

The Advonet Group

Providing Independent Advocacy

Leeds Advocacy Network



Advocacy Together: What is Advocacy?

August 2023 | Version 1.0

Introduction



On Thursday 20th July 2023, we held a free event as a follow-up to one that took place back in May 2022. Its' main aim was to get everyone who provides advocacy (formal and informal) in Leeds together to look at how we can support people from marginalised communities to get their voices heard.

We had a group exercise, asking the following questions:

- What is advocacy?
- Are you doing advocacy without knowing it? Advocacy covers a lot of things - no one model fits all
- How can we make advocacy more person-led?
- How can we do more advocacy together?

Innovation in advocacy

In addition to that, we also had talks about the innovative ways in which advocacy can be delivered. They covered topics such as coproduction and capturing people's stories.

We had talks from two recipients of grants from the first round of Advocacy Development Fund funding - MEMEC and Lippy People.

Inside this document, we have included the notes and comments people have made in the group exercise. They will be used to help give advocacy in Leeds a leg-up to make sure more people are heard and have their rights upheld.

What is advocacy?



- Raising voice, speaking up
- Raising awareness, solidarity
- From own experience or collective
- Not when you are just 'doing it' in a meeting
- Addressing the problem, solution focussed
- Can be a lifeline, knowing what is there and rights
- All having a chance to be heard
- Overcoming difficulties
- Helping others voice their opinions
- Professional support
- Non-judgemental
- Independent
- Person-led
- Giving people a voice
- Ensuring people's rights are upheld
- Making sure people know their rights
- Supporting people
- Helping people to help themselves
- Education
- Empowerment
- Skills building
- Enabling independence
- Speaking up
- Being a voice - listening
- Unlock barriers
- Upholding rights
- Giving people options
- Choice
- Boundaries
- Representation
- Legislation
- Children's advocacy

What is advocacy? - Continued



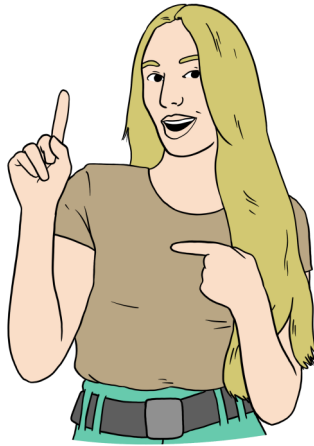
- Processes / systems
- Last word
- Information - knowledge
- Informal advocacy
- Speaking on behalf of someone
- Confidence

Are you doing advocacy without knowing it?



- We do advocacy all the time in everyday life, but training helps. Although not always needing a certificate. Need training for small groups delivering one-to-one advocacy
- If you are wanting to raise things collectively publicly, how do we tell the story powerfully?
- Sometimes, we feel we are preaching to the converted, video excerpts and in training.
- Support groups
- Speaking about own experiences (lived experience) can resonate with others
- Listening to client group
- Exploring options
- Providing information and tools for client to make informed decisions
- Yes!
- Might not be aware as not using the specific terminology / vocabulary
- It's ingrained in everything we do, although it sometimes now feels very specialist
- Perception of terminology - corporate
- Taking it to all members of the community
- "We don't call it advocacy, but it is"
- Parents / family / friends
- Interpreting – cultural knowledge
- Communicating needs
- Care givers – representing them through professionals – connection to the community

How can we make advocacy more person-led?



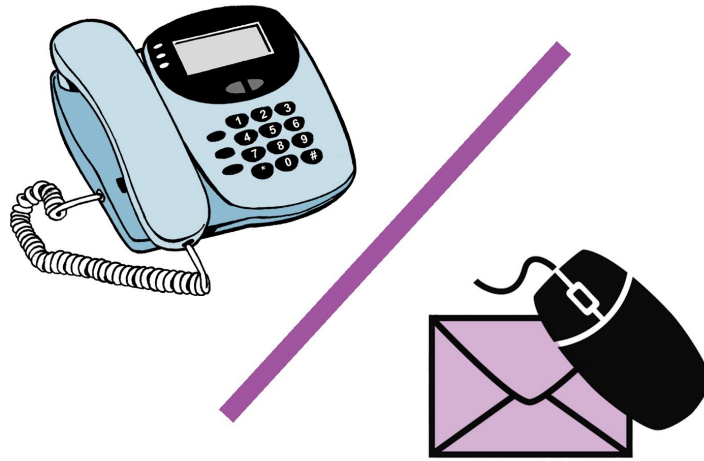
- Asking!
- Lived experience meaningful input campaigning
- Linking communities through a platform, so they know what each other does and link together
- Coaching / self-advocacy
- Helping them prioritise
- Lived experience
- Advocacy plans produced with client
- Linked-up working so clients can access the services they need in a more seamless way
- Lived Experience
- Client-centred approach
- People who have received service feed back into it
- Extra time for translation
- Co-production
- Skills, training
- Resources, information
- Self-recognition
- Lived and shared experience
- Cultural knowledge
- Redirecting to right places
- Proactive
- Partnership working
- Interpreting needs

How can we do more advocacy together?



- Challenging each other and supporting
- Share knowledge e.g. frameworks, training, rights
- Reach different groups / communities
- Better informed about different services and needs of other groups / communities
- Mutual support
- Connection
- Training Sessions
- Unpick funding jargon
- Sharing experience and resources - knowledge
- More events that bring people together
- Navigating
- Empowerment

Contact us



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