

Advocacy information

What is advocacy?

Advocacy can be defined as:

- standing up for the rights of people who are being treated unfairly
- standing alongside an individual and speaking out on their behalf in a way that best represents the interests of that person.

Types of advocacy

There are several different types of advocacy. These include:

Systemic advocacy

Systemic advocacy works towards changing the structures in society that create inequalities and disadvantage. Many peak bodies are involved in systemic advocacy work.

Legal advocacy

A community legal service would be an example of an agency providing legal advocacy. These organisations assist people with issues that require advice or knowledge from someone with legal knowledge. The types of problems that an agency providing legal advocacy might deal with include tenancy issues, guardianship and police issues.

Informal advocacy

Informal advocacy is usually provided by a carer, family member or friend as a natural extension of their role in your life. This person, who knows you well, can help you explain to others what you need or want. There are carers' groups available who provide carers with support, networking opportunities and training to assist them to effectively advocate on behalf of their family member.

Self-advocacy

Self-advocacy means that you are able to ask for what you need and want and tell people about your thoughts and feelings. Self-advocacy means you know your rights and responsibilities, you speak up for your rights, and you are able to make choices and decisions that affect your life.

Individual Advocacy

Individual advocacy is provided on a one-to-one basis by an advocate who is generally employed by an advocacy service. An advocate seeks to uphold the rights and interests of the person with a disability or older Australian and to address issues such as equity, discrimination, abuse or neglect.

Sometimes a person can feel isolated, vulnerable or unsure and when their rights are denied they are unable to stand up for themselves. In this situation an advocate can represent their interests for them.

If you feel uncomfortable about a decision that has been made by your service provider or government department or frightened to make a complaint yourself then an advocate can support you by speaking on your behalf.

Advocacy contacts

Below is a list of several advocacy organisations that provide individual advocacy support or assistance to carers.

Independent Regional Advocacy Service (IRASI)

Provides information, advice, advocacy and referral to:

- Tenants
 - People experiencing service and support issues around their mental health
- Phone: (07) 38160235
Enquiries: info@irasi.com.au

TASC National

A community legal service and advocacy organisation who can assist (subject to eligibility) with issues related to:

- Disability
- Elder Abuse
- Mental Health
- Family and Domestic Violence
- Minor criminal Matters
- Civil Matters

Phone: (07) 4616 9700

Email: reception@taschnational.org.au

Disability Advocacy Pathways (Pathways)

Provides a state-wide centralised phone advice and referral service to support all people with disability

Phone: 1800 130 582

ADAAustralia (ADA)

Provides Aged Care and Community Advocacy, Disability Advocacy, Elder Abuse Advocacy, Human Rights Advocacy and Legal Help.

Website: <https://adaaustralia.com.au>

Toll Free: 1800 818 338

Email: info@adaa.com.au

First Nations people with disability

[Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland](#)

(hosted by ADA Australia)

Phone: 1800 718 969

Carers Qld

Carers Queensland provides carers with information and services to support them in their caring role. They offer a Guardianship and Advocacy Program to assist family carers to navigate the Queensland Civil Administration Tribunal System (QCAT)

Website: <http://www.carersqld.com.au>

Freecall: 1300 747 636

AMPARO Advocacy

AMPARO is a non-profit community organisation which provides individual and systemic advocacy on behalf of people from a non-English speaking background who have a disability. AMPARO advocates for vulnerable people for whom language and/or cultural differences make it difficult to understand and negotiate systems and services. AMPARO aims to influence positive sustainable change to attitudes, policies, practices and resources within governments and communities.

Website: <http://www.amparo.org.au>

Phone: (07) 3344 4900

Interpreter Service: 131 450

Fax: (07) 3369 2511

Email: info@amparo.org.au

Queensland Advocacy Incorporated

QAI is an independent, community-based organisation for Queenslanders with a disability. QAI engages in systems advocacy through campaigns directed to attitudinal, law and policy change, and by supporting the development of a range of state advocacy initiatives. They also provide individual legal advocacy in relation to mental health law, legal advocacy with priority to persons with impaired capacity who are subject to restrictive practices and involuntary treatment and non-legal individual advocacy to prevent further entrenchment in the criminal justice system.

Website: <http://www.qai.org.au/>

Phone: (07) 3844 4200

Freecall: 1300 130 582

Email: qai@qai.org.au