

Advocacy information

What is advocacy?

Advocacy can be defined as:

- standing up for the rights of people who are being treated unfairly
- standing alongside an individual and speaking out on their behalf in a way that best represents the interests of that person.

Types of advocacy

There are several different types of advocacy. These include:

Systemic advocacy

Systemic advocacy works towards changing the structures in society that create inequalities and disadvantage. Many peak bodies are involved in systemic advocacy work.

Legal advocacy

A community legal service would be an example of an agency providing legal advocacy. These organisations assist people with issues that require advice or knowledge from someone with legal knowledge. The types of problems that an agency providing legal advocacy might deal with include tenancy issues, guardianship and police issues.

Informal advocacy

Informal advocacy is usually provided by a carer, family member or friend as a natural extension of their role in your life. This person, who knows you well, is able to help you explain to others what you need or want. There are carers' groups available who provide carers with support, networking opportunities and training to assist them to effectively advocate on behalf of their family member with a disability.

Self-advocacy

Self-advocacy means that you are able to ask for what you need and want and tell people about your thoughts and feelings. Self-advocacy means you know your rights and responsibilities, you speak up for your rights, and you are able to make choices and decisions that affect your life.

Individual Advocacy

Individual advocacy is provided on a one-to-one basis by an advocate who is generally employed by an advocacy service. An advocate seeks to uphold the rights and interests of the person with a disability and to address issues such as equity, discrimination, abuse or neglect.

Sometimes a person can feel isolated, vulnerable or unsure and when their rights are denied they are unable to stand up for themselves. In this situation an advocate can represent their interests for them.

If you feel uncomfortable about a decision that has been made by your service provider or government department or frightened to make a complaint yourself then an advocate can support you by speaking on your behalf.

Advocacy contacts

Below is a list of several advocacy organisations that provide individual advocacy support or assistance to carers.

Ipswich Regional Advocacy Service

This is a service for people with a disability and carers who live in the Ipswich West Moreton region.

Address: Shop 6 Nolan's Plaza, Ipswich Q 4305

Phone: (07) 3281 6006

Email: idas7@bigpond.com

Hours: Mon to Fri 8.30am to 4.30pm
(after hours by arrangement)

Queensland Aged and Disability Advocacy Inc.

QADA supports client's rights in Home and Community Care (HACC) services such as ALARA QLD Limited.

Website: <http://www.qada.org.au/default.htm>

Phone: (07) 3637 6000

Toll Free: 1800 818 338

Fax: (07) 3637 6001

Email: info@qada.org.au

Carers Qld

Carers Queensland provides carers with information and services to support them in their caring role.

Website: <http://www.carersqld.asn.au>

Address: 31 South St, Ipswich, Qld 4305

Phone: (07) 3202 1852

Freecall: 1800 242 636

Fax: (07) 3202 1976

Email: aweabb@carersqld.asn.au

Mental Health Association Qld Inc.

This organisation can advocate for mental health consumers regarding specific issues. They advocate for people who experience increased vulnerability, unfair and unjust circumstances, abuse and stigma.

Website: www.mentalhealth.org.au

Phone: 1300 729 686

Fax: (07) 3112 4399

AMPARO Advocacy

AMPARO is a non-profit community organisation which provides individual and systemic advocacy on behalf of people from a non-English speaking background who have a disability. AMPARO advocates for vulnerable people for whom language and/or cultural differences make it difficult to understand and negotiate systems and services. AMPARO aims to influence positive sustainable change to attitudes, policies, practices and resources within governments and communities.

Website: <http://www.amparo.org.au>

Address: 9 Chippendale St, Milton Q 4064

Phone: (07) 3369 2500

Interpreter Service: 131 450

Fax: (07) 3369 2511

Email: info@amparo.org.au

The following is a list of advocacy organisations that are involved in systemic advocacy:

Queensland Advocacy Incorporated

QAI is an independent, community-based organisation for Queenslanders with a disability. QAI engages in systems advocacy through campaigns directed to attitudinal, law and policy change, and by supporting the development of a range of state advocacy initiatives. They also provide individual legal advocacy in relation to mental health law, legal advocacy with priority to persons with impaired capacity who are subject to restrictive practices and involuntary treatment and non-legal individual advocacy to prevent further entrenchment in the criminal justice system.

Website: <http://www.gai.org.au/>

Address: 2nd Floor, South Central
43 Peel St, South Brisbane 4101

Phone: (07) 3844 4200

Within Qld: 1300 130 582

Fax: (07) 3844 4220

Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland

ECCQ is a voluntary, non-profit, community-based state peak organisation. Through their affiliation with the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) ECCQ contributes to national policy and debate on all matters concerning ethnic communities and multiculturalism.

Website: www.eccq.com.au

Address: ECCQ House, 253 Boundary St,
West End QLD 4101

Phone: (07) 3844 9166

Email: administration@eccq.com.au