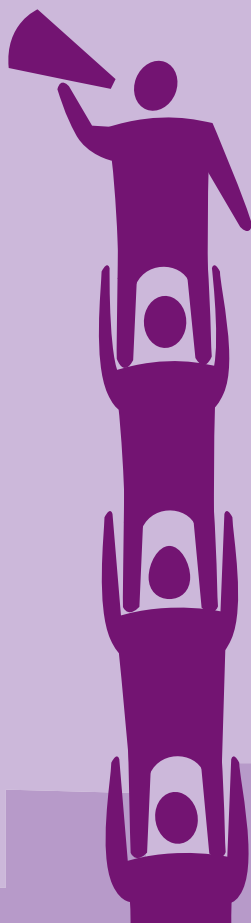




Centre on Human
Rights for People
with Disabilities



Learning Disability Advocacy Service

Have Your

Voice Heard

Supporting people with disabilities to achieve their human rights

Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights works to promote and protect the human rights of people with disabilities through education, capacity building, outreach work, campaigning, research and advocacy support.

Understanding human rights

Human rights are entitlements that every human being has to be treated fairly and involved in society. Some examples of human rights include the right to:

- healthcare;
- education;
- live independently and participate in the community;
- access justice;
- an adequate standard of living; and
- freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Although people with disabilities have the same human rights as everyone else, they continue to encounter a range of physical, cultural, social and attitudinal barriers, which prevent them from accessing the same rights as non-disabled people.

Advocacy service

Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights provides an advocacy service to support people with disabilities to take action to secure their human rights and represent their interests. This service is provided to people with all types of disabilities.

Learning Disability Advocacy Service

In the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights provides an advocacy service specifically for people with learning disabilities.

Our advocate works with people with learning disabilities in the community and also with long-term residents in Longstone Hospital.

The service is:

- confidential;
- provided free of charge; and
- independent, which means the advocate can work in partnership with clients, with no conflict of interest.

What does the advocate do?

The advocate supports people with learning disabilities to understand their rights and encourages them to speak up if they are unhappy about how they have been treated.

The advocate will listen to the person's issue and identify the options available to them. Once the person has made a decision on how they want to deal with the situation, the advocate will support them to take action and say what they want.

The advocate is also there to ensure that people with learning disabilities have choices about their lives, have access to the services they need and supports them to say how they want to live.

Non-instructed advocacy

The advocate also provides non-instructed advocacy, when a person cannot give a clear indication of their views or wishes in a specific situation, for example when a person has a profound learning disability. In these cases, the advocate works 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 the person's individual preferences and perspectives.

Who can use the advocacy service?

- Adults with learning disabilities living within the Southern Health and Social Care Trust, who need support to help them to deal with a difficult situation.
- In cases of non-instructed advocacy, for example when a person with a profound learning disability cannot give a clear indication of their views or wishes in a specific situation, the request may be made by someone involved in the care of the individual. The advocate will always act only for the individual and not for the person making the request.



For further information on Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights or to speak to an advocate, please contact:

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