**Learner’s Workbook**

Session date:

Learner’s name:

Tutor’s name:

**Module 2 – Am I an Advocate?**

This handbook is designed to complement the session and support you to record your learning to provide a point of reference for future use. You are encouraged to complete the handbook as fully as possible and use it in a way that you feel is most appropriate to your needs.

The handbook is for you to take away and will not be assessed or marked in any way.

**Learning outcomes for this module**

By the end of the session learners will be able to:

* Identify when and how they themselves may act as advocates
* Understand why they may be unable to advocate effectively in some situations
* Know what alternative options are available to ensure that the person receives ongoing support if they’re unable to advocate effectively

**The Squeaky Wheel**

**I hate to be a kicker,**

**I always long for peace,**

**But the wheel that does the squeaking**

**is the one that gets the grease.**

**(Josh Billings, c1870)**

**Exercise 1 – Recap ‘what is advocacy?’**

**Overview:** In this exercise learners are given a card with a sentence beginning on it and asked to complete the sentence

**The sentence on the card was:**

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**The sentences created by the group were:**

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**Discussion points**

Note any group discussion points arising from this exercise.

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From Slide 5

**What is advocacy…?**

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| ***Advocacy is*** | ***Advocacy is not*** | ***An advocate must*** |
| *Representing a person’s wishes and feelings.* | *Counselling.* | *Be led by the person – only doing what they request.* |
| *Ensuring a person’s rights and entitlements are being met.* | *Support work.* | *Represent what the person wants, regardless of their own opinions.* |
| *Accessing information to ensure the person understands the process.* | *Befriending / mentoring.* | *Consult with the person throughout.* |
| *Helping a person consider their options.* | *Advising a person on what you think is best for them.* | *Help the person consider all their options.* |
| *Attending a meeting with someone to give them more confidence.* | *Representing a person against their wishes.* | *Have the time to participate as much as requested by the person.* |
| *Listening to a person and acting on their direction.* | *Talking about someone behind their back and knowing things they don’t.* | *Be friendly while  still maintaining boundaries.* |

**Exercises 2 and 3 – How do we support others to have a voice and be heard?/Advocacy types**

**Overview:** In exercise 2, learners were given copies of the advocacy process on A3 sheets and asked to note practical examples of how/when they’ve carried out each stage in their personal and/or professional lives.

In exercise 3, cards with definitions of each type of advocacy on them were placed in four areas of the room. Learners were invited to think about the examples they noted in exercise 2 and consider which type of advocate they are.

**Discussion points**

Consider how this exercise supported you to identify your role as an advocate. Which type(s) of advocate are you? Make a note of how/who you act as an advocate for in each type you identify with e.g. under peer advocacy you might note ‘*I went with Jane to see the GP*’ (remember these notes are for your own use only).

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| Independent Professional Advocacy – *An individual may be able to access an advocate whose job is to provide them with independent support to get their voice heard regardless of their own views or opinions of the situation e.g. working for an advocacy service and advocating for a young person at a review meeting.*  Informal advocacy – *An individual may seek advocacy support from someone they know on an informal basis. This type of advocacy forms part of a broader emotional relationship where the advocate may have their own strong feelings about what’s best for the individual e.g. advocating that your child wishes to move schools to be able to study a particular subject they’re interested in.*  Formal advocacy – *Some broader professional roles have an element of advocacy within them. The professional can support the individual to express their views and wishes while separately expressing their own professional views or judgements e.g. advocating that someone you provide care to is not happy in their accommodation, at their request.*  Peer advocacy – *An individual might look for advocacy support from someone who understands their situation because they’ve been there or are in similar circumstances to themselves e.g. advocating that a work colleague should have the same amount of breaks as you.* |

From slide 11

**Barriers to being an effective advocate**

No one type of advocacy is ‘best’.

The reasons why each type of advocacy may/may not be suitable to the situation can be:

1) Linked to the person needing advocacy

2) Linked to the person potentially providing advocacy

3) Linked to the issue or situation

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| ‘Deciding what not to do is as important as deciding what to do’  (Steve Jobs, co-founder, Apple Inc.) |

**Exercise 4 – Which type is best?**

**Overview:** In this exercise, learners were invited to look at the case studies in groups/pairs and note their responses to the questions after each scenario

**Discussion points**

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you’ve felt unable to advocate? Why was this? What did you do?

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**What can we do if we’re unable to advocate?**

* Is there anyone else in a similar role that could advocate?
* Is there another form of advocacy available?

Helpful organisations:

* Meic – 0808 802 3456 (children and young people) [www.meiccymru.org](http://www.meiccymru.org/)
* Citizens Advice – 0345 404 0506 [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/)
* Older People’s Commissioner – 02920 445030 [www.olderpeoplewales.com](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/)
* Children’s Commissioner – 0808 801 1000 [www.childcomwales.org.uk](http://www.childcomwales.org.uk/)
* Is the person eligible to receive Independent Professional Advocacy support? (Specific to their situation – the organisations above will be able to help you find out about this. Or see [gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/151218part10en.pdf](http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/151218part10en.pdf) – “Local Authorities must arrange for the provision of an independent professional advocate when a person can only overcome the barrier(s) to participate fully with assistance from an appropriate individual, but there is no appropriate individual”).

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