

Advocacy

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is when another person is on your side to help you solve a problem, protect your rights, and promote your interests.

Advocates usually work with you on a short term basis (for a particular issue or problem) and will stop working with you once the issue is resolved.

An advocate will help you solve an issue you might have with **icare lifetime care**, or with a service provider.

They are independent of all other people who might already be working with you, such as your family members, service providers or a case manager.

Advocates can't give legal advice, but may be able to tell you where you can get this kind of advice if you need it.

What does an advocate do?

An advocate can help you sort out a problem, or do other things such as:

- Help write letters
- Help make phone calls
- Go to meetings with you or on your behalf.

Having an advocate will not affect how we treat you. We will only know you have an advocate if you've given the advocate permission to speak on your behalf.

There is no limit on the number of times you can seek help from an advocate, but there has to be a particular issue or problem the advocate can help with. They are unable to help with day-to-day issues.

Why would I want an advocate?

An advocate gives you a different kind of help from a case manager or other people involved in your treatment, rehabilitation and care.

An advocate might help if you feel you can't talk to us or a service provider in the following types of situations:

- To change your contact at **icare lifetime care** (such as a coordinator)
- To change service providers, such as your case manager or attendant care provider
- To change your living arrangements (for example, to move out of home)

How do I find an advocate?

We can help you find an advocate or you can use the Disability Advocacy Finder developed by the National Disability Advocacy Program to find services which provide advocacy for people with disabilities www.disabilityadvocacyfinder.dss.gov.au

Sometimes you may want to make a complaint about us, the services we fund or the way we do things. If you disagree with a decision we've made, you may want to dispute it. If you want the help of an advocate to navigate the complaint or dispute process, we have some specific impartial and external support and advocacy service providers who can help you. See our information sheet: *Support and Advocacy Service*. This is available on our website www.icare.nsw.gov.au