



Advent Advocacy is a nationwide advocacy service, supporting service users in hospitals, residential care homes and health care environments covering a wide array of specialties ranging from Forensic services through to Child and Adolescent services.



ADVOCACY SERVICES

WE AIM TO...

Empower service users and help represent their views, wants and wishes.

Safeguard service users rights and provide any information they require to make informed decisions.

Ensure a flexible service that adapts to the varying needs of each service user.

Provide a non-adversarial approach that supports service users to obtain the best outcomes together with service providers.

Provide comprehensive reporting structures, which enable the recording of our activities and assist service providers to identify trends and areas of need.

WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

Advocates support service users, ensuring their views, wishes and beliefs are not only listened to but taken into consideration when decisions are made about them. An advocate will support individuals through decision making processes, helping them to understand and providing them with key information.

Advocates are independent to anyone else involved in an individual's care and are part of the safeguarding legal framework.

WHAT TYPES OF ADVOCACY ARE THERE?

There are many types of advocacy including:

- **Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)**
- **Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)**
- **Generic Advocacy**
- **Children & Young People's Advocacy**
- **Care Act Advocacy**

WHAT IS AN IMHA?

IMHA stands for Independent Mental Health Advocate. IMHAs are specialist advocates who are trained to work with individuals detained under the Mental Health Act. They help service users obtain information on, and understand, their rights under the Act, the rights that Act gives others (e.g. Nearest Relative), any restrictions they are under, any treatment they are receiving or might be given and the reasons and legal authority for providing any treatment.

WHAT IS AN IMCA?

IMCA stands for Independent Mental Capacity Advocate. The Mental Capacity Act (2005) introduced IMCA services to support people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. This might be due to the result of brain injury, dementia, stroke, learning difficulties or mental health needs. An IMCA must be instructed in the following circumstances:

- **When a decision is being made about serious medical treatment or change of accommodation.**
- **AND the person has no family or friends to support them and represent their views.**
- **AND the Decision Maker has deemed that the individual lacks the capacity to make the decision as outlined in The Mental Capacity Act (2005).**

IMCAs may also be instructed for Care Reviews or decisions relating to Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults.

WHAT IS CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSON'S ADVOCACY?

Advocates work with children and young people to ensure they are supported and heard when decisions are made about them. Appreciating the views and feelings of the young person helps them feel involved and can help everyone make better decisions. Working like this is not just good practice, it's a legal requirement.

Advocates will work to ensure the children and young people they support are aware of their rights as part of the Children's Act (1989, 2004) such as a right to privacy or a right to being listened to. If a local authority is deciding what should happen to a child or young person they have to find out how they feel and what they want, they have to tell them what is happening and why. An advocate will ensure this happens, supporting the child or young person throughout the process.



INDEPENDENT MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY



INDEPENDENT MENTAL CAPACITY ADVOCACY



GENERIC ADVOCACY



CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S ADVOCACY



CARE ACT ADVOCACY

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WHAT IS CARE ACT ADVOCACY?

The Care Act (2014) outlines a statutory requirement for Independent Advocacy for individuals who have no appropriate person to help facilitate their involvement and who would have substantial difficulty being involved without an independent advocate.

Care Act advocates help support the person to understand processes, understand their rights, make decisions, understand plans, challenge decisions, access records and communicate views, wishes and feelings.

GENERIC ADVOCACY

Generic Advocates serve as independent professionals within care settings and are commissioned to provide support to service users in much the same way that an IMHA does. Whilst not statutory, the Generic Advocate can represent individuals at important meetings and can support people to represent themselves effectively in these meetings by assisting with agenda points, opening statements and exploring questions regarding their wishes and views.

Non-instructed advocacy models have been developed to support and advocate for individuals even when it may not be possible to obtain clear instructions from that person as to how they would like their rights and choices to be promoted, recognising that everyone has fundamental rights and needs.

For people with communication difficulties or who lack capacity, non-instructed advocacy can be an effective way for an advocate to represent the person's likely views and preferences to decision makers.

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