

Nicolas Dewaele

PEER SUPPORT WORKER · HIV / PREP / STI CLINIC · GHENT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Nicolas is a peer support worker in the HIV, PrEP and STI clinic at Ghent University Hospital — an academic teaching hospital and one of Belgium's designated HIV reference centres, the specialist clinics where HIV care in Belgium is delivered. Doctors and nurses refer patients to him during routine follow-up. Most come because they experience their use as a problem; some arrive before they would have put it in those words. He is a full member of the clinical team, working alongside physicians, nurses, psychologists and sexologists, and is a graduate of the professional programme in peer support for mental health and addiction care (expert by experience) at UCLL University of Applied Sciences, Leuven (Heverlee), Belgium.

He gave the opening testimonial, “The Ferrari in the Garage”, at the International Chemsex Conference in Antwerp in March 2026, and now sits on its scientific committee. He is first author of an original research article on this role, currently under review at AIDS Care. With VAD, the Flemish government's expertise centre on alcohol and drugs, he co-developed the chemsex training for Belgium's HIV clinics, and is one of its trainers.

He works from his own experience with chemsex and slamming, from residential rehab in South Africa, and from a recovery that has not been linear.

nicolasdewaele.com · Gent, België