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OCD &

ADVOCACY



## ADVOCACY IS...

PROTECTING YOUR RIGHTS

CONFIDENTIAL

INDEPENDENT

NON JUDGEMENTAL

WORKING ON YOUR INSTRUCTION

ADVOCACY IS ABOUT HELPING YOU MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD IN SITUATIONS WHERE YOU MIGHT FEEL EXCLUDED, MARGINALISED AND IGNORED.

### OCD AND ADVOCACY

Having OCD or any other mental health issue can often feel isolating and at times, daunting. It often means that your opinions and ideas are not taken seriously, or that you are not offered the services, opportunities and support that you would like. Sometimes it feels as if nobody is listening or doing anything to help and this can make you feel frustrated and powerless. It is at times like these that Advocacy may be able to help you.

### WHAT IS ADVOCACY?-

Advocacy is about helping you make your voice heard in situations where you might feel excluded, marginalised and ignored. It helps build your confidence so you can have a say in what happens to you. This might be about getting the right treatment for OCD, or resolving an issue in work, education or housing. Advocacy can work in almost any situation but it aims to help you a

better deal by making sure that you are listened to and that your rights are upheld.

### YOU AND YOUR ADVOCATE

Advocates should be independent and they usually work to an agreed code of practice which they should explain to you. Advocates generally work on your instruction; they do not do anything without checking whether it is what you want them to do. They are not legally or medically trained and they are not counsellors or befrienders. They provide you with information and options, they can help you find specialist advice and they can represent you in any way you wish, such as attending meetings with you or on your behalf, writing letters or making phone calls if you feel you are not able to do these things yourself. It is an Advocate's role to help you represent yourself if you feel able to and to help find the solution which works best for you.

## ADVOCACY ISN'T..

DOING WHAT THE ADVOCATE THINK IS BEST

TELLING YOU WHAT TO DO

FILTERING YOUR ISSUES

BEING PART OF YOUR CARE TEAM

JUDGING WHAT YOU DO



ADVOCATES PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION AND OPTIONS, THEY CAN HELP YOU FIND SPECIALIST ADVICE AND THEY CAN REPRESENT YOU IN ANY WAY YOU WISH, SUCH AS ATTENDING MEETINGS WITH YOU OR ON YOUR BEHALF...

OCD Action takes every care to make sure that information is up to date and accurate, the charity however, does not offer legal advice. Please consult a legal expert if you need specific legal information about your case.



## HOW ADVOCACY CAN HELP YOU


There are many different types of Advocacy. If you have ever been detained in hospital under a Section of the Mental Health Act 1983, you may have come across Independent Mental Health Act Advocates. If you have ever lost mental capacity and there has been nobody else to represent you and decisions have to be made on your behalf about your physical care or treatment or where you are to live, you are entitled to an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate. Both these types of Advocates are 'statutory' which means you have a right by law, to be offered them if you meet the criteria.

Much Advocacy however is not statutory, that means there is no requirement under law to have it, but it is offered by different organisations to help clients. Examples could include Advocacy offered to children, older people or people with sensory impairments or mental health issues.

### HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

OCD Action now have a professional Advocate who can help you, either by phoning or by visiting you. Currently visits are restricted to people in the Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham areas, but you can get support over the phone wherever you are in the UK. OCD Action is also actively recruiting and training Volunteer Advocates who will be able to expand this support to as many people as possible.

We are also encouraging OCD support groups throughout the country to practice 'Peer Advocacy' and 'Group Advocacy'. This is when people support each other and act as Advocates for one another or as a collective. If you would like more information about this, or you would like to become a Volunteer Advocate or access the Advocacy Service directly, then please contact our helpline on: 0845 3906232



If you would like further information about OCD Action and its Advocacy Service, please visit our website at [www.ocdaction.org.uk](http://www.ocdaction.org.uk) or contact Jude Wynne Advocacy Manager on 0845 3906234 or email [jude@ocdaction.org.uk](mailto:jude@ocdaction.org.uk)