

Since its launch in 2002, advocacy organisations from across the country have adopted the Advocacy Charter. In total over 75 organisations contributed to its development and many more advocacy organisations use it regularly as a tool to focus on key advocacy issues and guide their work.

Developed as a set of core principles for advocacy, the Charter is designed:

- To inform advocacy practice and training
- To raise awareness of the value of Advocacy
- As a tool for negotiating with funding and commissioning bodies
- As a quality assurance mechanism

The Ad✓ocacy Charter

An accessible version of the Advocacy Charter and a range of supporting advocacy literature and publications are available from:

Action for Advocacy
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**defining and promoting key
advocacy principles**

The Ad⁴ocacy Charter

CLARITY OF PURPOSE

The advocacy scheme will have clearly stated aims and objectives and be able to demonstrate how it meets the principles contained in this Charter. Advocacy schemes will ensure that people they advocate for, service providers and funding agencies have information on the scope and limitations of the schemes' role.

INDEPENDENCE

The advocacy scheme will be structurally independent from statutory organisations and preferably from all service provider agencies. The advocacy scheme will be as free from conflict of interest as possible both in design and operation, and actively seek to reduce conflicting interests.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The advocacy scheme will ensure that the wishes and interests of the people they advocate for direct advocates' work.

Advocates should be non-judgmental and respectful of peoples' needs, views and experiences. Advocates will ensure that information concerning the people they advocate for is shared with these individuals.

“**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 advocacy

EMPOWERMENT

The advocacy scheme will support self-advocacy and empowerment through its work. People who use the scheme should have a say in the level of involvement and style of advocacy support they want. Schemes will ensure that people who want to, can influence and be involved in the running and management of the scheme.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The advocacy scheme will have a written equal opportunities policy that recognises the need to be proactive in tackling all forms of inequality, discrimination and social exclusion. The scheme will have in place systems for the fair and equitable allocation of advocates' time.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The advocacy scheme will have in place systems for the effective monitoring and evaluation of its work. All those who use the scheme will have a named advocate and a means of contacting them.

ACCESSIBILITY

Advocacy will be provided free of charge to eligible people. The advocacy scheme will aim to ensure that its premises, policies, procedures and publicity materials promote access for the whole community.

SUPPORTING ADVOCATES

The advocacy scheme will ensure advocates are prepared, trained and supported in their role and provided with opportunities to develop their skills and experience.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The advocacy scheme will have a written policy on confidentiality, stating that information known about a person using the scheme is confidential to the scheme and any circumstances under which confidentiality might be breached.

COMPLAINTS

The advocacy scheme will have a written policy describing how to make complaints or give feedback about the scheme or about individual advocates. Where necessary, the scheme will enable people who use its services to access external independent support to make or pursue a complaint.