



advocacy
focus



NHS and Social Care Complaints Advocacy

Phone us on **0300 323 0965**

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

NHS and Social Care Complaints Advocacy

What is in this booklet

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1. About this booklet



- This booklet explains what **Independent Complaints Advocacy** is.



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



- It is designed for people who want to make a **complaint**, or have made a **complaint** against the NHS or Social Care providers.



- The charity that provides the complaints 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 be heard.



- 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 or the NHS.



Free

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



Confidential

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

3. Independent Complaints Advocacy



- **Complaints advocacy** can help you to complain about the NHS or Adult Social Services if you are not happy with the care or treatment you or someone you care for have received.

- They can help you complain about:



- NHS
 - Doctors and Nurses
 - Hospital staff
 - Dentist
 - Opticians



- Social Services
 - Social Care Homes
 - Social workers
 - Children's services

4. Who can have an Independent Advocate



- Anyone can have the support of an **Independent Advocate**.



- You can make a complaint on someone else's behalf, with their written permission, or in the case that they have passed away.



- You can make a complaint on behalf of someone who **lacks mental capacity** or on behalf of a child less than 18 years old.

5. What an Independent Advocate can do



- They can help you at any stage of the complaints process.

Before making your complaint



- They can help you to decide whether to make a complaint.
- They will tell you how to complain and who to.
- They will send you a helpful information pack in the post.

Making a complaint



- You will have your own **Independent Advocate** to support you to make the complaint and answer any questions you may have.
- They can help you prepare for any meetings or come with you for support.

Following the complaint



- If you are still not happy with the response, we can support you to complain to an **Ombudsman**.

6. What an Independent Advocate cannot do



- Provide legal or medical advice, including matters of compensation.
- Investigate your complaint.
- If they can't help you, they will signpost you to other organisations who can.

7. How to get an Independent Advocate



- Phone us on:
0300 323 0965



- We will send you our complaints Self - Help Pack.

8. How we helped Mrs Lindley from Preston

"I was having a problem with my Social Worker, it was like he wasn't listening to me.

I spoke to Advocacy Focus who supported me to write to the council and complain. My Advocate was very understanding and helped me to write the letter.

She helped me every step of the way and I was very happy when I had a resolution meeting with the council and I had the chance to get everything off my chest and gain back control in my life."

9. 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

10. What do the words mean

In alphabetical order,

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 the safety of others.

Complaint

This is a formal process where you express in writing how you are unhappy with the service, care and treatment you receive.

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.

Independent Complaints Advocacy / Complaints Advocacy

This independent service is designed to support anyone who feels they cannot initiate and complete a formal complaint against health and social care services.

Lacks Mental Capacity

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

Ombudsman

An ombudsman is a way of trying to resolve a complaint without going to court.