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**Community Mental Health Advocacy - Key Information**

Community Mental Health Advocacy (CMHA) provides independent advocacy support to people over the age of 18 years old who access community mental health services in Warrington.

CMHA is non statutory, empowering individuals to be involved in decisions about their lives.

Individuals may be known to the IMHA service previously if they were detained under the Mental Health Act in one of the local advocacy delivery settings.

CMHA will provide continuity of advocacy support at a time when individuals may feel particularly vulnerable and isolated. Working in partnership with the individual and other professionals, timely support and strategies will be put in place with the aim of preventing relapse and readmission to hospital.

**Eligibility criteria to access the CMHA service:**

Individuals must:

* Be over the age of 18 years old
* Live in Warrington and/or be registered with a Warrington GP
* Access community mental health services in Warrington
* Have no one else willing and appropriate to support them

Advocacy support is provided up to a maximum of 6 months.

**Processes the Community Mental Health Advocate can support with:**

* Care planning
* Care Programme Approach (CPA)
* Care and Treatment Reviews
* s117 reviews
* 72-hour reviews with the community mental health team following discharge
* Access to appropriate agencies and services such as CAB and Housing

**What advocacy is:**

Advocacy is taking action to help people say what they want, secure their rights, represent their interests, and obtain services they need. Advocates work in partnership with the people they support and take their side.

Advocacy is free, confidential, independent and person led.

Our aim is to strengthen the voice of the person facing discrimination, disadvantage and social isolation.

Advocacy **is not** giving advice, offering a befriending or mediation service, providing emotional support, or filling a gap in service provision.

**How the Community Mental Health Advocate will support:**

The advocate will work in partnership with individuals to provide consistent support in the transition process on discharge from inpatient mental health services as they settle into life in the community.

Advocacy intervention will be for a maximum of six months and involve:

* Signposting and enabling positive access to appropriate community services (statutory, 3rd sector, community and peer led support initiatives)
* Attending where necessary initial appointments
* Preparing for and supporting within relevant meetings
* Liaising with appropriate health professionals so that timely support and strategies are put in place to prevent relapse and readmission to hospital
* Enabling individuals to develop their self-esteem and confidence, take control of their own lives, and improve their wellbeing
* Providing resources and information to develop effective self- advocacy skills

**How to make a referral**

1. Referrals can be made by professionals with the consent of the person needing advocacy support by using the CMHA referral form. It is essential that all relevant information in relation to consent is completed.
2. Self-referrals are actively encouraged using the self-referral form.

Please provide as much detail as possible on the referral form that will inform our allocation process and advocacy work undertaken. For example, this may include significant meeting dates, information on any access needs or communication approaches and relevant religious, cultural or gender factors.

If you are uncertain as to whether a person is entitled to an advocate, please contact the duty advocate on 01925 246 888 to discuss further.

Professional referrals should be completed and sent via email (password protected) to [referral@advocacyhub.org.uk](mailto:referral@advocacyhub.org.uk)

Self-referrals can be completed by phone, email or in person with the advocate.