



Advocacy Referral Flowchart

This flowchart helps you understand what type of advocacy support may be right for you or your family. It is designed to make advocacy pathways clearer and easier to navigate.

Step 1: Do you need help being heard or involved in decisions?

Advocacy support can help when decisions feel overwhelming, confusing, or when your voice (or your loved one's) is not being properly listened to.

Step 2: Who needs advocacy support?

- An adult (18+)
- A child or young person
- A parent or family member
- Someone who may lack mental capacity

Step 3: Is this statutory advocacy?

Statutory advocacy applies when:

- Important decisions are being made
- The person has substantial difficulty being involved
- There is no appropriate family member or friend to support them

Examples include:

- Mental Health Act advocacy (IMHA)
- Mental Capacity Act decisions (IMCA)
- Care Act assessments or reviews
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (RPR / DoLS)

If yes, referral should be made to the local statutory advocacy provider (e.g. VoiceAbility).

Step 4: Independent or non-statutory advocacy

If statutory criteria are not met, or the person can choose their advocate, independent or private advocacy may be appropriate. This can include:

- Parent and family advocacy
- SEND and education support
- Support for older people who retain capacity
- Preparation for meetings and reviews



Step 5: Is advice or support needed instead?

If you mainly need benefits, housing, debt or general advice, you may be better supported by organisations such as:

- Citizens Advice
- Age UK
- Step Change
- Other specialist community services.

Advocacy is about ensuring people are heard, understood and supported in decisions that affect their lives.

Still unsure where you fit?

If you're not certain which type of advocacy applies, you don't have to figure it out alone. Get in touch and we'll talk it through with you.

 **Contact Improving Futures**