

Advocacy support to get your voice heard

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is free, independent support to help you to get your voice heard. Advocacy services pair you up with an independent advocate who is on your side if you need support. They can:

- help you to find information
- talk things through with you to find out what you want
- support you to get your views across at appointments and meetings
- help you to understand your rights

What can an Advocate help with?

- **accessing services such as [Health](#), [Housing](#), [Adult Social Care](#) [Point](#).**
- **[personal budgets](#)**
- **[protecting you from abuse](#)**
- writing important letters
- **[making complaints](#)**

When to use an Advocate

It can be helpful to use an advocate when you:

- want things in your life to change but don't know where to start
- feel that you are not being listened to
- feel like you are on your own
- need help to speak up for yourself

Types of advocacy available in Newcastle

[Care and support](#)

[Community](#)

[Mental Health](#)

Dementia

Care and support advocacy

Independent advocacy is for people who have difficulty in understanding or taking part in decisions about your care and support including:

- carers assessments
- safeguarding enquiries or processes
- social care: assessments, reviews or support plans

Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council can arrange for an independent advocate if there is no one else to support you, for example a friend or family member. The advocate will support you with understanding the discussions and expressing your views. For example, they may support you through your needs assessment so the Council can work out what support you need to help you stay independent.

Young people who are moving from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care can get help to get your views heard. Until you are 18 years old your parents and carers are involved in your assessment. Your parents and carers can still be involved when you are 18 years old, if you want.

Your Voice Counts is commissioned by Newcastle City Council to provide this service in Newcastle.

Community advocacy

Connected Voice Advocacy offer free Community Advocacy helping vulnerable adults in Newcastle to help make informed choices and speak up for themselves.

People who might benefit from this service include:

- people with physical or learning disabilities
- older people

Community Advocacy is available to any vulnerable adult living in Newcastle who meets at least 3 of the following criteria:

- needs support making their views known
- is facing a major life change
- has inappropriate support or lacks support from services or family
- has no independent support who can help with their interests
- has a poor quality of life which is affected by any of the points mentioned above

Connected Voice Advocacy's services include:

- Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Advocacy

- Mental Health Advocacy
 - Families through crisis Advocacy
 - Welfare advocacy
 - [Hate crime advocacy](#) free, confidential support and advice to people over 16 who have experienced hate crime
 - Case Advocacy specialist support for people with neurological conditions in Newcastle and Gateshead
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Mental Health advocacy

The following statutory services are provided by [Your Voice Counts](#) in Newcastle:

- [Independent Mental Capacity Advocate \(IMCA\)](#)
 - [Independent Mental Health Act Advocacy \(IMHA\)](#)
 - [Independent Care Act Advocate \(ICAA\)](#)
 - [Relevant Persons Representative \(RPR\)](#)
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Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) Service

The IMCA Service is for people who lack mental capacity and have no one to support them or represent their views. An IMCA is appointed by a professional to support and represent you to make important decisions about:

- serious medical treatment
- long term change of residence. For example moving into a hospital or care home
- deprivation of liberty

You may lack capacity because of dementia, a brain injury, a learning disability or mental health needs. An IMCA can be involved if you've been abused or neglected or is accused of abusing someone else.

What happens when an IMCA is appointed

The IMCA:

- meets you and others involved in your care so you can speak up about your wishes, feelings, beliefs and values
 - submits a report to the decision maker highlighting all of the things that are important about the decision
 - can challenge the decision maker on your behalf if needed
 - can help with care reviews in certain cases
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How to use the IMCA Service

You can be referred to this service by a health professional, a social worker or Community Health and Social Care Direct. If a person lacks capacity, then they are entitled to an IMCA to represent them throughout the safeguarding adults process whether or not they have someone to represent them.

Full details of how to make a referral are on [Your Voice Counts website](#).

[Your Voice Counts](#) is commissioned by Newcastle City Council to provide the IMCA service in Newcastle.

Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA)

[IMHA](#) help people who have no one to support them or represent their views.who are:

- detained or 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act also known as 'subject to the Mental Health Act'
- on supervised community treatment or guardianship orders
- conditionally discharged from hospital

IMHAs can help you to:

- understand the information you are given about your care or treatment
- talk to the medical or social work team about your care or treatment
- access information about how the Mental Health Act applies to them
- ?attend meetings with you or stand in for you if you prefer
- help with applications to Tribunals and Managers reviews
- support you to participate in decisions

How to use the IMHA Service

You can self refer to this service if you are eligible or you can be referred to this service by a health professional, a social worker or [Adult Social CarePoint](#). Full details of how to make a referral are on [Your Voice Counts website](#).

[Your Voice Counts](#) is commissioned by Newcastle City Council to provide the IMHA service in Newcastle.

Relevant Persons Representative (RPR)

Under Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS), if a person living in a care home, or staying in hospital, is assessed as lacking in capacity to choose where they will live then, in order to receive care or treatment, this may mean that the council will need to carry out additional assessments to determine if the person is deprived of their liberty. Following assessment, if the DoLS authorisation is granted, then a representative called the 'relevant person's representative' is appointed. Often this is a family member or friend. If the person doesn't have a relative or friend who is able to take on this role, or it is felt that they may not be appropriate, the council must appoint a paid representative.

The paid representative, is a professional who is trained and experienced in these matters, who will act for the person in relation to the DoLS. The job of the representative is to stay in regular contact with the person. They should consider whether the person's care arrangements need to change, be given access to documents about decisions, and if necessary ask for a review of an assessment decision. The representative can also appeal against the DoLS authorisation, and should do so where the person under DoLS disagrees with it, even if they themselves do not.

If you are eligible for this service your social worker can refer you. [Your Voice Counts](#) is commissioned by Newcastle City Council to provide the RPR service in Newcastle.

NHS health care complaints advocacy

[NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy \(ICA\)](#) can help you if you feel you have not had the service you expect from the National Health Service (NHS) and want to make a complaint. [Your Voice Counts](#) is commissioned to provide this service.

An NHS complaint might include something that happened during care or treatment at:

- the hospital
- your General Practitioner (GP)
- the dentist
- the pharmacist
- the optician
- an NHS funded care home
- any other **NHS funded service** even if delivered in the private sector

You can watch a video in British Sign Language (BSL) about your rights to make a NHS health complaint:

Dementia advocacy

[Silverline Memories](#) runs a Dementia Advocacy and Care Navigation Service. They can help people with a diagnosis of Dementia, their carers and families to navigating health and social care system and to get your voice heard.

Other useful information

- [Making Decisions \(Mental Capacity\)](#)
- [Looking After Someone](#)
- [Citizens Advice Newcastle](#) provide free, independent and confidential advice to help with any issue, including debt, benefits, housing, employment, consumer issues, relationships, family matters, health, education, discrimination, immigration and the law.
- [Being heard; a guide to self advocacy for carers](#) free guide from Carers UK

Useful Organisations

Citizens Advice Newcastle (CAN)

Email: citycab@newcastlecab.org.uk

Website: <http://citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk>

Telephone: 0808 223 1133

Address: 4th Floor, City Library, NE1 8AX

Connected Voice Advocacy

Email: advocacy@connectedvoice.org.uk

Website: <http://www.connectedvoice.org.uk/services/advocacy>

Telephone: 0191 235 7013

Address: One Strawberry Lane, NE1 4BX

Newcastle NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy (NHS ICA)

Email: nhsadvocacy@yvc.org.uk

Website: <https://www.yvc.org.uk/nhsica>

Telephone: 0191 478 6472

Address: NHS Complaints Advocacy (Your Voice Counts), NE8 1PQ

Solicitors for the Elderly

Email: admin@sfe.legal

Website: www.sfe.legal

Telephone: 0844 567 6173

Address: Studio 209, MillStudio Business Centre, SG12 9PY

Connected Voice Haref

Email: haref@connectedvoice.org.uk

Website: <https://connectedvoice.org.uk/services/haref>

Telephone: 0191 235 7022

Address: One Strawberry Lane, NE1 4BX

Your Voice Counts

Email: mail@yvc.org.uk

Website: www.yvc.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 478 6472

Address: Your Voice Counts, NE3 3PF

West End Women and Girls Centre

Email: info@westendwomenandgirls.co.uk

Website: www.westendwomenandgirls.co.uk

Telephone: 0191 273 4942

Address: The Stephenson Building, NE4 6SQ

Silverline Memories

Email: hello@silverlinememories.com

Website: www.silverlinememories.com

Telephone: 0191 603 0095

Address: Dementia Activity Centre, NE3 3BE

Related Articles

[How to make a complaint about Adult Social Care services](#)

[How to complain about health services](#)

[Having your say about health and care services](#)

[Advance Decisions](#)

[Age discrimination and ageing well](#)

[Disability Rights](#)

[Racial Discrimination](#)

[Making decisions and your mental capacity](#)

[Where to get legal advice](#)

[Lasting Power of Attorney and Deputyship](#)

[Adult abuse](#)

[Immigration and Asylum](#)

[Thinking about moving home?](#)

[How to make a good complaint](#)

[Introduction to Adult Social Care](#)

[Managing someone else's affairs](#)

[Moving from Childrens to Adults Social Care](#)