



Information for people who use the service

Introduction

Advocacy helps you speak up about what is important to you in all aspects of your life.

The person who helps you is called your 'advocate'.

You may have family members, friends or support workers who advocate for you or help you advocate for yourself. Independent advocacy does not stop this happening nor replace it.

Some people, however, have no-one in their lives to help them speak up. They may feel isolated and alone.

Alternatively, sometimes what you want may be different from what other people in your life think is best for you.

This is when independent advocacy may help.

Who We Are

AIMS Advocacy was set up in 1998 to provide independent advocacy in North Ayrshire. At present we provide advocacy for people from North Ayrshire over the age of 16 years who are members of a recognised community care group.

We are a Scottish Charity and are independent of the local authority and NHS, although they contribute funding to help us do our work.

We provide advocacy in both hospital and community settings. Our main office is in Stevenston, but the service is available to people from across North Ayrshire including both island and mainland communities.

AIMS Advocacy is a full member of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance and works to the principles, standards and codes of practice adopted by them.



What advocates do

The advocate will take time to get to know you and find out what your wants and needs are. You can expect your advocate to do the following things :



- Take time to get to know you
- Find out how you feel about things
- Help you find the information you need to make decisions and choices
- Help you consider different ways of doing things before making your choice
- Support you to put over your views to other people
- Go with you to meetings if you want this
- Act as your voice when needed – but they will only express your views
- Stand up for you when needed

What advocates don't do

The independent advocate will not:

- Give their own opinion
- Work to their own agenda
- Tell you what to do or give you advice
- Speak to other people about you without your permission
- except in a limited number of cases which will be explained to you

A photograph of a hand holding a pen and writing on a form. The form is titled "All About Me" and has several sections. The first section is "Communication" and asks for details about help or support required with communication, including language, understanding, reading, writing, numeracy, and use of the telephone. The second section is "Personal History" and asks for anything relevant about educational, cultural, economic, work or social experiences, and what is comfortable with and what will help to support more effectively. The third section is "Family and Social Contacts" and asks for people important to the person, including friends and pets, and what is comfortable with and what will help to support more effectively. The fourth section is "Social Life and Community" and asks for social life and activities, hobbies and interests, and what is comfortable with and what will help to support more effectively. The form is partially filled out with handwritten text.

If you want to use the service

Referrals can be made by yourself or by a third party.

Referrals can be made in person or on the phone. We try to make the process as straightforward as possible. If you are unsure about whether independent advocacy would be appropriate or not, please get in touch and talk things through with us.

Making Comments or Complaints

AIMS Advocacy Service encourages comments from everyone who comes into contact with the Service. We always try to provide the best service we can but know we may not always get it right.

It helps us a lot if you tell us the things we get right and also where we could do better. If we have made a mistake we always try to learn from it.

All comments and complaints will be dealt with in the same way whether you tell us about them verbally or put them in writing.

Contact Details

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(for people using the service)



AIMS Advocacy

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