



Community Advocacy

How to get an advocate

You can make a referral yourself or ask a friend or relative to make one on your behalf. We also take referrals from professionals.

To make a referral:

Phone: 01257 472900, or 01942 487854

Email: advocacy@my-life.org.uk

Online: www.my-life.org.uk/advocacy

Face-to-face: Phone or email My Life to arrange an appointment to discuss a referral face-to-face at either of its two sites:

- **Standish site**
Thompson House Equestrian Centre,
off Pepper Lane, Standish, Wigan, WN6 0PP
- **Leigh site**
Leigh Sports Village, Sale Way, Leigh, Lancs, WN7 4JY

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm.

Alternatively, face-to-face appointments can be arranged at mutually convenient venues.

Not being listened to?

We offer a range of confidential, independent advocacy services to help you to make choices about your life, understand your rights and get your voice heard.



Our skilled and trained advocates work with individuals who need information and support to get their voice heard. We work with people who are socially isolated, disadvantaged, and/or have complex needs. This includes: older people, people with disabilities or mental health issues, substance misusers and asylum seekers.

Our service is independent, confidential and non-judgemental.

How can an advocate help?

With your permission, our advocate can write letters, make phone calls, attend meetings, offer support, research your options and rights, help you to access the information you need, and support you at meetings or interviews.

Our advocates will:

- listen to you, make sure you know your rights and entitlements and take your side;
- speak up for you and make sure people listen to your views;
- make sure you are treated fairly;
- be independent from other people in your life, such as your family, friends or professionals.

Advocacy is all about giving you a choice and a voice. It is **not**:

- about offering advice, opinions or judgements about what is best for you, or persuading you to follow a particular course of action;
- about replacing support or services that are lacking;
- a substitute for a professional to talk directly to you;
- about representing you legally in a court of law (we can offer support).

What types of things can we help you with?

Our advocates can help you:

- communicate with organisations, such as Wigan Council, employers, benefits agency, etc;
- with problems when the Police are involved;
- understand your doctor or at the hospital;
- with your support plan;
- decide where you want to live;
- if you are in a crisis situation, or where there are safeguarding concerns;
- to get a direct payment;
- understand your rights and make a complaint (although complaints about health are dealt with by Healthwatch);
- and many other problems you may have.

Who can get advocacy?

Adults eligible for health and social care support from Wigan Council, and people who are self-funders.