

# East Lothian Independent Advocacy Services

Independent  
Advocacy

Enabling  
people

to have  
their voice  
heard



# WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

Independent advocacy is a way to help people have a stronger voice and to have as much control as possible over their own lives

It is about everyone having the right to a voice:

- addressing barriers and imbalances of power, and
- ensuring that an individual's human rights are recognised, respected, and secured.

Independent advocacy can have a preventative role and stop situations from escalating. It can help assist individuals and groups to develop the skills, confidence and understanding to speak up for themselves in the future.

Independent advocacy is especially important when individuals are vulnerable, or at risk of being discriminated against.

## Who can access Independent Advocacy

- Older adults
- LGBTQIA+ community
- People with mental health issues
- People with a learning disability
- People with autism
- People who've had a stroke
- People who use drugs/alcohol
- People with a physical disability or acquired brain injury
- Adults experiencing an Eating Disorder



# INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

## Individual Advocacy

Individual Advocacy is provided on a one-to-one basis. An Advocacy Worker will:

- assist people to represent their own interests
- represent the views of individuals if the person is unable to do this themselves

## Collective Advocacy

Collective advocacy happens when a group of people with similar issues or experiences get together to raise issues and try to change things.

It enables people to find a stronger voice, to campaign and influence issues and decisions that shape and affect their lives.

# SIGNPOSTING TO ADVOCACY SERVICES

Working professionals have a **duty to inform** eligible individuals of the availability of Independent Advocacy services, and **it is up to the person** to make the decision if they wish to access them or not.

An independent advocacy worker can be particularly helpful to both parties in the following situations:

- if the wishes and needs of an individual are unclear.
- if the person is likely to experience difficulty in understanding or retaining the information being presented to them.
- if the person has difficulty expressing their needs and wishes.



# EAST LOTHIAN ADVOCACY PROVIDERS



**CAPS Independent Advocacy** is an organisation that provides individual advocacy to people who have mental health issues or are using drugs or alcohol in East Lothian.

They also work with children and young people who are involved in the Children's Hearings process. Adults living in Lothian experiencing an eating disorder can access individual advocacy. CAPS also runs various collective advocacy groups for people with mental health issues in Lothian and for veterans living anywhere in Scotland.

## **Individual Advocacy for Adults**

**T:** 0131 273 5118

**E:** [advocate@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:advocate@capsadvocacy.org)

## **Individual Advocacy for Children**

**T:** 0131 273 5236

**E:** [ypadvocacy@capsadvocacy.org](mailto:ypadvocacy@capsadvocacy.org)

**[www.capsadvocacy.org](http://www.capsadvocacy.org)**



**EARS Independent Advocacy Service (SCIO)** assists a variety of individuals including older people, people with a physical disability or acquired brain injury as well as people who have had a stroke.

## **Specifically this includes:**

- Older people (65+) in East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian.
- Adults (16+) with physical disabilities and/or acquired brain injury in East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian.
- Adults (16+) who have survived a stroke in Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian.

**T:** 0131 478 8866 or 01506 205840 / **E:** [info@ears-advocacy.org.uk](mailto:info@ears-advocacy.org.uk)

**[www.ears-advocacy.org.uk](http://www.ears-advocacy.org.uk)**



Partners in Advocacy provide independent advocacy for adults with learning disabilities in East Lothian. They provide individual independent advocacy for adults with learning disabilities and autism, as well as collective advocacy for the same group.

Additionally, they offer independent advocacy to children and young people aged 12-15 who want to challenge decisions made by education authorities across Scotland.

**T:** 0131 478 7723 / **E:** [edinburgh@partnersinadvocacy.org.uk](mailto:edinburgh@partnersinadvocacy.org.uk)

**[www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk](http://www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk)**