

# Making a Telephone Call

If you're going to call to seek information or to self-advocate it's worth making some notes beforehand so that you're clear what you want to say and what you want from the call.

- State your name and what you need – be brief – it is often helpful to have a sentence or two written down for this opening.
- If the first person you speak to can't help you – ask to be put through to someone who can.
- If the person you need/want to speak to is not available – ask when they will be so that you can ring them then.
- Ask for the direct dial number of the person you want to speak to to avoid having to go through reception / another person each time.
- Ask for the name and position/role of everyone you speak to – write this information down – don't be afraid to ask people to spell names.
- Keep a record of the date, times, names and positions of the people you have spoken to and what was said. See our Telephone Log Worksheet!
- Try to remain calm and clear on the phone even if you are distressed and frustrated – be focused on your goal!
- Don't forget to listen!
- Always be polite – the person who answers the phone may be your gateway to the person who is responsible for making the decision you need and you may end up speaking to them often as you try to speak to the decision-maker – so, keep them sweet!
- If someone is going to pass on a message/ring you back – ask them when they will do that – write that down.
- If people don't ring you back or the situation is not resolved – ring again.
- If, when the person you've left a message for does ring you back, you're not ready to speak to them, arrange for them to ring another time so that you can be well prepared to speak to them – see the sheet on Communication Skills.

## **If you are unsatisfied with the result of the call:**

- Ask why the person can't help. Write down the answer they give you – make it clear that you are doing this. Ask for them to put that decision in writing to you along with the reasons.
- Ask if there is another agency/person that may be able to help you.
- If the person you speak to is rude or unpleasant – ask to speak to their Line Manager.