

Total Voice Suffolk

Advocacy services in Suffolk
A guide for professionals



We support people to speak up and have their voice heard

About us

Total Voice Suffolk is a partnership of organisations working together to provide advocacy in Suffolk. We provide free, independent and confidential advocacy services.

Our multi-skilled advocates carry out all elements of statutory advocacy (IMCA, IMHA, Care Act and NHS Complaints) and professional and community advocacy.

We work with adults who may have mental health issues, learning disabilities, dementia, acquired brain injury or other disability. We also work in some cases with children and with family carers.

What is advocacy?

Advocacy is about taking action to support people to:

- Say what they want
- Secure their rights
- Represent their interests
- Obtain services they need.

Advocacy is there to ensure that people are involved in decision-making about their health and care as much as possible or are represented where required. Advocates and advocacy providers work in partnership with the people they support and take their side. Advocacy promotes social inclusion, equality and social justice.

What does an independent advocate do?

- Seek the person's views, wishes and preferences
- Help the person to know their rights and communicate what they want
- Support the person to understand information, processes and decisions
- Support the person to challenge decisions they are unhappy with, or do so on their behalf if required
- Work with professionals to keep the person and their well-being at the centre of the care process.



The advocate has the right to access the person's records if they lack capacity or the person wishes them to. An advocate may write a report outlining their findings that must be taken into account by professionals.

Non-instructed advocacy

Non-instructed advocacy takes place when a person lacks the capacity to instruct an advocate. The non-instructed advocate seeks to uphold the person's rights; ensure fair and equal treatment and access to services; and make certain that decisions are taken with due consideration for all relevant factors which must include the person's unique preferences and perspectives.

Your duty to refer

Professionals have a duty to refer eligible people to independent advocacy under the Care Act, the Mental Capacity Act and the Mental Health Act.

Independent advocacy is a statutory right for individuals who, without independent support, are unable to be involved in making important decisions about their lives. Eligibility criteria for advocacy prioritises those most in need.

We also offer a range of non-statutory advocacy services, such as community and professional advocacy, which can help a wider range of people.



Types of advocacy and who is eligible

Care Act Advocacy

Advocate's role

To support the person to understand their rights under the Care Act and be fully involved in:

- Needs assessments, young carers assessments, carers assessments
- Transitions assessments (Children to Adult Services)
- Care/support plans and care reviews (including joint health needs assessments)
- Safeguarding enquiries and adult safeguarding reviews.

Eligibility

Adults

The person has care and support needs.

Children (under 18)

The child is in transition from Children to Adult Services and has care and support needs and is subject to a child's needs assessment.

Young Carers

The person is having an assessment of potential future needs for support.

Adult Carers

The person is having an assessment of potential future needs for support. They are and will continue to be able/willing to care for the adult.

AND the person has a substantial difficulty **AND** there is no appropriate person who is willing and able to support the person's active involvement.

Exceptions can also apply when there is an appropriate person, if:

- A placement is being considered in NHS funded provision (Hospital for 4 weeks or more **OR** Care home for 8 weeks or more) **AND** the local authority believes an advocate would be in the best interests of the person.
- There is a disagreement between the local authority and the appropriate individual **AND** they **BOTH** agree that an advocate would be in the best interests of the person.

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)

Advocate's role

To support the person with issues specifically relating to the person's detention, care, treatment or rights.

Eligibility

The person is either:

- Detained under the Mental Health Act OR
- Subject to a Community Treatment Order or a Guardianship OR
- Being considered for psychosurgery or ECT under Sections 57 / 58 MHA (83) OR
- A conditionally discharged restricted patient.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)

Advocate's role

To represent someone if a best-interest decision is being made about:

- Serious medical treatment
- Long term accommodation or
- Care Review

Eligibility

The person is assessed to 'lack capacity' to make a specific decision, which means:

- The person has an impairment or disturbance of the mind (e.g. a brain injury, dementia, Autism, learning disabilities, mental health problems)
AND
- They are unable to either understand or retain information for long enough to make a decision, weigh-up information to make a decision or communicate their decision
AND
- There are no family or friends considered appropriate to be consulted in relation to the best interest decision.





NHS Complaints Advocacy

Advocate's role

To support a person to make a complaint if they are unhappy about treatment or care that they, or someone they know, has received from the NHS.

An advocate can:

- Provide people with information about different NHS complaints processes
- Help people understand the different options they have in raising their concerns
- Offer people support to help them think about their complaint and what they want to get from making a complaint
- Support people to make a complaint.

Eligibility

Anyone who wants to make a complaint about an NHS service or a service funded by the NHS.

Professional Advocacy

Advocate's role

To support people in their relationships with statutory organisations, and when facing important decisions about their lives with service providers in situations such as:

- Continuing Health Care
- Complaints resolution in more complex situations, both informally and through complaints procedures
- Support to Parents involved in Child Protection Proceedings
- Supporting people lacking capacity to understand information in order to exercise choice and control.

Eligibility

The eligibility is not age or disability-specific.



How to make a referral

By phone: For advice on making a referral or to refer someone, call the Total Voice referral line on **01473 857631**. People can also self-refer using the same contact details, or our text phone **07948 160240**.

E-mail: You can email us for advice and referral forms, info@totalvoicesuffolk.org

Online: You will find a referral form on our website, totalvoicesuffolk.org

NHS Complaints Advocacy: For NHS Complaints Advocacy, we also offer a dedicated helpline **0300 330 5454** and dedicated website where people can download self-help information packs: nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org

If in doubt about which advocacy service you need for someone you support, contact us. We will work together to get the person the appropriate advocate.

The Total Voice Suffolk Partnership

The Total Voice Suffolk team is made up of seven experienced organisations working together. This means you can quickly access the right specialist support using just one point of contact. The partnership members are:



For more information and to get in touch



E-mail

info@totalvoicesuffolk.org



Phone

01473 857631



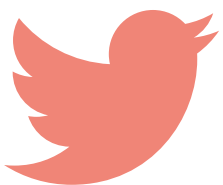
Text

07948 160240



Online

totalvoicesuffolk.org



Twitter

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This booklet was designed in co-production between members of the Total Voice Suffolk Partnership.

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