

## How do I get a Mental Health Advocate?

The medical or social care team should do everything possible to ensure you understand the IMHA support available, and how to access it, as soon as you are subject to the Act. They should also give information to your family, unless you request otherwise.

You choose whether to receive an IMHA's support, or not, and can change your mind at any time.

Speak to a member of staff and ask to be referred for an IMHA or telephone us and we can request this to be done on your behalf.

For further information and a referral form please visit our webpage

[www.iane.org.uk](http://www.iane.org.uk)

[www.iane.org.uk](http://www.iane.org.uk)



**Under the Care Act, Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.**

**To report any concerns you may have please contact:**

**The Adult Gateway Team**

**tel. 0191 643 2777**

**Out of hours 0191 200 6800**

### **Independent Advocacy North East**

**Room B14  
Linskill Centre  
Linskill Terrace  
North Shields  
NE30 2AY**

Phone: (0191) 259 6662

Email: [info@iane.org.uk](mailto:info@iane.org.uk)

Website: [www.iane.org.uk](http://www.iane.org.uk)

Independent Advocacy North East  
is a Registered Charity (Number 1148607)  
and a Company Limited By Guarantee  
(Number 7949689)



### **Advocacy support for people treated under the Mental Health Act**



Independent Advocacy  
North East

## Are you entitled to an Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA)?

You are entitled to an IMHA if you are detained or 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act. An Advocate can also work with you if you are conditionally discharged under Guardianship or Supervised Community Treatment.

If you are an 'informal' patient, you will also be able to get support from an IMHA if you are being considered for serious surgery, such as neurosurgery for a mental disorder, or if you are under 18 years old and are being considered for Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT).

### What is an IMHA?

An IMHA is a trained and experienced advocate who can work with you around your care and treatment under the Mental Health Act. An IMHA is independent which means they are separate from your medical and social care teams and work for a different organisation.

IMHAs do not replace existing advocacy services. IMHAs can work with other advocates whilst supporting you.

### What can an IMHA do for me?

An IMHA can work with you:

- To inform you of your rights and make sure they are upheld
- To gather information to help you consider your choices and make decisions
- To help you to understand your care and treatment
- To have your views heard by standing by you and supporting you to speak up
- To attend ward rounds, appeals and meetings
- To represent you when you are unable to, or do not want to, attend meetings
- In private, when possible
- To speak privately with your medical or social care team, on your behalf, to discuss issues or to access records held about you.

An IMHA will not tell you what he or she thinks is right for you, but will help you to decide what you want to do. They will only act on your instructions and will not judge you.

### How will an IMHA work with you?

An IMHA is free so you don't have to pay for the service.

It's confidential so your discussions and information will only be shared with medical and social care staff if you ask for it to be shared or if there is a very good reason to do so.

An IMHA will share with you any information they get about you.

An IMHA does not affect your right to a solicitor. They will not give you advice, but will help you to consider your options and support you to make decisions.

**Free**

**Independent**

**Confidential**