

Metal for Life NI

Metal for Life NI is a non-profit charitable organisation which supports the mental health of Metal music fans in Northern Ireland.

The group was founded in honour of Dani Kansanaho, who tragically took his own life in October 2017, aged 23.



Dani's death sent waves of shock and sadness throughout our Metal community here in Northern Ireland. **Depression and suicidal thoughts can affect anyone at any time**, and we quickly realised that many other metal fans suffer from mental illness. The general public often incorrectly thinks that metal music and lifestyle choices are to blame for mental illness. In fact, the opposite is true and we are challenging this stigma head on. Our target group is rock and metal fans of any age, within Northern Ireland. Our goal is to preserve life.

Founded by Gillian and Ahti Kansanaho in January 2018, Metal for Life NI was the first of its kind. Our charity is fully constituted and run by a Board of Trustees. We are boosted by support from Impact Network Northern Ireland and the Public Health Agency as well as local and international bands and the Metal music industry in Northern Ireland.

Run by a trained, experienced voluntary team of Metal fans, we promote mental health by:

- *Providing an understanding of mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety and fighting the stigma associated with them.*
- *Providing knowledge of the support available for mental illnesses (including suicide prevention)*
- *Helping people build resilience and maintain positive mental health for themselves and others*
- *Promoting emotional health and wellbeing.*

We do not discriminate against age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, politics, wealth or up-bringing.

Our primary function is to run regular mental health peer support groups. We nurture mutual respect, confidentiality and positive well-being, aiming to bring people together within our local Metal community without judgement or prejudice. All our services are accessible, free-of-charge, welcoming and highly confidential. Support groups are currently offered in Belfast twice per month and Ballyclare once per month. Registration is essential.

We acknowledge that we cannot reach everyone in the region who needs support, our social media (**Metal for Life NI** on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) provides educational posts and encourages members to support mental health, post inspirational music, images and thoughts. We run a variety of mental health awareness events and workshops, fundraisers and outings. We support our cause through sales of branded merchandise such as T-shirts, record bags, patches, jewellery and stationary on our website www.metalforlifeni.co.uk.

We also raise awareness and support in our Metal community and beyond. We regularly attend metal and rock shows and we are delighted to have been endorsed over the years by many local and international bands.

Message for bands, journalists, photographers and anyone who would like to support Metal for Life NI:

We'd be delighted to bring Metal for Life NI to one of your shows or events, with an information and merchandise stand. A short speech or presentation can also be organised, if required.

You may also wish to give us a **social media endorsement** by sharing our accounts or a link to our website, inviting your followers to join us and generally telling everyone why you think this is a good idea! **We welcome any messages which encourage talking openly about mental illness, seeking help when required and looking out for each other.** If you would like to help, in return, we'd be delighted to promote your organisation, band, upcoming gig or music release, if you wish.

For more information or discussion, please e-mail us: info@metalforlifeni.co.uk

You are awesome. Many Thanks!

Metal for Life NI

supporting mental health together