

## Advocacy Charter



**INDEPENDENCE** Our advocates will take your side independently of all health, social care and other services. This includes any other services provided by Friendship Care and Housing and organisations we work in partnership with including funders, contractors and regulators. We will actively seek to reduce any conflicting interests in providing independent advocacy for you.

**PUTTING YOU FIRST** Your wishes and interests will direct what we do. We will not judge you and will listen to and respect and act on what you say about your needs, views and experiences.

**EMPOWERMENT** We will support self-advocacy and empowerment through all our work. We have ways in which people who want to, can influence and be involved in the running and management of the service.

**CONFIDENTIALITY** We will keep all your information confidential within the service unless we cannot do so for legal reasons or there is a risk to yours or others safety. Your advocate will always tell you if they feel they must pass on information. We will give you a copy of our confidentiality policy if you ask.

**EQUALITY** We have a written Equality and Diversity strategy and we proactively tackle all forms of

inequality, discrimination and social exclusion. We will ensure you and others have fair and equal access to advocates' time.

**ACCESSIBILITY** Advocacy will be provided free of charge. We will aim to ensure that the places we meet you and our policies, procedures and publicity materials are accessible to you and for the whole community.

**CLARITY AND HONESTY** We will be clear and honest about what we can and cannot do for you at all times. We will make available our statement of Aims and Objectives if you ask.

**ACCOUNTABILITY** We have in place systems for the effective monitoring and evaluation of our work. You will have a named advocate and a means of contacting them.

**SUPPORTING ADVOCATES** We will ensure our advocates are prepared, trained and supported in their role and provided with opportunities to develop their skills and experience.

**COMPLAINTS** We work hard to provide an excellent service. Occasionally, things go wrong. When this happens we want you to tell us so we can put things right for you and take steps to make sure the problems are not repeated.

## Service Standards

We work to the nationally recognised Action for Advocacy 'Quality Standards for Advocacy Schemes' and 'Code of Practice for Advocates'. These are based on the principles in the Advocacy Charter. We will provide you with a copy if you ask us.

The basic standards you can always expect are:

- ✓ Your advocate will work with you according to the principles above
- ✓ We will agree an advocacy plan with you focused on resolving *your* issues and regularly review progress with you
- ✓ We will plan to meet you on an appointment basis, so please let us know if you cannot keep to the appointment. If we need to change any arrangements we will discuss this with you first
- ✓ When we start working with you, we will give you a copy of this Advocacy Charter, your advocacy plan, and our How to Make a Complaint leaflet
- ✓ If you ask, we will provide you with a copy of any policy or procedure, which applies to the service you receive
- ✓ We will provide information in a format that suits you, such as easy read, audio, other languages, large print or Braille.

If there is anything you do not understand about the Charter, or if you think we are not keeping to the promises in this Charter, please ask your advocate or any member of the team, who will do their best to help you.

### Your Advocate is:

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their Telephone number is:  
.....

### Their manager is:

.....  
their Telephone number is:  
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### The Services Manager is:

.....  
their Telephone number is:  
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### You can also discuss any concerns with the people that fund us:

#### Sandwell Area

Sandwell Primary Care Trust  
Complaints Section  
Kingston House  
438 High Street  
West Bromwich  
B70 9LD

#### Birmingham Area

Mental Health Joint  
Commissioning Team  
NHS Birmingham East & North  
Suite 202, Ciba Building  
146 Hagley Road  
Birmingham  
B16 9NX