

Contact us

Get in touch to find out how we can help you.



020 3960 7920



referrals@advocacyproject.org.uk



www.advocacyproject.org.uk

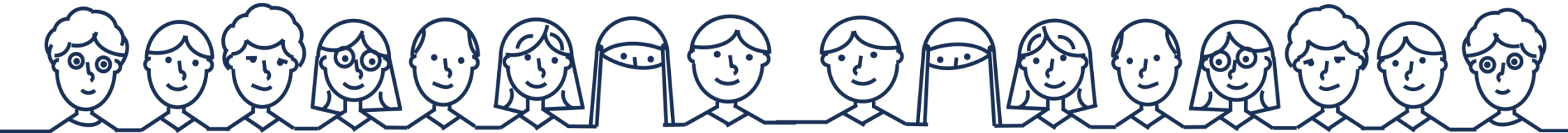


your voice your rights your choice

"If it wasn't for your outstanding support and you understanding me, I would have felt trapped and alone. I am extremely grateful for what you do"

Independent Mental Health Advocacy

Guide for professionals



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What is Independent Mental Health Advocacy?

Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHAs) are specialist advocates who are trained to work within the Mental Health Act (MHA). They provide an additional safeguard to people detained under the MHA, both in hospital and those who are conditionally discharged or subject to a community treatment order.

IMHAs give clients information and help them make informed decisions about their care. They don't give advice. An IMHA will only act if a client asks them to do so.

Who is entitled to an IMHA?

To qualify for IMHA support a client must be:

- › detained under the Mental Health Act
- › a conditionally discharged restricted patient
- › subject to a Community Treatment Order
- › subject to guardianship
- › informal and discussing the possibility of Section 57 treatment
- › under 18 and being considered for ECT
- › informal and liable to be detained under the Mental Health Act

Clients under short term and emergency detentions are not eligible for IMHA support; in this instance this refers to clients detained under section 4, 5(2), 5(4), 135 and 136.

What support can an IMHA offer?

An IMHA can support people to:

- › find out about their legal rights
- › apply for a mental health review tribunal or manager's hearing
- › raise concerns about their care and treatment
- › take part in the care planning processes
- › access their medical records
- › understand information about hospital procedures
- › give feedback to staff or make complaints

What an IMHA is entitled to do

Under the Mental Health Act 2007, IMHAs have the right to:

- › meet with a client in private
- › speak to professionals involved in a patient's treatment
- › see records about the client's treatment, detention and aftercare

Confidentiality

The IMHA service is confidential. We don't share any information clients give us unless they ask us to, unless there are concerns about their safety or someone else's safety.

Section 117 aftercare and the Care Act

We also advocate for people being assessed under the Care Act as part of Section 117 aftercare planning. If you think someone fits the criteria for statutory advocacy, please contact us.

