



Advocacy Action

Developing Advocacy in Wakefield District

Models of Advocacy

A range of advocacy models have developed over the past couple of decades. These models all share the same basic principles, but vary in how they provide advocacy and who the advocate is (e.g. whether paid worker or volunteer).

Citizen Advocacy - This is based on the idea of an 'ordinary' member of the community (the advocate) working with a person who is discriminated against (the partner). The partnership may develop into friendship, but it should certainly build mutual trust, respect and loyalty. Citizen advocacy partnerships, although often developing out of a particular need, usually continue over several months or years so if other problems come up they can be addressed easily.

Peer Advocacy - People who have experienced similar problems or used similar services can be very effective in helping others to speak up for themselves. A peer advocate is likely to have a very good understanding of what other service users are going through.

Volunteer Advocacy - As the name suggests, this model has developed to fit in with common practices in the UK voluntary sector. Volunteer advocates are often flexible in their approach, working to a variety of advocacy models depending on their partner or the situation. Volunteers gain useful skills and experience which can develop into full time work or other opportunities.

Crisis Advocacy - This is where an advocate is found to help with a one-off difficult situation or crisis. The advocate may be a volunteer or a paid worker. Also known as short-term or casework advocacy.

Professional Advocacy - People who are paid solely as advocates, and usually work with the casework model. Professional advocacy can also be provided by experts in a professional field, such as solicitors or barristers, being commissioned to speak up on behalf of an individual service user or group. These experts may or may not receive payment for acting as an advocate.

Self Advocacy - Where most advocacy is aiming - for people to be able to stand up for, and speak out for, themselves.

Group Advocacy - This is where a group of people, usually from a similar background, work together to deal with issues that affect them. This may be by speaking together as a single voice, or by speaking to and learning from each other so each individual gets stronger.