



Scottish  
**Independent  
Advocacy**  
Alliance



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# Independent Advocacy

14<sup>th</sup> August 2017

# Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

Anyone with a mental disorder has a right to access independent advocacy.

This includes individual and collective advocacy.

Mental disorder covers;

- Mental illness
- Learning disability
- Dementia

# Definition of advocacy service

‘services of support and representation for the purpose of enabling the person ... to have as much control of, or capacity to influence, that person’s care and welfare as is, in the circumstances, appropriate.’

# Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

- Advocates for independent advocacy
- To promote, support and defend independent advocacy in Scotland
- Good practice guidance for the development, commissioning and delivery of advocacy across Scotland
- Inform and lobby Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament on independent advocacy
- Provide information and support for member organisations



## Profile of Advocacy in Scotland

- Approx. 60 Advocacy organisations in Scotland
- Mental health problems, learning disabilities, dementia/older people
- At any one time in Scotland 21% of population have statutory right of access
- Scottish Public Health Observatory estimates that 8.3% of children (around 80,000) have a diagnosed mental health problem and therefore a right of access to independent advocacy



# Advocacy Map 2015-16

- Demand has gone up by 11.5 %
- Statutory funding has gone down by 4%
- 30,500 people accessed independent advocacy
- Number of staff and volunteers has gone down



# Gaps in provision

- Children & young people
- Older people
- Carers
- People in prison
- People with substance misuse issues

## Right to access advocacy

- Mental Health (Care & Treatment)(Scotland) Act 2003
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Patient Rights Act (Scotland) 2011
- Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

# Impact of advocacy

*“Advocacy helped me to be heard”*

*“Advocacy saved my life”*

*“I don’t want to think about what my life would be like without  
advocacy.....”*

*“Advocacy helped me to get the support and care I need”*

*“Advocacy helped me to find out about my rights”*



# Different types of advocacy

- Individual;
  - a) 1.2.1
  - b) Peer
  - c) Citizen
  
- Collective or group

## Advocacy and advice

- Advocacy is an equal partnership
- It helps build capacity
- Advocacy helps the advocacy partner;
  - know and understand their rights
  - navigate the system
  - access the right support
  - access choices
  - make informed decisions
  - understand the consequences of decisions

## What advocacy is....

- about standing alongside people
- ensuring that people know and understand their rights
- about standing up for and sticking with a person or group
- about social justice
- listening and taking their side
- finding out what is important to them
- understanding the system and structural barriers
- supporting them to ensure they are listened to and taken seriously
- helping someone to know what choices they have and what the consequences of these choices might be
- enabling a person to have control over their life but taking up issues on their behalf if necessary.



## Advocacy is not....

- making decisions for someone
- mediation
- counselling
- befriending
- care and support work
- consultation
- telling or advising someone what you think they should do
- solving all someone's problems for them
- speaking for people when they are able to do so themselves
- filling all the gaps in someone's life
- agreeing with everything a person says and doing anything a person asks you to do



## Questions to consider

- How does the role of the new social security agency staff providing advocacy and advice fit with the independent advocacy and advice sectors?
- What changes would the independent advocacy and advice sectors have to make to meet the demand?



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