

What is an IMCA?



An Independent Mental Capacity Advocate is trained to provide advocacy support to people under a piece of law called the Mental Capacity Act.

Sometimes people say IMCA to make it easier to understand.



This advocacy work is statutory which means it must be done by law.

The Mental Capacity Act explains the rights people have if they cannot make some decisions for themselves.



It helps people to make decisions and choices about their lives. It says what rights people have.



Some health or social care professionals can make decisions about what is best for you.

They are called the decision maker.



This decision will be made using a best interests checklist to make sure that your rights are being upheld under the Mental Capacity Act.

What does an IMCA do?



An IMCA will help you to understand and be involved in the decision about a serious medical treatment.

This decision is usually made when someone is in hospital or an outpatient.



The decisions an IMCA will support you with:

- Major surgery such as open heart surgery or brain surgery
- A medical procedure such as a cataract operation
- Withholding or stopping treatment if this would not help a person get better

When can I have an IMCA?



You have the right to support from an IMCA if you would find it difficult to:

- Understand important information about the serious medical treatment
- Remember that important information



- Look at the good and bad things of the important information
This is called weighing up
- Communicate your views, wishes and feelings



If you would find it difficult to do one or all of these things on your own and you do not have any one appropriate to represent you, then you can have an IMCA to support you.



An appropriate person is a friend or family member who knows you well. It is someone who you trust to help you to understand information, make your decision and have your views and wishes heard.