue on the outskirts of Belfast.

Gay Ethnic Group

The Gay Ethnic Group (GEG) is a peer support group for LGBTQIA+ minority ethnic people. We know that LGBTQIA+ people from ethnically diverse backgrounds can face additional struggles in exploring their sexual orientation and or gender identity. GEG aims to create safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ BAME people in Northern Ireland, to come together in a social capacity through a range of activities and events during the year. GEG activities are currently on offer in Belfast but will soon be on offer in L'Derry.

Note GEG is run by the Advocacy service.

Workshops and Awareness Sessions for LGBTQIA+ people

Throughout the year we run a range of workshops and awareness sessions, covering a wide variety of topics and activities. Join our mailing list and keep an eye on our social media platforms to hear about workshops and sessions which might interest you.

ZERO
HIV
TRANSMISSIONS
Rainbow Project
BAN
CONVERSION

SAIL

PART OF THE RAINBOW PROJECT

SAIL provides vital peer support for families of transgender, non-binary, and gender-variant people, offering a safe and understanding space for those navigating often complex and emotional journeys.

Through confidential group meetings and social opportunities, SAIL helps reduce isolation and build meaningful connections between families with shared experiences.

Alongside group support, SAIL offers one-to-one guidance, either in person or by phone, ensuring families can access support in a way that feels comfortable to them. The organisation also provides trusted information and resources to help families better understand gender identity and support their loved ones.

Beyond direct support, SAIL is committed to raising awareness and promoting inclusion. By engaging with health professionals, educators, and wider sectors, SAIL works to build a more informed, compassionate society where transgender people and their families feel accepted, supported, and valued.

- Peer support for families of trans, non-binary and gender-variant people
- Safe, confidential support meetings
- Social events to build connection and community
- 1-to-1 support (in person or by phone)
- Information and practical guidance for families
- Private community space
- Awareness-raising and advocacy
- Promoting understanding, inclusion and acceptance

sail@rainbow-project.org

CANCER CHAMPIONS

MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Cancer Champions is a pioneering pilot service from The Rainbow Project and Macmillan Cancer Support, supporting LGBTQIA+ people impacted by cancer. We run the first dedicated service for LGBTQIA+ cancer support in Northern Ireland. Our team are here for any support you need or questions you may have around cancer.

LGBTQIA+ 1:1 Support, Information and Advice

- Cancer Screening, signs and symptoms information
- Living with or beyond cancer
- Bereavement by cancer
- Friends, family and carers of someone living with cancer
- Those undergoing tests for the presence of cancer

Events

- LGBTQIA+ Death Café's & End of Life workshops
- Awareness events throughout the year

Training and Education

Cancer Champions bring relevant LGBTQIA+ expertise into your cancer care setting to raise the confidence of professionals supporting our community.

- Training for cancer workforce professionals
- Advice around creating inclusive services and spaces in cancer care

Examples of previous training audiences include HSC staff working in cancer care, community-based volunteers and medical students.

Become a Cancer Champion Volunteer

Part of the community and want to make a difference reducing health inequalities? Become a Cancer Champion in your community. From helping out at one off events, to developing creative opportunities and more, you can get involved in raising cancer awareness in a variety of ways. Macmillan Cancer Support cancer awareness training provided.

For more information, to get support or for training enquiries, email **info@rainbow-project.org** or call **028 9031 9030** (Belfast) or **028 7128 3030**.

SEXUAL HEALTH

Looking after your sexual health is just as important as looking after your own mental or physical health. The Rainbow Project provides sexual health information, support and HIV/syphilis testing to enable LGBTQIA+ people to make informed choices and engage in safer sex and healthier relationships. We can provide advice on how to access PEP, PrEP, STI Testing.

Rapid HIV & Syphilis Testing

We provide free, confidential and non-judgemental rapid HIV and syphilis testing at our Belfast and Foyle LGBTQIA+ centres by appointment. We offer a monthly walk-in clinic on the second Tuesday of every month from 5-8pm at our Belfast LGBTQIA+ centre.

To make an appointment, give us a call or book a test via our website: rainbow-project.org/bookonline

Safer Sex Packs

We provide tailor-made safer sex packs free of charge to LGBTQIA+ individuals which can be collected from our Belfast & Foyle centres or posted out in discreet packaging. We carry all available sizes of condoms including latex-free condoms. You can order or pick-up condoms & lube as often as you like.

If you would like to collect safer sex packs, drop into one of centres Monday-Friday 10am-5pm or complete a postal order requests on our website: rainbow-project.org/ssp

RAINBOW YOUTH

Rainbow Youth is a youth led project for LGBTQIA+ young people aged between 12-25 years old, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund. Based in the Foyle LGBTQIA+ Centre, we engage with young people across Derry, Strabane and the surrounding areas. Whether you're looking for support, new friends, or just a place to be yourself, Rainbow Youth is here for you.

What We're All About:

- **We're Rights Based** – everyone deserves to feel safe, seen and supported.
- **Youth Led** – your ideas and experiences shape what we do.
- **LGBTQIA+ Affirmative** – we uplift and celebrate all identities and experiences.
- **Play Inspired** – fun, creativity and joy are at the heart of what we do.
- **Compassion Focused** – we lead with kindness, always.

What We Offer:

- Drop-ins where you can chill, chat, and connect with other LGBTQIA+ young people in both Derry & Strabane.
- 1-to-1 youth counselling and group support in a therapeutic, safe space.
- Creative workshops and events for young people to learn new skills and have fun.
- A Rainbow Youth online space to stay connected, no matter where you live in Northern Ireland.
- Opportunities to get involved in peer-led research and youth led training provision.

Want to get involved or find out more?

- Drop us an email: **youth@rainbow-project.org**
- Give us a ring: **028 7128 3030**
- Follow us on Insta: **@rainbow_youth_derry**
- Visit: **rainbow-project.org/youthservices**

COMMUNITY FUND

TRAINING

Trusted to deliver LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training for over 30 years.

- LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training
- Trans & Non-Binary Awareness Training
- LGBTQIA+ Affirmative Therapy Training ...and *more*!

In-person and virtual training options available across Northern Ireland.

"Very useful and helpful. Important discussions. An ever changing and ongoing conversation should be maintained by professionals."

"This was an excellent session and of great practical benefit, delivered in a very accessible way with lots of opportunity for questions and discussions. Thanks very much!"

The Rainbow Project through our various support & advocacy services along with our research work and partnerships have a wide range of training workshops available. Each of these can be delivered regardless of whether you're approaching this from a public, private or third sector, for personal development or for professional development, and regardless of whether you are or are not a member of the LGBTQIA+ community.

LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training: Interactive workshop providing awareness of LGBTQIA+ identities, language, experiences and ways to become a stronger ally. We recommend this workshop for the best starting point. This training can be delivered as Accredited CPD Training. The Rainbow Project are a certified member of CPD UK providing recognised independent CPD accreditation compatible with global CPD principles.

LGBTQIA+ Affirmative Therapy: This training is for professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists, GPs, counsellors, therapists and educators) working therapeutically with LGBTQIA clients to learn how to offer the best possible service for LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Trans & Non-Binary Awareness Training: Delivered as a standalone workshop or as a follow up to the LGBTQIA+ Awareness Training. This training aims to provide a holistic overview of Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender NonConfirming identities, experiences, language and allyship.

Promoting LGBTQIA+ Health & Wellbeing: Interactive workshop aimed at promoting steps that support a positive health & wellbeing experience for LGBTQIA+ people. This is aimed mainly to workplaces and community/support centres but can be tailored to most audiences.

To find out more contact **training@rainbow-project.org**

CPD MEMBER
The CPD Certification Service

June 2026

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