

Speaking Up



What is advocacy?

A simple definition of advocacy is helping and supporting someone else to speak up for what they want. This can involve expressing their views or acting on their behalf to secure services that they require or rights to which they are entitled. Key concepts in advocacy are: equality, inclusion, empowerment and rights.

There are different ways in which people with learning disabilities and their carers can speak up about the provision of services either to an individual, a family or to the service user group as a whole. It is important to know about the different organisations that are available to people in Wakefield, and how to seek support from them.

This section includes information about:

Advocacy for people with learning disabilities

Advocacy in Wakefield district

Advocacy specifically for carers

Safeguarding

Support Groups



Advocacy for people with learning disabilities

The importance of advocacy

People with learning difficulties are individuals with individual needs. While some people are able to speak up for themselves and make informed choices about what happens in their lives, others find it more difficult to make their needs understood. Similarly, people need very different support in their lives. For example, some people can look after themselves easily and need help with things like finances and correspondence, while others need help with all aspects of their daily life, including eating and personal care.

Whether we have a learning disability or not, we all need some form of help in our lives for different tasks, and we are all dependant on other people to a certain degree. However, the training and support that people with learning disabilities require is often not understood nor provided in such a way that is useful to them and their carers. This means that people are left with very little control over decisions that affect their own lives.

The voice of people with learning disabilities was not really heard for many years. Carers, professionals and organisations have spoken up for the needs of this group and helped achieve some positive moves forward. However, it is only in recent years that services have accepted the importance of acknowledging what their service users really think or want from those services, and from their lives in general.

The advocacy movement throughout the UK is growing faster than ever, and it is now considered essential that people with learning disabilities are involved in the planning and provision of any services and support.

Listening to the needs of people with learning disabilities, and involving them in the process, does not mean that the views of family carers and other professionals are not valued. There is a clear need to take many factors into account when planning and delivering services, including carers' opinions and the circumstances of each individual.

Types of Advocacy

A variety of advocacy has developed to recognise differences in types of need. Common to all of the following types of advocacy is that the person who needs it is always at the centre of the advocacy process. Advocacy involves finding out exactly what that person wants, and the best way of getting that across to the people who need to know.

- **Self advocacy**

Self advocacy is when people speak up for themselves and support one another. Many people with learning disabilities are good at speaking up for themselves but sometimes they find it hard to get others to accept this or listen to them.

Self advocacy groups are run by people with learning disabilities, sometimes with supporters. Self advocacy groups are often groups of people who use services or have the same interests locally. They work together to make sure they have a say in how those services are run.

- **Peer advocacy**

Peer advocacy is when the advocate and the advocacy partner share similar problems, experiences or environments, and support one another through them. This is often like citizen advocacy, with both partners having a learning disability and is mostly of an informal nature.

- **Crisis advocacy**

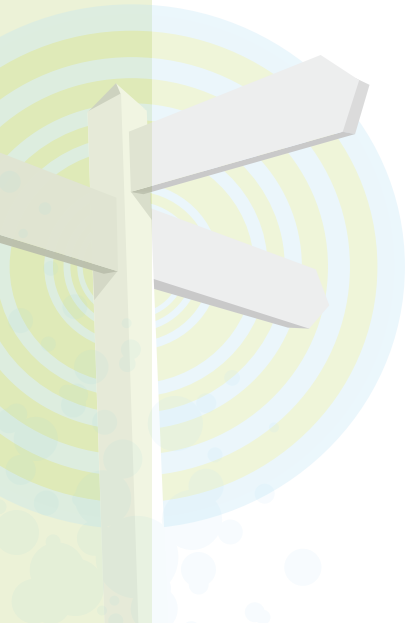
Crisis advocacy is temporary, and often has clear outcomes and targets, with the advocacy finishing when the outcomes have been met. This advocacy can be undertaken by volunteers, paid members of local independent advocacy scheme staff, or by individual paid consultant advocates.

Some service providers such as social care services or NHS Trusts may pay advocacy schemes to provide this type of advocacy on a contract basis. They may also pay independent consultants to provide advocacy when certain situations arise.

- **Citizen advocacy**

Citizen advocacy is a partnership between two people. One is usually called the advocacy partner, and one the 'citizen advocate'. An 'advocacy partner' is someone at risk of having their choices ignored. A citizen advocate is a person who is unpaid and voluntarily speaks up to support an advocacy partner.

The type of advocacy that is used will depend on the person who seeks it. A person may ask for different types of advocacy support at different times in their life.



Advocacy in Wakefield district

Your Voice Advocacy Project – Wakefield

**Address: Pontefract Family Centre, 4 Harropwell Lane,
Pontefract WF8 1QY**

Tel: 01977 705437 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm)

Email: scott.williams@cloverleaf-advocacy.co.uk

Your Voice Advocacy Project provides advocacy support to people with a learning disability and/or autism living in Wakefield. They provide one-to-one support so that individuals are able to make their own choices and express their own views. They are also involved in supporting local self-advocacy groups and promoting self-advocacy within the district.

You can access the service using a referral system through professionals, family carers and they also encourage self-referrals. Your Voice support people with a learning disability to speak out. For some people with more profound learning disabilities, this may not be so easy. Advocates represent these people after meeting and building up relations with them. Your Voice encourage all people with a learning disability, no matter how profound the disability, to express their thoughts, wishes and complaints.

Lift Up Advocacy

**Address: St Andrew's Christian Centre, Peterson Road,
Wakefield WF1 4DX**

Tel: 01924 380197

Email: group@liftup.org.uk

Website: www.liftup.org.uk

Lift Up is Wakefield's first independent self advocacy group for people with learning disabilities. There are meetings every week where people talk about issues that affect them, plan activities, and access additional support.

Kirklees and Wakefield IMCA Service

Tel: 01924 361050

Email: kirkleeswakefieldimca@together-uk.org

Web: www.together-uk.org

The Service's Independent Mental Capacity Advocates work with people who – for reasons such as learning disability, dementia, mental health problems or brain injury – are unable to make specific decisions about the following areas:

- serious medical treatment
- accommodation changes that are for more than 28 days in hospital or eight weeks in a care home
- accommodation reviews
- adult protection.

People can be referred to the Service by staff from Kirklees and Wakefield Councils and their health partners, including doctors and nurses, social workers and care managers.

Person-Centred Planning

Address: Valuing People Team, Grange View, Annie Street, Outwood, Wakefield, WF1 2PW

Tel: 01924 303847

Person-Centred Planning is a process for continual listening and learning, focussing on what is important to someone now and in the future, and acting upon this in alliance with their family and friends.

Who needs Person-Centred Planning?

- A person who wishes to make changes in their life or who is having a change imposed on them
- A person who would like to gain employment
- A person who would like to make new friends or start/maintain meaningful relationships
- A person who would like to live somewhere else

- A person who would like to be involved in more activities
- A person who would like more choice and control over their daily living.

To make a referral with or on behalf of a person, complete a referral form online at www.wakefielddpb.org.uk or contact the Valuing People Team on 01924 303847.

General advocacy information

Advocacy Action

**Address: c/o St Andrews Christian Centre, Peterson Road,
Wakefield WF1 4DX**

Tel: 01924 380 197

Email: info@advocacyaction.org.uk

Web: www.advocacyaction.org.uk

Advocacy Action is the support and development organisation for all areas of advocacy in the Wakefield district. Advocacy Action was formed by a group of local projects that have been successfully making a difference to local people's lives across Wakefield district for over 10 years.

While these individual projects are providing good services, sometimes their relatively small size makes it difficult to do the wider promotional and development work that is also needed. Advocacy Action will do this wider work.

Advocacy specifically for carers

While people with learning disabilities are the 'experts' in their own lives, family carers are 'experts' too. They have usually supported people throughout their lives and understand their needs and wishes better than most.

Carers have a vital role in supporting the person cared for to speak up and in ensuring that services provided are appropriate, safe, and meeting the needs of the people using them. Carers should be included and involved in assessments and reviews of the person with learning disabilities and are entitled to assessments in their own right.

See also :

Section 1: Carers and support in the community - Care Management and Assessment

See also Section 3: Rights and the law

While carers have a role to play in speaking up for the person they care for, there are a number of organisations which can also support carers to speak up about their own needs and concerns, and help advocate on their behalf, either individually or collectively.

Many organisations and services have carer forums or are regularly involved in campaigning for changes. In some services, carers are routinely involved in quality audits, inspections, and interviewing. You can access local advocacy support for carers through **Carers Wakefield and District**.

An important forum which enables the voices carers to be heard is the Carers Delivery Group of the Wakefield Learning Disability Partnership Board. The group informs strategic decision making on learning disability services in the district and has elected carer representatives on the Learning Disability Partnership Board. For more information on the group, contact **Carers Wakefield and District** or visit www.wakefieldldpb.org.uk.

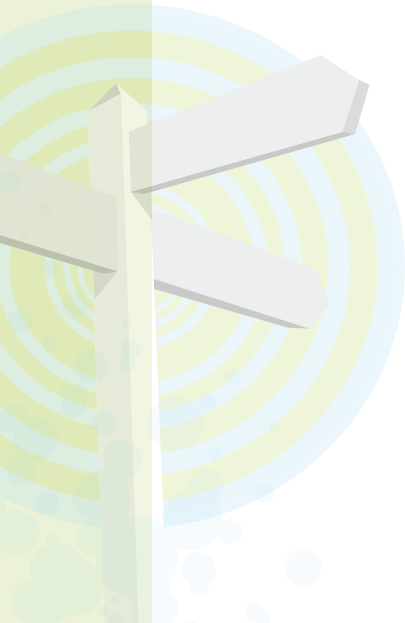
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Carers

**Address: Valuing People Team, Grange View, Annie Street,
Outwood, Wakefield, WF1 2PW**

Tel: 07919696429

Email: amahmood@wakefield.gov.uk

The job of the Black and Minority Ethnic Development Worker is to work with black and minority ethnic communities in Wakefield, to make sure services for people with learning disabilities and family carers are appropriate and that they are receiving the support they need. If you have a learning disability, are a family carer or a friend of someone with a learning disability from a black and minority ethnic community, you can contact the Black and Minority Ethnic Development Worker to find out what support is on offer.



Safeguarding

If you are concerned that someone may be suffering from abuse, your first point of contact is [Social Care Direct](#)

The way we treat each other, our friends, members of our family or anyone else for that matter, is by and large based on basic values. Words like respect, dignity, care and consideration come to mind as examples of values we try to uphold in our dealings with other people.

Although values like these are usually deeply held personal beliefs, they are sometimes so important that they have to be reinforced by our laws. Consequently some acceptable actions have been made criminal offences (murder, theft, assault), punishable by imprisonment. Other types of action, such as trespass or misuse of someone's money, can be challenged in the civil courts.

For most of us, in many of our dealings with each other, this system of values and legal reinforcements serves us well. However, some members of our society are more vulnerable. They may not have the physical or mental capacity to involve the police, act as witnesses in criminal matters, or take others to court to defend their rights. They may even be isolated and afraid to take any action. The most obvious group of these vulnerable people are children, but we also include people with disabilities, mental illness, and older people. We call these people 'vulnerable adults'.

While we would like to think that vulnerable adults would be well treated in a compassionate society, sadly this is not always the case. Sometimes this inappropriate treatment is of little consequence, resulting from exceptional circumstances, of only minor impact and with no malicious intent. Sometimes, however, the way a vulnerable person is treated is bad enough to warrant the use of the term 'abuse'. In those circumstances, help from social care services is needed to offer support and protection to vulnerable adults.

- **What kinds of abuse happen?**

Research shows that the abuse that takes place can be:

- Physical - causing physical injury
- Financial - taking money from a vulnerable person, often on a regular basis
- Neglectful - the vulnerable person does not receive the essentials of nourishment, warmth or medical attention that they need
- Sexual – the vulnerable person is involved in sexual contact without consent
- Emotional – including treatment which grossly undermines the vulnerable person’s confidence or self-belief
- Discriminatory – the vulnerable adult is denied services or rights because of their race, disability, or gender

Abuse can also be inflicted by another vulnerable adult, such as another resident in a care home, or it can be self inflicted.

- **How should assistance be provided?**

Confronting abuse is never easy, and can cause a great deal of upset or distress. It is therefore important that abuse is dealt with sensitively in an acceptable manner and pace to the vulnerable adult.

The assistance required can vary to the circumstances, and can involve services or support from a number of different welfare, health and public safety organisations. Once abuse is reported there will normally be an investigation of all the circumstances contributing to the abuse.

This will lead to suggestions for a way forward that can maximise the benefits to the vulnerable person, while minimising the negative effects of confronting the abuse.

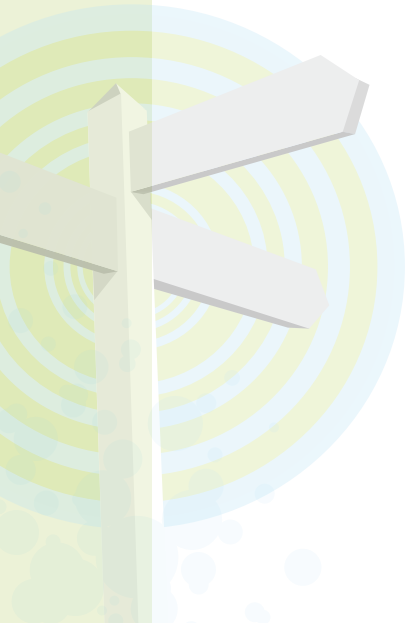
The organisation taking the lead role in investigating abuse will vary according to the circumstances. However, it is usual for Family Services to coordinate all services involved.

Serious crime investigations will always be led by the police, often using specialist officers who have extensive training and experience in dealing with vulnerable people suffering abuse.

- **How do I get help?**

All Safeguarding issues should be reported to **Social Care Direct**.

However, most people may feel happiest talking first to someone they already know and trust, such as a professional they are already in regular contact with (GP, social worker, police officer, nurse, etc). The professional will then following the Safeguarding Adults Procedure. More information on this procedure can be found at www.wakefield.gov.uk



Support groups

There are a number of confidential helplines which can help you through the problems:

Action on Elder Abuse

Tel: 0808 808 8141

Ann Craft Trust

Tel: 0115 9515400

Respond

Tel: 0808 808 0700

Samaritans

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

Domestic Abuse

If you are experiencing domestic abuse and want confidential advice and support, please contact the **Safe at Home Team** on freephone 0800 9151561

Getting help in Wakefield – 24 hour contacts

In an emergency - you should always call 999 - the Police take domestic violence seriously, and will respond to all incidents.

Women's Aid National Domestic Violence Helpline

Tel: 0808 2 000 247

Social Care Direct

Tel: 0845 8 503 503

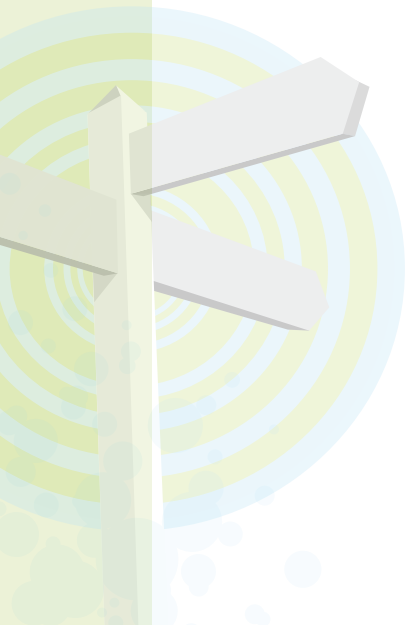
West Yorkshire Police Domestic Violence Unit

Tel: 01977 601039 (not 24 hours)

Open Door Project - Sanctuary Scheme

Tel: 01924 304383/304384

If you are the victim of domestic abuse, Wakefield Open Door Project run a Sanctuary Scheme to help you stay in your own home and be safe. Alternatively you can choose to leave the person who is abusing you. Domestic abuse is recognised as a reason for priority housing.



Hate Incidents and Hate Crime

A Hate Incident is:

Any incident which may, or may not, constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.

A Hate Crime is:

Any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.

The prejudice or hate perceived can be based on any identifying factor, including Disability, Race, Religion or Sexual orientation. This may include:

- Visual: Leaflets, Letters, Posters, Graffiti
- Physical: Hitting, Kicking, Spitting, Threats, Assault
- Verbal: Abuse, Harrassment
- Against Property: Damage, Theft

• **What is a Disability Related Incident?**

Any incident which is perceived to be based upon prejudice towards, or hatred of, the victim because of their disability or so perceived by the victim or any other person. The term 'incident' may or may not have a crime attached to it. All hate incidents should be reported and will receive attention depending on the severity of the incident.

• **Why should you report a Hate Incident/Crime?**

If you have personally experienced a hate crime or hate incident, it is important that you report it. Without your reports the Police are not able to fully assess the true scale of hate crime across the county. You can report it as the victim or as a third party witness.

- **How can you Report a Hate Incident/Crime?**
- Call **999** in an emergency
- Call **0845 6060606** for all non-emergency calls
- Call in at any police station
- Use one of the Hate Incident Reporting Centres – see **www.westyorkshire.police.uk** for more information
- Contact **StophateUK** on **0800 138 1625**

True Vision

The aim of the True Vision initiative is to improve the service the police provide to individuals targeted because of their disability, race, religion or sexual orientation.

The True Vision packs provide you with a single self-reporting form and a pre-paid envelope. They contain a variety of information that will support you if you have been a victim or witness to a hate crime, or if you are reporting information on behalf of someone else.

The packs are available at Police Stations through the Hate Crime Co-ordinators, and they have also been distributed to a variety of pubs, clubs, libraries, community centres and community events.

An online reporting facility will be available at a later date.

- **What happens after you have reported a Hate Incident/Crime?**

All hate crimes/incidents are investigated thoroughly. Not all cases will be put before the court. When a hate incident is received, the views of the victim are always considered.

- **Where can you obtain additional help if you have reported a Hate Crime/Incident?**

More information on issues relating to the reporting, recording and investigation of hate crime/incidents is available from West Yorkshire Police, HQ Local Policing Department, Community Cohesion Unit:

Community Cohesion Inspector - 01924 282150

Community Cohesion Officer - 01924 282594

Or you can find help by visiting one of the hate crime reporting centres :

Housing Aid Centre

4-5 The Springs, Wakefield WF1 1PU

Housing Office

The Close, Hill Top, Knottingley, Ferrybridge WF11 8EE

Housing Office

Ground Floor, Civic Centre, Castleford WF10 4JH

Pontefract Municipal Offices

Stuart Road, Pontefract WF8 4PQ

Housing Office

Westfield Road, Hemsworth WF9 4ND

Housing Office

Exchange Street, South Elmsall WF9 2RD

Housing Office

Queen Street, Normanton WF6 2DQ

Housing Office

19-25 Wood Street, Wakefield WF1 2EL

Housing Office

2/4 George-a-Green Road, Lupset, Wakefield WF2 8HN

Housing Office

Ossett Town Hall, Ossett WF5 8BE

Housing Office

Stansfield Road, Airedale, Castleford WF10 3BY

Housing Office

Wakefield Road, Featherstone WF7 5HU

Housing Office

Stanley Street, Eastmoor WF1 4NB

Victim Support

The Gaslight, Lower Warrengate, Wakefield, WF1 1SA

St Georges Community Centre

Lupset Community Centre Association, Broadway, Wakefield, WF2 8AA

Wakefield Citizens Advice Bureau

27 King Street, Wakefield WF1 2SR

Pontefract Citizens Advice Bureau

First Floor, Horsefair House, Advice Bureau, Horsefair,
Pontefract WF8 1NX

South Elmsall Citizens Advice Bureau

Westfield Resource & Enterprise Centre, Citizens Advice Centre,
Westfield Lane, South Elmsall WF9 2PU

Asylum Seekers Team Base

Queens House, Queens Street, Wakefield, WF1 1JR

Asylum Seeker & Refugee Drop in

Agbrigg & Belle View Community Centre, Montague Street,
Off Agbrigg Road, Wakefield, WF1 5BB

Jamia Mosque

12 Grange Street, Wakefield WF2 8TF

Wakefield Asian Welfare Association

Agbrigg & Belle View Community Centre, Montague Street, Off Agbrigg Rd, Wakefield, WF1 5BB

Bar Zeus

6 Lower Warrengate, Wakefield WF1 1SA

RASA Advocacy Project

13 Upper York Street, Wakefield, WF1 3LQ

Surestart Wakefield East

Tel: 01924 302648

Surestart Ferry Fryston and Airedale

Tel: 01977 724044

Surestart Hemsworth, Kinsley and Fitzwilliam

Tel: 01977 465610

Surestart Wakefield West

Children's Centre Tel: 01924 302333

Sunshine Library Tel: 01924 290880

