

The Advocacy Charter

Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice by empowering people. It enables people to express their personal views and needs, thereby achieving their rights and entitlements. It also assists people in securing relevant information and knowledge, enabling them to make informed choices.

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.

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.

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.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The advocacy scheme will ensure that the wishes and interests of the people for whom they advocate direct the advocates' work. Advocates should be non-judgmental and respectful of peoples' needs, views and experience. Advocates will ensure that information concerning the people they work with is shared with them.

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

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.

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.

ACCESSIBILITY

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

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.

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.



The Advocacy Charter has been developed by London Advocacy Schemes. The Network of Advocacy Projects in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland who are now working to actively adopt the principles of the Charter acknowledge their foresight and endeavour.

The aim of the Advocacy Charter is to define a set of core principles for advocacy.

The Charter can be used:

- to inform advocacy practice;
- to raise public awareness of the value of advocacy;
- as a tool for negotiating with funding and commissioning bodies;
- as a quality assurance mechanism.

Network of Advocacy Projects in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

The Network of Advocacy Projects is a collection of voluntary organisations that provide independent advocacy services.

Membership is open to organisations that provide, or wish to develop advocacy support as a significant aspect of their work.

For further copies of the Charter, or for more information about the Network, contact:

Gill Wollerton
CVS Community Partnership
Beaumont Enterprise Centre
Boston Road
Leicester
LE4 1HB

Tel (0116) 2341577

Fax (0116) 2351844

E-mail info@ccp.org.uk

E-mail gill@ccp.org.uk

Website www.ccp.org.uk

The Advocacy Charter

*Defining and
promoting key
advocacy principles*

Advocacy Across Leicester,
Leicestershire and Rutland.

Jan 2003