

Disability Sheffield Information Service

Advocacy Factsheet



Disability Sheffield Information Service,
The Circle, 33 Rockingham Lane, Sheffield S1 4FW
Tel (0114) 253 6750

E mail: info@disabilitysheffield.org.uk

Website: www.disabilitysheffield.org.uk

Independent Advocacy Services

What is independent advocacy?

‘Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain services they need. Advocates work in partnership with the people they support and take their side. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice’



The Advocacy Charter, 2002

Sometimes we all need help to get our voices heard and our problems sorted out. Advocacy is there to help people who for whatever reason may be vulnerable to exclusion and discrimination and as a result may not be getting the sort of help and support they need.

Advocacy can help people get the things changed that are not working with them or for them. It can help people reflect on, understand and secure their rights and to get services and support that fit with their individual needs and preferences.

Advocacy can also help the services people rely on to change the way they work, helping them to offer a more flexible and individual approach.

Independent advocacy is;

- Free
- Person centred
- Confidential
- Responsive to local needs

Disability Sheffield believes that independent advocacy should be available locally to all people who find themselves in vulnerable situations.

Statutory Advocacy Services

Statutory advocacy is when you are legally entitled to free, confidential and independent advocacy support ,which is provided in Sheffield by:-

Sheffield Advocacy Hub

Sheffield Advocacy Hub is a partnership between Citizens Advice Sheffield, Cloverleaf Advocacy and Disability Sheffield.

Tel : **0800 035 0396**

Email : referrals@sheffieldadvocacyhub.org.uk

Website: [Sheffield Advocacy Hub](#)

The Advocacy Hub provides all statutory advocacy in Sheffield, including:-

- **Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)**
Access to an IMHA is a statutory right for people detained under most sections of the Mental Health Act, subject to Guardianship or on a community treatment order (CTO). When someone is detained in hospital or on a CTO it can be a very confusing and distressing experience. IMHAs are independent of mental health services and can help people get their opinions heard and make sure they know their rights under the law. View more information about [Independent Mental Health Advocacy \(IMHA\)](#)
- **Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA)**
The Mental Capacity Act 2005 introduced the role of the independent mental capacity advocate (IMCA).IMCAs are a legal safeguard for people who lack the capacity to make specific important decisions: including making decisions about where they live and about serious medical treatment options. IMCAs are mainly instructed to represent people where there is no one independent of services, such as a family member or friend, who is able to represent the person. View more information about [Independent Mental Capacity Advocate \(IMCA\)](#)
- **Sheffield NHS Complaints Advocacy**
The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service is a free and independent service that can help you make a complaint about local NHS services. This might include help with understanding the process and what you might realistically achieve, writing letters, preparing for meetings, following up responses, or simply talking through your options to help you make a decision. View more information about [Sheffield NHS Complaints Advocacy](#)
- **Independent Advocacy under the Care Act**
Local authorities must involve people in decisions made about them and their care and support. No matter how complex a person's needs, local authorities are required to help people express their wishes and feelings, support them in weighing up their options, and assist them in making their own decisions. Local authorities must consider, for each person, whether they are likely to have substantial difficulty in engaging with the care and support process. If so an independent advocate must be appointed to support and represent the person for the purpose of assisting their involvement. View more information about [Independent Advocacy under the Care Act](#)
- **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards**
Sometimes people who have been assessed to lack the mental capacity to decide about their care and where they live are legally 'deprived of their liberty'. This means the person is not free to leave where they are living and is constantly

supervised – for instance by a carer, support worker or a nurse. In this situation, the local authority (known as the Supervisory Body) is legally required to provide an independent check to make sure that the person is only restricted enough to keep them safe and that this is in their best interests. These are known as the ‘Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards’ or DoLS. View more information about [Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards](#)

- **Independent Advocacy for People with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health or Physical Disabilities**

The partners in the Advocacy Hub also deliver specialist learning disability, mental health and physical disability advocacy support for people who are using or need to access health or social care services in the city.

View more information about [Independent Advocacy for People with Learning Disabilities, Mental Health or Physical Disabilities](#)

Disability Sheffield Advocacy Service

Disability Sheffield Advocacy is a free, confidential and independent advocacy service for disabled people over the age of 18 living in Sheffield. We are part of the [Sheffield Advocacy Hub](#) We advocate for people who are having difficulty accessing the health and social care services they need. We work with people on a one to one basis using our team of both paid staff and volunteers. Our advocates can visit you at home if necessary. We accept self-referrals, as well as referrals from third parties (for example family members or social workers).

Here are examples of issues we can help you with:-

- Getting your voice heard by the healthcare and social care practitioners working with you
- Supporting you by providing information and advocacy support on a range of issues that affect your ability to live your own life
- Speaking on your behalf if you want us to
- Letter writing, complaints procedures, preparing for and attending meetings, reviews and assessments
- Talking in confidence to someone who is independent of the NHS
- Protecting your rights and getting the right support and advice from other service providers if necessary
- Helping you get the services you need and helping services offer a more flexible and individual approach to meet your needs
- Supporting you if you want to make major changes , for example moving out of institutional care or the family home
- If you are assessed as not being eligible for care services looking at what other options are available for you
- We can also take referrals from other people and organisations that may support you

View more information about [Disability Sheffield Advocacy Service](#)

The Circle
Rockingham Lane
Sheffield S1 4FW
Tel: (0114) 253 6750
E mail: advocacyreferrals@disabilitysheffield.org.uk
Website: Disability Sheffield

Other Advocacy Support in the City

Sheffkids

Home of Sheffield Children's Involvement Team, Sheffkids provides advocacy support for children and young people at Child Protection Conferences, as well as for all looked after Sheffield children, young people and care leavers from 0-25yrs old
Website : Sheffkids

Sheffield African Caribbean Mental Health Association

SACMHA provide free, confidential and independent support and advocacy services in the area of adult health and social care to help individuals, families and communities have the knowledge, expert support and confidence to solve their problems and improve their lives.
SACMHA Campus,
263 Pitsmoor Road Sheffield, S3 9AQ
Tel : **0114 2726393** or **0114 2706836** 2726314 2726393 0114 2726393 0114 2726393
Email: admin@sachma.org.uk
Website: SACMHA

What do you think of this factsheet?

If you would like to comment on this factsheet or provide additional information from your own experience please let us know and we would be happy to consider adding to or amending the factsheet. We welcome any comments to help us improve our service. Our contact details are:-

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or are recommended by Disability Sheffield Information Service. Details may change so it is important you check the information provided to make sure they are accurate and suitable for your own requirements

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