



# Kirklees Advocacy Service

**The mental health system  
can be complicated**

**We can help you to know  
your rights, and to speak  
up for them**





## **If you are in hospital because of your mental health, it might be useful to speak with an Advocate.**

We can help you if:

- You are getting mental health treatment in hospital or you are being detained or 'on a section'.
- You want more information about the kind of treatment you can get.
- You want someone with you at meetings (like 'ward rounds' or 'case conferences') to make sure your point of view is heard, and that you are listened to.

If you have been told you are not allowed to leave hospital, an advocate could help you.

The Independent Mental Health Advocacy Advocate is someone who is trained in mental health law, who is there to help people to know and stand up for their rights - and is described in the revised Mental Health Act 2007.



## **Who is the service for?**

- Anyone detained or sectioned under the Mental Health Act.
- Anyone on a Community Treatment Order or conditionally discharged (a restricted patient).
- Anyone subject to guardianship.
- If you are an informal patient, who is likely to be detained.
- Any patient discussing serious treatment such as neurosurgery or ECT ('electric convulsive therapy' sometimes called 'shock treatment') for anyone under 18.
- If you are an informal or voluntary patient you can still see a mental health advocate so contact us about the service we can offer you.

## **What can we do?**

- We can explain how the Mental Health Act affects you.
- We can provide you with information on your rights and help you understand how to demand them effectively.
- We can help get information about the kind of help/ treatment you are being offered, and to work out what you want.
- We can support you and make sure your views get heard at ward rounds, tribunals and meetings.
- We can be on your side, and help you challenge a decision about your treatment, or to make a complaint.
- We can help you understand what is going on, and to take more control over your care and treatment.
- We can help you meet other people with similar experiences (if you want) , if you think that would be helpful.

## Some examples of when an Independent Mental Health Advocate might be useful

When	What an IMHA can help with
When you are first admitted into hospital.	To help you understand your situation, what is going on, and what your rights are.  To help you understand the process of assessment or treatment that is being proposed.
Before a ward round, or meetings.	To help you understand the purpose of the meeting, who will be there, what their role is, what you want to talk about, and what they will want to talk about.  Help to work out what support you may want in the meeting, and how we will provide that.
During a ward round, or meetings.	Support with making your voice and opinions heard, helping you to effectively exercise your rights.
If you are concerned about the care or treatment choices you are being offered (eg medication).	To understand what is on offer - what are the possible advantages and disadvantages of particular treatments, and to help you work out and decide what is best for you.
When plans for your care are being made, or being changed or reviewed.	To make sure you are fully involved in agreeing what is going on, who is doing what, and what is expected of you.

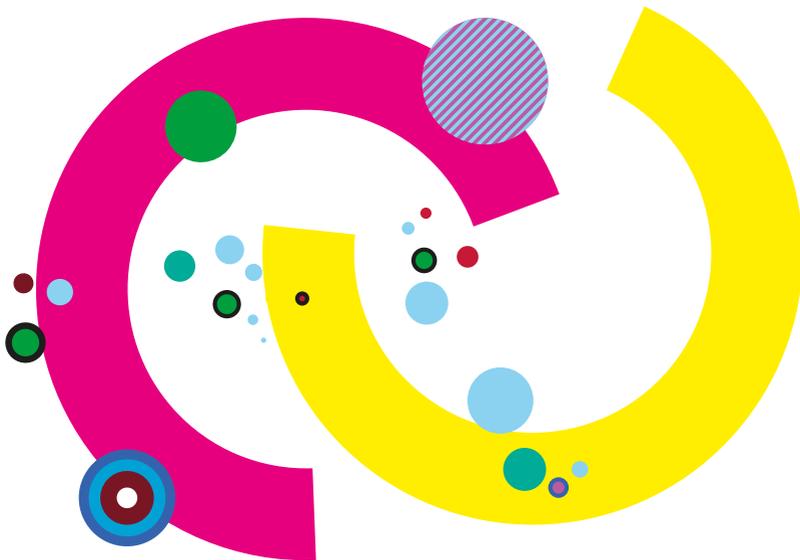
When	What an IMHA can help with
If you want to see your records or notes.	To understand how to get access to your records, and how you can make sure these are accurate.
If you want to make a complaint.	Help with getting the outcome you want - working out what you want to say, to whom, and the best way of resolving the problem.
If you want to apply for a Manager's Hearing or Tribunal (to 'appeal your section').	Help to get you specialist legal advice and support.
To apply for "leave" from hospital	Help to ask for permission to temporarily leave hospital and to negotiate the conditions of this leave.
If you want help with issues such as housing, debt, etc.	We can raise those issues with either your Care Co-ordinator or another appropriate service.
Before you are discharged.	Help to ensure you are discharged from hospital in a way that's planned and that you get the kind of support you want after you leave.

## How to contact an Advocate

Advocates are on the ward each week. We run drop-ins on the ward, and offer appointments for anyone seeking support.

If you want to contact us, you can:

- Call the number on the back of this leaflet, or send us an email.
- Ask a member of staff to help you to refer yourself.
- Ask a friend or member of your family to get in touch with us.
- Look for the posters that tell you when we are next on the wards.
- Ask around on the ward - we help lots of people to know their rights and to stand up for them.



## What else does Touchstone Provide?

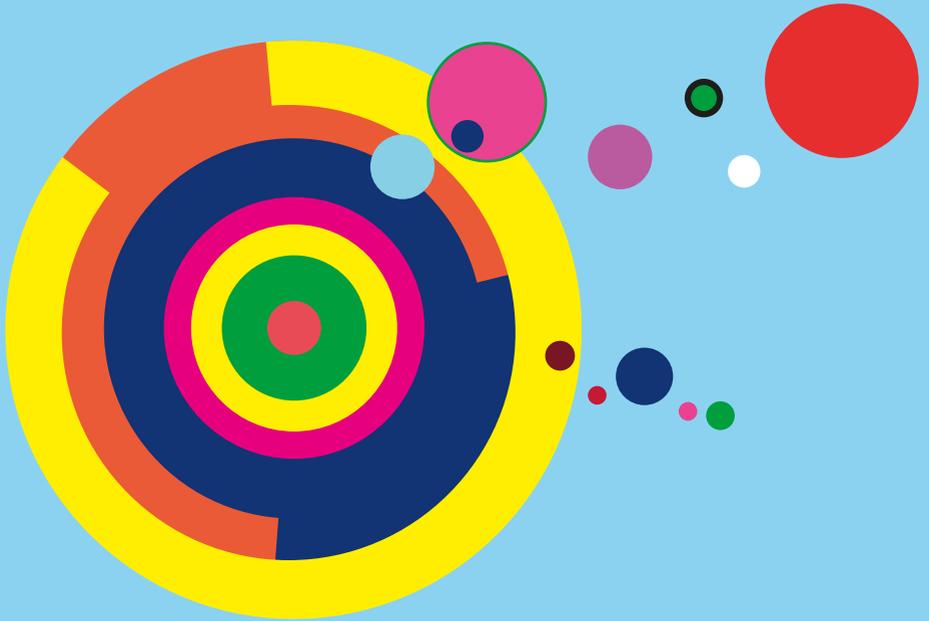
Touchstone also provides Mental Health Advocacy for people who are not in hospital, or who are not detained against their will.

We can also help people who get help from Social Services to choose the kind of mental health support they want, through our Peer Brokerage Service. We help people with Personal Budgets to spend them on the kind of help they want, and to find the right kind of support that helps their recovery.

## What makes Touchstone's services different?

All our services in Kirklees:

- Are designed and delivered by people with experience of using mental health services.
- Build on what people can do for themselves.
- Recognise we can all help and learn from each other.
- Try to help people make social connections with other people.
- Challenge a culture of 'them and us'.
- Are focused on recovery and inclusion.
- Are free, and completely confidential.



# Touchstone Kirklees Advocacy Service

Contact us on 01924 460211 or  
[advocacy@touchstonesupport.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@touchstonesupport.org.uk)

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[www.touchstonesupport.org.uk](http://www.touchstonesupport.org.uk)

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