



advocacy
focus



Independent Care Act Advocacy for Carer's

Phone us on **0300 323 0965**

This guide has been written to meet
the UK Easy Read Standard

Independent Care Act Advocacy for Carers

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1. About this booklet



- This booklet explains what Independent **Care Act** advocacy is.



- It also explains what an **Independent Care Act Advocate** is and what they can do to help.



- It is designed for people who use the advocacy service because you are a **Carer** who needs some extra support.



- The charity that provides this advocacy service is called Advocacy Focus.

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- Words in **bold** text are described in more detail at the end of the booklet.

2. What is Advocacy



- Advocacy is about helping you to speak up and get the support you need.



- An Advocate is a person who can help you to get your point of view across and be heard.



Independent

- They are **independent**. They do not work for social services, the NHS, or other health care providers.



Free

- Their support is **free of charge**.



Confidential

- You can meet with them in private, your discussion is **confidential**.

3. Independent Care Act Advocacy



- **Care Act** advocacy is about helping you to live a fulfilling life and promote your own well-being, whilst caring for someone.



- It helps you to understand information, have your voice heard, and help you get the support you need to continue as a **Carer**.

4. The Care Act



- The **Care Act** in England is the law that recognises carers' vital input and aims to help them to maintain their role.



- The law says you may be entitled to a **Carer's Assessment** which looks at what **care and support** you provide and decides your needs as a result of caring.



- The law says that the **local authority** should listen to your wishes and needs in order to make your life better. This is important for your **wellbeing**.

5. Why you have an Independent Advocate

It is your right to have an Independent Advocate if,



- You are a **Carer**.



- You would find it difficult to understand what is happening in your care planning or to communicate your wishes.



- You have no family or friends **appropriate** to help you.

6. What an Independent Advocate can do

An **Independent Advocate** will help you with:



- The Carer's **Assessment** – This is how the **local authority** decides what support you need.



- **Care and Support Plans** – The **local authority** will provide you with a written plan. Your advocate can explain what this means for you.

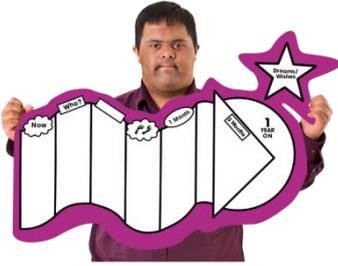


- The **Care Review** – to be involved in the **light touch** and **annual care reviews** of your care and support.

An **Independent Advocate** will help you to:



- Understand your rights to a **Carer's assessment** – you can ask social services for a **Carer's assessment**.



- Understand the Carer's Assessment process – we can explain what is happening and how your needs can be met by the process.



- Tell people what you want – we can help you to communicate the impact caring has on you.



- Explain the **assessment** decision
– When the **assessment** is complete, the local authority must decide whether your needs are '**eligible**' for support from the local authority.



- Carer's Support Plan – once a plan has been made to help you, we can explain what it means for you in simple terms, with no jargon.

7. What an Independent Advocate cannot do



- Make the decisions about your care.
- Decide if you need help making decisions or not, your social worker does that.



- Give you our opinion or say what we would do if we were you.
- Help you with money or legal advice.

8. When does the support from an Independent Advocate end



- We will support until the Assessment has been completed. We can also help you with the **light touch** and **annual care reviews**.

9. How we helped Ms Shaw from Rawtenstall

"I didn't even realise that I was entitled to support until I saw a poster for Advocacy Focus in the community centre. She is my mum, my only family and so I thought it was up to me to look after her following her stroke. I didn't want to admit that I was struggling, I was spending all my time shopping, cooking, feeding and bathing mum that I was neglecting my own health and my life really. I phoned up Advocacy Focus and was given the information I needed to ask my social worker to complete a carer's assessment and for them to refer me for an Independent Advocate. My Advocate was really patient with me and really seemed to understand what I was going through. As a result of my assessment, I now have some help. I thought I would have to quit work but it turns out I can have support for my mum to allow me to stay in work."

10. Contact Advocacy Focus



- **Phone us on**
0300 323 0965
- **Text us on**
07886744634
- **Email us at**
admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk
- **Visit our website at**
www.advocacyfocus.org.uk

11. What do the words mean

In alphabetical order,

Appropriate

A adult that can help you with your assessment and care and support planning. It may be a family or friend. If you do not have an appropriate person, your social worker will decide you may benefit from having an **Independent Advocate**.

Care Act

This is a law in 2014 that outlines the way in which the **local authority** should decide who is eligible for care and support and what this support should be.

Care and Support

This is when people have help in their lives in different ways. This could be help to get out of bed, get dressed and washed or help with eating and cooking meals.

Carer

A carer is someone who helps another person, usually a relative or close friend, in their everyday life.

The help a carer provides depends on the individual they support's circumstances, who may require care because of a disability, a mental disorder, or due to their age or ill-health.

Carer's Assessment

A Carer's Assessment will assess whether you as the carer have needs and what those needs may be. This assessment will consider the impact of caring on you, the carer. Your assessment will identify if you are unable to achieve what you want to achieve and if this is having a significant impact on your wellbeing.

Your carer's assessment will identify if you are eligible for support as a carer.

Care Review – Light Review or Annual Review

A light review looks carefully at your care plan within the first six to eight months, and then again annually unless there is a big change in your needs.

Carer's Support Plan

This is the support you will receive to make your caring role easier for you. For example it could be benefits advice, 'peace of mind' for carers support and access to emergency 72 hour respite care provision.

In most cases local authorities do not charge for providing support to carers, in recognition of the valuable contribution that carers make to their local community. However, once eligibility has been determined you may be provided with a personal budget.

Confidential

The private information you share with us will remain private unless you tell us to tell someone, or the law says we must reveal it for your safety or someone else's safety.

Eligible

Local authorities have to consider the impact of your role as a carer on your wellbeing. If the impact is significant then the eligibility criteria are likely to be met.

Free of Charge

The **Independent Advocate** service is free of charge, so you do not need to pay a penny.

Independent Advocate / Independent

An **Independent Advocate** is there to support you. They do not work for the NHS, any other health care providers or the local authority. This means that they can give unbiased support.

Local Authority

This is another name for the council in the area that you live. They may also be known to you as social services.

Well-being

The wellbeing of individuals is about helping people to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their everyday lives.