



Independent Advocate

Job title	Independent Advocate
Reporting to	Advocacy Service Manager
Contract	Permanent
Hours	Full time 37.5 hours per week
Salary	£25,679 per annum
Location	Ealing
Closing date	12 noon, Monday 03 February 2025

We welcome applications from people with transferrable skills and qualities, and people with diverse employment histories and personal backgrounds.

Hybrid working: we deliver in-person services, and hybrid working must prioritise the needs of those receiving our services. The amount of time working from home / offices / face-to-face services will be dependent on the role.

About The Advocacy Project

We help people speak up and make decisions about their health, wellbeing and social care. We're here to make sure people who are vulnerable because of their circumstance can understand their rights, make effective choices about their lives and voice their concerns.

Some of the ways we do this include:

- advocacy services that make sure people can express their wishes when decisions are being made about their care or wellbeing
- user involvement projects that help organisations improve what they offer by listening to people who use their services
- local Healthwatch services, which act as health and social care champions for the areas they serve and give people a direct channel to share their feedback
- innovative Personal Health Budget projects that allow people to access items and services to improve their wellbeing.

Our vision
A world in which every person has a voice

Our mission
To enable every person to have their voice heard, uphold their rights and make choices

Our services are independent, confidential, and free to those receiving them. Together, our teams are standing up for essential rights and supporting people to have a say on the issues that matter to them.

About the role

The post-holder will provide independent advocacy in various settings, including in the community, people's homes, and hospital settings including mental health wards. You'll raise awareness of advocacy, including for people from minority ethnic communities. You'll work as part of a team of independent advocates, reporting to the Advocacy Service Manager.

You will work as part of the Ealing advocacy team. You may also need to carry out your role in other London boroughs.

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2008, the post holder will be required to visit CQC registered care homes and would be subject to government requirements.

Key responsibilities

- Provide advocacy for eligible people under Mental Health Act 2007, the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Mental Capacity Act 2005 and under the Care Act 2014.
- Provide a one-to-one advocacy service for people and undertake case work, evidencing and uploading case notes and data in a timely manner.
- Provide instructed and non-instructed advocacy, where appropriate.
- Provide information, support or signpost clients in order to inform or empower individuals on any issues about their treatment under the relevant legislation.
- Act as duty advocate for our Single Point of Access referral line on a rota basis.
- Meet case-working standards, monitoring system requirements and the goals for our service, making sure everyone needing advocacy is referred into the service in the right way.
- Work within the location-specific engagement protocols, security, confidentiality and safeguarding policies (in addition to the Advocacy Best Practice Handbook).
- Actively promote self-advocacy throughout all work with patients, where practical.
- Raise awareness of independent advocacy and referring pathways to eligible people and referring agencies.
- Keep your knowledge of legislation and policy up-to-date, including the mental health act, mental capacity act, care act, and local / national policy.
- Keep up to date with developments and good practice in independent advocacy (including different advocacy models).
- Develop good working relationships with key staff within health and social care services.
- Be an active member of the advocacy service, contributing to service planning and providing cover for other colleagues when needed.

General responsibilities

- Participate in team meetings and training.
- Participate in personal, team and organisational development.
- Contribute to monitoring reports.

- Keep to our policies, including health & safety, and risk regulations.
- Work to our mission, vision, and values.
- Carry out other projects and tasks as needed.

Person specification

We welcome applications from people with transferrable skills and qualities, and people with diverse employment histories and personal backgrounds.

Essential qualities and attributes:

- Understanding of the role and responsibilities of an advocate.
- Understanding of issues faced by people with mental health conditions, physical health conditions and learning disabilities.
- Ability to listen and build trust, to encourage people to express their own views and to represent clients' self-defined interests.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (written and verbal). Good at working with a wide variety of people including commissioners, service users and colleagues.
- IT literate, including working knowledge of Microsoft packages (Excel, Word, Outlook).
- Commitment to working within The Advocacy Project code of conduct, equality and safeguarding policies.
- Ability to work as part of a team and on your own initiative, to plan and prioritise your own workload.
- Willingness to promote The Advocacy Project and its services in line with our mission, vision and values.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development.

Desirable knowledge, experience and qualifications:

- Experience of delivering different forms of advocacy (instructed and non-instructed; IMHA, ICAA, IMCA, IHCA,) within a statutory advocacy service.
- Knowledge of the Mental Health Act / Mental Capacity Act / Care Act and other statutory legislation as it applies to advocacy.
- Knowledge of mental health sections and social care services, including current issues in policy and practice.
- Understanding of the Accessible Information Standard.
- Advocacy qualification.

Benefits of working for us

We're committed to providing an empowering, flexible and supportive working environment for all our staff.

Our employee benefits include 30 days annual leave (including up to 3 days between Christmas and New Year), participation in a pension scheme with 6% employer contribution, access to a free confidential counselling service, and an interest-free travel/bike loan.

All our staff are supported to learn and develop in a variety of ways, including a monthly lecture series where we invite sector experts to talk to our staff on topical issues.

We are a Disability Confident and Mindful Employer.

How to apply

Upload your application via our website on www.advocacyproject.org.uk/work-for-us

Include your CV and a supporting statement explaining why you think you're the person we're looking for and how your experience meets each point in the person specification. You can use examples from paid or voluntary work, and life experiences. We only accept applications from candidates who upload both a supporting statement and CV.

It's a legal requirement that you are eligible to work in the UK for all our posts.

If you have any questions please get in touch on HR@advocacyproject.org.uk / 020 8106 0640.

The Advocacy Project is fully committed to equality of opportunity and diversity and we warmly welcome applications from all suitably qualified candidates. We welcome applications regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, or age. All applications will be considered solely on merit.

The Advocacy project is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children young people and adults we work with. All successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check and safer recruitment checks.

An external review concluded that:

"...advocates have excellent support and training to undertake their roles" and advocates find the "lectures, internal training, team meetings and case review meetings extremely helpful"

The review also stated "managers are always accessible and there was a great deal of knowledge and experience across the teams".

**Winner of the
National Advocacy Award for Equality & Diversity**