



advocacy  
focus



# Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy

Phone us on **0300 323 0965**

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

# **Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)**

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## 1. About this booklet

The logo for IMCA, consisting of the letters 'IMCA' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, tilted slightly upwards to the right.

- This booklet explains what an Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy is (IMCA).

- It also explains what an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate is and what they can do (also known as an IMCA).



- It is designed for people who use the advocacy service. It may also be useful for your family, friends or carers.



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

The letters 'Aa' in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font.

- 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 Mental Capacity Advocacy



- An Advocate that is specially trained in the **Mental Capacity Act** is called an IMCA.
- An IMCA is only there to support you.

### 4. The Mental Capacity Act



- The **Mental Capacity Act** in England is the law that will help you if you find it difficult to make certain decisions in your life.



- The law provides you with a **Decision Maker** who will try to make the best decision for you, known as a '**best interest**' decision.



- There is a **Code of Practice** that explains the rules the **Decision Maker** must follow to make decisions for you.

## 5. Why you have an IMCA



- You will have an IMCA if you have an important decision to make like,



- If you should have a serious medical treatment like an operation.
- If you should change where you live.



- and, you have no-one to help you.



- You may have the help of an IMCA for,

- Your **Care Reviews** to review your Care Plan.



- **Safeguarding Adults Proceeding**

## 6. What an IMCA can do



- An IMCA can help you understand your options in the decision to be made.

- They can ask you questions or show you pictures to understand your thoughts, wishes and beliefs on the matter.



- Get to know you to work out what you would choose if you could make the decision yourself.



- Talk to people who know you best and look at your medical or care records.



- Tell the **Decision Maker** your feelings and write a report.

- Make sure your rights are upheld.

## 7. What an IMCA cannot do



- Make the decisions about your care and treatment.



- Give you our opinion or say what they would do, if they were you.

## 8. When does the support from an IMCA end



- They will support until the decision has been made in your **best interest** and completed.

## 9. How we helped Mr Ahmed from Brierfield

"Mr Ahmed was living in a Care Home but had been showing difficult behaviour and staff were concerned by the fact that he kept trying to leave the premises.

An IMCA from Advocacy Focus visited Mr Ahmed and after spending time getting to know his wishes and supporting him to communicate his desire to move to his social worker.

A best interest meeting established that it would be better for him to move to a different care home with a safe outside area.

Mr Ahmed had always been a keen gardener and liked spending time in the outdoors. He is now settled and happy in his new residence."

## 10. Contact Advocacy Focus



- Phone us on  
**0300 323 0965**
- Text: **07886 744 634**
- Email us at  
[admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk](mailto:admin@advocacyfocus.org.uk)
- Visit our website at  
[www.advocacyfocus.org.uk](http://www.advocacyfocus.org.uk)

## 11. What do the words mean

**In alphabetical order,**

### **Best Interest**

This is when a decision is made that is best for the person

### **Care Review**

A review of your care plan by social services within the first three months, and then at least annually.

### **Code of Practice**

The Code of Practice is a document that explains the principles of the **Mental Capacity Act** and tells people and services how to give you the right support.

### **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.

### **Decision Maker**

The Decision Maker will make the final decision about you. It will be a doctor if the decision is about your medical treatment. It will be a Care Manager if it is about your accommodation.

## **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.

## **Lacking capacity**

This is someone who is assessed and deemed unable to make decisions at a particular time because of a mental disorder.

## **Mental Capacity Act**

This is a law that helps support people who make it difficult to make decisions.

## **Safeguarding Adults Proceedings**

A process that helps protect adults from abuse or neglect.