

What is the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance?

A membership organisation, devoted to the promotion, support and defence of Independent Advocacy in Scotland.

What do we do?

- Represent advocacy organisations at various levels.**
- Work as a central agency to gather and distribute information to the membership, and other interested parties.**
- Raise awareness and understanding of Independent Advocacy across Scotland.**
- Provide training on Independent Advocacy and related issues.**

HOW TO CONTACT US

**138-140 Slateford Road
Edinburgh
EH14 1LR**

0131 455 8183 (Tel)

0131 455 8184 (Fax)

enquiry@siaa.org.uk

www.siaa.org.uk

A Guide to Independent Advocacy for Service Providers



Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance

**Leaflet 2
DRAFT**

What is Advocacy?

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable and discriminated against or whom services find difficult to serve.
- Empowering people who need a stronger voice by enabling them to express their own needs and make their own decisions, where possible.
- Enabling people to gain access to information, explore and understand their options, and to make their views and wishes known.
- Speaking on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves.

The benefits of independent advocacy for service providers.

Staff in care settings such as hospitals, residential homes and supported accommodation advocate for their service users on a daily basis. Sometimes staff can be suspicious of Independent Advocacy as they might feel that advocates are “stepping on their toes”.

Independent Advocacy is about challenging systems and decisions made by those who work within those systems. Staff may feel that they can challenge these decisions, but as the people who put the systems in place are also the employers, staff members can become compromised about how far they can push the issue.

One of the benefits of Independent Advocacy is the Independent Advocate can take the issue to its logical conclusion without the fear of compromise to their employment.

The Independent Advocate will:

- Take time to get to know the person and significant others in their lives, where appropriate.
- Ensure the person’s rights are upheld with regard to the appropriate legislation.
- Challenge service systems in order to promote a person-centred approach.

The Independent Advocate will not:

- Give her/his own opinion.
- Work to their own agenda.
- Do anything their advocacy partner does not want them to do.