



Guidance Notes for Early Help Advocacy Referrals

Early help advocacy supports with issues that are not covered by statutory advocacy in the community. This may include support to:

- Participate within Child in Need processes
- Access appropriate agencies and services such as CAB and Housing
- Make a complaint
- Report a hate crime
- Put plans in place for End of Life wishes

Early access to appropriate support can often prevent intervention from social care and empower people to take control over their lives.

Key to Early Help Advocacy is providing a range of resources to encourage people to develop their self-help and self-advocacy skills

Advocates are qualified to deliver independent advocacy within community settings.

The following eligibility criteria apply:

- People over the age of 18 who live in Warrington and/or are registered with a Warrington GP
- A vulnerable person where one or more of the following applies:
 - Mental health needs
 - Learning difficulty/disability
 - Sensory or physical impairment
 - Autism/Aspergers
 - Older person
 - Dementia
 - Long term health condition
 - Acquired brain injury
 - Socially isolated or disadvantaged
- Advocacy support is issue based

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 and independent.

In all our advocacy activity our aim is to strengthen the voice of the person facing discrimination, disadvantage and social isolation. Where possible we will always promote self-advocacy. A range of self-help resources are available to enable people to have the confidence to advocate for themselves. These resources can be downloaded from the Warrington Speak Up website www.warringtonspeakup.org.uk

Advocacy **is not** giving advice, offering a befriending or mediation service, providing emotional support or filling a gap in service provision. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.

Making a referral

Referrals can be made by professionals with the consent of the person needing advocacy support by using the Early Help Advocacy referral form. It is essential that all relevant information in relation to consent is completed. 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.

Referrals should be completed and sent via email (password protected) to referral@advocacyhub.org.uk