

Independent Mental Health Advocacy Service (IMHA)



The IMHA service is now available in Worcestershire and is being provided by Onside Independent Advocacy.

You can access free, independent and confidential support from an Independent Mental Health Advocate if you are a patient and subject to the Mental Health Act.

You may:

- Feel overwhelmed or confused by events and processes.
- Be unsure about your rights or where to get information.
- Find it hard to say how you feel.

An advocate:

- Can support you and provide information on the Act and how it affects you.
- Can support you to put forward your views and help you access expert advice and information.
- Will act on your behalf and is independent of any other services.

You are entitled to IMHA support if you are:

- Detained under the Mental Health Act (even if you are on leave under Section 17)
- On a conditional discharge
- Subject to guardianship
- On a supervised community treatment order

Informal patients can have support if they are:

- Being considered for a treatment to which Section 57 applies
- Under 18 and being considered for electro-convulsive therapy or any other treatment to which section 58A applies

How can an advocate help and support me?

Advocates will help you obtain information about and understand:

- Your rights under the Act.
- The rights which other people have in relation to you under the Act i.e. nearest relative.
- The particular parts of the Act which apply to you.
- Any medical treatment that you are receiving or might receive.

Advocates can also support you in other ways, for example to:

- Engage with the care planning process.
- Access Mental Health Review Tribunals, prepare for them and understand the decisions made. (This does not replace the role of the solicitor).
- Negotiate appropriate aftercare.
- Access other support and services.
- Raise concerns about your experience/care.

How can I contact Onside if I would like to know more or obtain support from an independent advocate?

You may contact us directly or ask staff, family, or a friend to get in touch with us in the one of the following ways

Referrals: **0844 248 9 248**

General enquiries: **01905 27525**

Email: IMHA@onside-advocacy.org.uk

Web: www.onside-advocacy.org.uk

Fax: **01905 28554**

By post:

Onside Independent Advocacy
Williamson House
14 Charles Street
Worcester
WR1 2AQ

Onside is a Worcestershire based independent Advocacy Organisation which has been working in the County since 1993 and have extensive experience in supporting people experiencing mental ill health.

