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Their support was really reassuring

**Unpaid Adult Carers Advocacy:
A guide for professionals in Edinburgh**



What is an advocate?

Advocates are independent professionals who support people to have their say, be heard, and understand their rights.

Eligibility

Any unpaid adult carer who is 18 years or older and caring for someone living in Edinburgh. The unpaid carer does not need to be a resident of the City of Edinburgh but must be caring for an adult or child who is a resident of the City of Edinburgh.

When to refer

Advocacy support is available to unpaid carers who require assistance in understanding their rights, and having their voice heard and their views understood.

Make a referral whenever the carer is caring for a person who meets at least one of these criteria:

- they have a mental health condition, a diagnosis of dementia, physical disability, sensory impairment, or an acquired brain injury
- they are a child or young person receiving services from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- they are subject to one of the following Acts:
Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007,
Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, Mental Health (Scotland) Act 2015 and Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000, Carers (Scotland) Act 2016

What do advocates do?

An advocate will work with and on behalf of the person they support.

An advocate can support and empower someone to:

- communicate their views and wishes
- understand their rights
- understand any processes and decisions they are subject to
- understand the options they have
- make their own choices
- challenge a decision

An advocate will:

- listen and be on their side
- represent people when they are not able to represent themselves
- support them to make decisions

Even when someone can't tell their advocate what they want, our advocates will use a range of approaches to establish their views and wishes as far as possible and secure their rights. In some circumstances, the advocate may need to consult or get information from others to support the person. They will only do this, if the person tells them they can, unless the person is unable to give consent.

An advocate does not:

- offer counselling or befriending
- offer legal advice
- tell people they support what decisions to make

How to make a referral

Online at:

voiceability.org

Freephone:

0300 303 1660



You can also request a referral form by emailing helpline.scotland@voiceability.org

If you have questions about eligibility or advocacy types, contact us.

We're open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

About VoiceAbility

We've been supporting people to have their say in decisions about their health, care and wellbeing for over 40 years. We're an independent charity and one of the UK's largest providers of advocacy and involvement services.