



York Advocacy Hub
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Reg. Charity Number 1006759
Reg. Company Number 26594

York Advocacy Hub Information Sheet

What do we mean by Advocacy?

Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests and obtain services they need. Advocates and advocacy schemes work in partnership with the people they support and take their side. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice. (Action for Advocacy¹)

About York Advocacy Hub

Our advocacy services are **free, confidential and independent**. Our advocates work under instruction which means that we listen to what **you** want and act on your behalf at all times.

We deliver a range of specialist advocacy services for residents in the City of York, in conjunction with our partners Cloverleaf Advocacy.

NHS Advocacy: If you have a concern or complaint about the care and treatment you have received from an NHS service or organisation we can provide you with information on the complaints process. If you have an additional need for example; mental ill-health, learning disabilities or communication difficulties an advocate can support you to make a complaint and attend a local resolution meeting with you.

General Advocacy: Is for people aged 18 and over, who have a disability, mental ill-health or are a vulnerable person and who have an issue they need support with.

Self-Advocacy: Supports individuals and groups who want to speak up about issues that affect them.

Care Act Advocacy: If you or someone you know is going through needs assessment, review, care planning, carers assessment or safeguarding processes under the Care Act 2014, and they have a substantial difficulty and do not have an appropriate person to advocate for them, they may be eligible for a Care Act Advocate.

Mental Capacity Advocacy – Independent Mental Capacity advocacy (IMCA) referrals should be made for persons aged 16 and over for whom York health and social care professionals are considering a ‘best interests’ decision regarding serious medical treatment, a long term change in accommodation or safeguarding.

¹Action for Advocacy, 2007, Advocacy Charter, www.actionforadvocacy.org.uk

A 'best interests' decision would only be considered where the person has been assessed as lacking capacity to make the decision themselves.

Mental Health Act Advocacy – adults detained under the Mental Health Act are entitled to have an advocate to support them to have their say in regards to their care and treatment, and to ensure that their rights are being properly considered.

How York Advocacy Hub can help you.

Our advocates are here to support you in putting forward **your** point of view when:

- No-one is listening to you
- You don't agree with decisions that are being made about you
- You can't get the help you need

We Can.

- Find out information and who to contact
- Attend meetings and appointments with you
- Speak out on your behalf
- Tell you about other services that could help you

What not to expect from the service

- To be given advice or to be told what to do
- To be given legal or medical advice or opinions
- Advocates are not counsellors, social workers, support workers or mediators
- Advocacy is not a crisis support service
- The advocacy service is an appointment based service not a drop-in.

Confidentiality

Our advocacy service is confidential which means that whatever you talk to us about will not be passed onto other people outside of the Advocacy Hub without your consent except in the following circumstances:

1. When your advocate has supervision; this is to ensure that your advocate is supported and that you receive a high quality service.
2. At times it may be necessary for the advocacy manager to discuss client issues with their line manager who is the Head of Service of the organisation.
3. Confidentiality is with the Advocacy Hub service and not an individual advocate.
4. If you or someone else is at risk of harm, where child protection issues are raised or if we have to disclose information by law, for example a court order. We would always try to contact you and get your consent to break confidentiality although sometimes this is not always possible.

5. York Advocacy Hub is delivered by York Mind in conjunction with Cloverleaf Advocacy. No information will be shared with other York Mind services unless you give consent or if there are concerns or risks regarding the safety of yourself or others.

Information and record keeping

We keep case records which record important information that you or other professionals have given to us and information that we have given to you. We store this information in your case file and on our electronic client database. This information is stored securely and is kept for **1** year after your last appointment, unless you tell us that you do not want us to keep your information.

We may use statistical and outcomes information to inform funders about the work we do. This information is anonymous to protect your identity.

Access to records

In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998), you have the right to request sight of your notes held by York Advocacy Hub. If you would like to see your notes you need to write to us and we will reply to you within 2 weeks. York Advocacy Hub may withhold sensitive information received from third parties if we feel that this information may be harmful to yourself or others.

What happens next?

If you would like to see an advocate you or someone who knows you can, with your permission make a referral via our website or through the office on **01904 414357**.

If you need an assessment appointment and would like some support at this meeting you can bring someone with you who you know and feel comfortable with.

When you see an advocate you will be able to talk about the support you need and issues you need help with. Once this work has been completed we will close your case. We do not keep any cases open when there are no advocacy issues or where we are unable to gain an instruction from you. If you need further advocacy help please contact the office.

When we close your case we will send you a feedback form. Your feedback is important and tells us what we are doing well and when we need to make changes.

We will where possible, take into account who you would like to work with for example, a male or female advocate, cultural preferences or communication needs.

What do we expect from you?

If you cannot attend an appointment you can let us know by calling us on our office number **01904 414357**.

If you miss an appointment and we cannot contact you we will write to you and if we do not hear from you within the timescale indicated in the correspondence sent we will need to close your case.

We ask that you do not attend advocacy appointments under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Physical or verbal aggression towards staff, other service users, or property is not acceptable.

We ask that you tell us about any risks past or present, this may include serious offences, incidents of self-harm, harm to others or suicide attempts. We can then talk about how we can support you.

We hope your experience of advocacy is good, however, if you are unhappy with any part of our service you should inform your advocate or the advocacy manager. If you are not happy with how they deal with your concerns you can make a formal complaint to our Head of Services at York Mind.

We ask that you read this information and talk to your advocate if you have any questions. Please sign below to show you have read, understood the information and agree with how we will store your details.

Signed..... Dated.....(Client)

Signed..... Dated.....(Advocate)