



your voice your rights your choice

Independent Advocate (IMHA/ICAA)

Job title	Independent Advocate (IMHA/ICAA)
Reporting to	Senior Mental Health Advocate
Contract	Permanent
Hours	Full time and part time posts
Salary	£24,156 – £27,000 pa
Location	London
Closing date	Wednesday 18 March, 12 noon
Interviews	Wednesday 25 March

About The Advocacy Project

We help marginalised and vulnerable people make effective choices about what happens in their lives. We also support them to speak up and help improve important services we all need. We want to make sure people across all age and care groups – including learning disability and mental health – can:

- › voice their concerns
- › understand their rights
- › make effective choices about what happens in their lives

We do this through advocacy services which support people individually, and user involvement projects that help organisations improve the services they offer. Find out more about us at www.advocacyproject.org.uk

Our vision

A world in which every person has a voice

Our mission

To enable every person to have their voice heard, uphold their rights and make choices

About the role

We believe everyone has the right to influence decisions affecting their lives. We're searching for an exceptional person to join our dynamic and innovative advocacy team that currently provides services to a range of care groups across London. We're looking for advocates to work in roles in Hammersmith & Fulham, Hackney, Westminster & Kensington and Chelsea, and Ealing (forensic setting).

This role will provide independent mental health advocacy for adults with mental health issues in hospital and community settings including a specialist eating disorder unit. The role includes independent Care Act advocacy and non-statutory advocacy.

Key responsibilities

- Provide advocacy for eligible people under Care Act 2014 and Mental Health Act 2007.
- Provide instructed and non-instructed advocacy.
- Meet case-working standards, monitoring system requirements and the goals for our service, making sure everyone needing advocacy is referred into the service in the right way.
- Refer people to other types of statutory or non-statutory advocacy as appropriate.
- Raise awareness of independent advocacy and referring pathways to eligible people and referring agencies
- Keep your knowledge of legislation and policy up-to-date, including the mental health act, mental capacity act, care act, and local / national policy.
- Keep up to date with developments and good practice in independent advocacy (including different advocacy models).
- Develop good working relationships with key staff within health and social care services.
- Be an active member of the mental health service, contributing to service planning and providing cover for other colleagues when needed.

General responsibilities

- Participate in team meetings and training.
- Participate in personal, team and organisational development.
- Contribute to monitoring reports.
- Keep to our policies, including health & safety, and risk regulations.
- Work to our mission, vision, and values.
- Carry out other projects and tasks as needed.

Person specification

Essential:

- Experience and understanding of the role and responsibilities of advocacy under Mental Health Act and Care Act.
- Experience of working with people with mental health issues and an understanding of the issues they face.
- Experience of work with a wide range of people who are likely to be eligible for advocacy under the Care Act 2014.
- Sound knowledge of mental health services, including current issues in policy and practice. Knowledge of health and social care practice and legislation.
- Experience of the principles and practice of advocacy and an understanding of different forms of advocacy.
- Ability to listen and build trust, to encourage people to express their own views and to represent clients' self-defined interests.
- Excellent communication skills (written and verbal) including an understanding of creative communication methods.
- Excellent interpersonal skills. Good at working with a wide variety of people including commissioners, service users and colleagues.
- Commitment to working within The Advocacy Project code of conduct, equality and safeguarding policies.
- Ability to work as part of a team and on your own initiative, to plan and prioritise your own workload.
- Willingness to promote The Advocacy Project and the mental health service in line with our mission, vision and values.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development.

Desirable:

- Achieved – or studying for – a relevant professional qualification, eg NAQ
- Experience of working with children and young people; an understanding of the issues they face, particularly in relation to mental health.
- Experience of working in a forensic setting.
- Knowledge of housing and benefits in relation to advocacy.
- Understanding of the Accessible Information Standard.
- Ability to speak a local community language.

Benefits of working for us

We're committed to providing an empowering, flexible and supportive working environment for all our staff.

Our employee benefits include 30 days annual leave (including up to 3 days between Christmas and New Year), participation in a pension scheme with 6% employer contribution, access to a free confidential counselling service, and an interest-free travel/bike loan.

All our staff are supported to learn and develop in a variety of ways, including a monthly lecture series where we invite sector experts to talk to our staff on topical issues.

We are a Disability Confident and Mindful Employer.

An external review concluded that:

"...advocates have excellent support and training to undertake their roles" and advocates find the "lectures, internal training, team meetings and case review meetings extremely helpful"

The review also stated "managers are always accessible and there was a great deal of knowledge and experience across the teams".

How to apply

Send your CV and a supporting statement explaining why you think you're the person we're looking for and how your experience meets the person specification.

Upload your application via our website on www.advocacyproject.org.uk/work-for-us

Remember to get it to us by the deadline listed on page 1.

If you have any questions please get in touch on HR@advocacyproject.org.uk / 020 8969 3000.

**Winner of the 2019
National Advocacy Award for Equality & Diversity**