

What is an Independent Advocate?

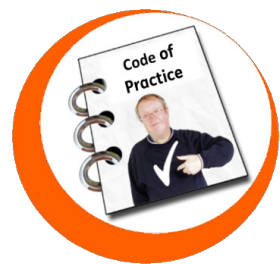


An **Independent Advocate** is trained to provide advocacy support to people under a piece of law called the **Mental Health Act (1983)**.



If you are an **informal or voluntary patient**, you are **not** detained under the Mental Health Act.

If you are an **informal patient** you have agreed to be in hospital on the advice of the healthcare professionals caring for you.



There is a **Code of Practice** which explains how you should be treated in hospital. It tells you about your **rights**

What does an Independent Advocate do?



An Independent Advocates job is to support you if you have agreed to be an **informal patient**

Your Advocate can help you to:



- **understand your rights** and be involved in decisions about your **care and treatment**



- talk through your options



- get information about and support you to access other services



- prepare for and go with you to meetings



- make a complaint if you are unhappy

When can I have an Independent Advocate?



You have the right to an Advocate if you are an **informal patient**.



You **do not** have to have support from an Advocate, it is your **choice**. You can **end** the support you have from your Advocate at **any time**.