



Referrals

Referrals to the IMCA service must be made by or on behalf of a professional decision maker. Anyone else wishing to make a referral must have this approved by the decision maker.

If you wish to discuss a referral or require further information then please contact our Access Hub on 01905 27525 or email:

accesshub@onside-advocacy.org.uk

Completed referral forms should be emailed to:

imca@onside-advocacy.org.uk

Referrals should not be made in the following circumstances:

- When serious or emergency/medical intervention is required immediately
- Where there is an urgent need for accommodation
- Where any treatment is regulated under Part 4 of the Mental Health Act
- Where restrictions are in place relating to a person's accommodation under the Mental Health Act

ONSIDE have been delivering independent advocacy services since 1993. We have extensive experience and skills in advocacy and in working with a wide range of adults facing disadvantage or who are vulnerable including those who lack capacity to give instruction.

We also provide Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), Independent Health Complaints Advocacy, Care Act Advocacy and Generic Advocacy.

Contact details

For general enquiries and to find out more about other services please contact our Access Hub or visit our website using the details below:

☎ **01905 27525**

✉ **accesshub@onside-advocacy.org.uk**

🌐 **www.onside-advocacy.org.uk**

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ONSIDE Independent Mental Capacity Advocates help people across Herefordshire & Worcestershire

The Independent Mental Capacity Advocate service was introduced in the Mental Capacity Act 2005 as part of a range of measures designed to support, safeguard and protect vulnerable people who lack capacity and are unable to make their own decisions in specific areas of their lives.

It is a statutory advocacy service for people who are over 18 and aims to ensure that individuals wishes, views and feelings are taken in to account in decisions affecting their lives.

The IMCA service is for people who have no family or friends to support them.

When is an IMCA needed?

An IMCA can support someone who lacks capacity to make specific decisions relating to:

- **A change of accommodation** when the NHS or local council want to move a person to hospital for more than 28 days or to other care accommodation for more than 8 weeks
- **A decision needs to be made relating to serious medical treatment**, including situations where the NHS wants to stop or withhold treatment as a decision to start it
- **Safeguarding** - Safeguarding referrals should be made under Care Act Advocacy. The IMCA Service however can support alleged perpetrators of a safeguarding concern
- **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards** - IMCAs are instructed by the local authority for the assessment of a person's deprivation of liberty

Who is eligible for an IMCA?

A person who has been assessed as not having the capacity to make a specific decision relating to the circumstances detailed above.

IMCAs are primarily intended to provide support where people do not have appropriate family or friends to represent them.

People eligible are likely to include, but not be limited, to those with:

- Dementia or other conditions affecting cognition such as brain injury or stroke
- Mental ill health
- Learning difficulties
- Physical disabilities

Or people who are unconscious or in a coma.



What will the IMCA do?

- Support and represent the person throughout the decision-making process
- Meet the person and take time to understand their wishes, feelings and values
- Consult with other key people in the person's life
- Evaluate information including accessing and reviewing relevant medical and social care records
- Identify and evaluate alternative course of action
- Work to ensure that the Mental Capacity Act principles are being followed within any processes
- Evaluate all information and write a report which the decision maker has a legal duty to consider
- Challenge the decision (including capacity) if necessary informally or if appropriate through the Court of Protection

What an IMCA cannot do:

- Assess a person's capacity
- Make decisions on behalf of the person who lacks capacity
- Make decisions on behalf of the decision maker
- Continue to provide support once the decision is made

