

# Advocacy

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### 1. Purpose

Clients may use an advocate or representative of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be a family member, friend or independent advocacy service.

Advocates will be accepted by Subee as representing the interests of the client.

Advocates may be used during assessments, reviews, complaints or for any other communication between the client and the organisation.

### 2. Definition

An advocate is a person who, with the authority of the client, represents the client's interests.

Advocacy will support clients with:

- Promoting their independence and social and economic participation
- Promoting choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports
- Maximising independent lifestyle and inclusion in the community

### 3. Expected Outcome

Expected Outcome: Each client's right to access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of their choice is supported, as is their right to have the advocate present.

### 4. Procedure

Subee will inform each client of the advocacy services available in the clients local area. They will also offer phone numbers, email and web addresses of alternative advocacy services. If requested Subee, assist clients in their attempts to find an advocate who –

- ✓ will listen to and follow the client's instructions;
- ✓ will fairly and impartially articulate the client's wishes;
- ✓ is independent;
- ✓ will assist the client to be better informed, to achieve desired change and to meet the client's needs;
- ✓ will increase the client's confidence, independence, power and achievement of desired outcomes.

Where it has not been possible to recruit an independent advocate, the organisation will offer to act as an advocate for the client in interactions with other services. Advocacy is seen as being a component of the case management process. Service coordinators will make sure clients are aware of their right to use an advocate and will regularly remind clients of this option. This will be explained by service coordinators at formal assessments and reviews and through informal discussion and from time to time on Subee website.

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### Procedure for Appointing an Advocate

Clients wishing to use an advocate should inform the organisation, if possible, in writing, of the name of the person they wish to negotiate on their behalf. The client has the right to change their advocate at any time and should inform the organisation of any change. Advocacy Services Advocacy services are free, confidential and independent.

### For Aged Care Services

Anyone receiving Australian Government funded aged care services for help at home or in an aged care home can access free advocacy services with the National Aged Care Advocacy Line on 1800 700 600.

This includes people who:

- are receiving or have previously received aged care services
- are potentially going to receive aged care services, including people who have been assessed as eligible to receive aged care services
- are the family of, or represent the person receiving aged care services?

If requested by the client, the service coordinator will contact an advocacy agent on their behalf to explain their concerns and make arrangements for an advocate to contact them.

### What can an advocate do?

An advocate can –

- ✓ give you information about your rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ listen to your concerns •
- ✓ help you resolve problems or complaints with your aged care service provider
- ✓ speak with your service provider if you wish
- ✓ refer you to other agencies when needed.

### 5. Resources

Who do I contact about advocacy?

#### Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN)

<https://opan.org.au/>

An organisation contracted by the Australian Government to provide free, independent and confidential advocacy services to older people using Australian Government funded Aged Care services as well as their family and carers.

**The National Aged Care Advocacy Line** is - 1800 700 600.

#### Senior Rights Service Inc.

Gadigal Land, 201/ 418a Elizabeth Street SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Phone: (02) 9281 3600 or 1800 424 079 (freecall)

Email: [tars@tars.com.au](mailto:tars@tars.com.au) Website: [www.tars.com.au](http://www.tars.com.au)

#### Disability Advocacy NSW <https://www.da.org.au/> Local Branch – Newcastle

Suite 1, Level 2 “Devonshire House” 408 King St  
Newcastle West, NSW 2302

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Telephone: 1300 365 085

Email: [newcastle@da.org.au](mailto:newcastle@da.org.au)

### Local Branch- Coffs Harbour

13-15 Park Avenue Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

#### Postal address

PO Box 418 Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

Telephone: 1300 365 085

Email: [coffsharbour@da.org.au](mailto:coffsharbour@da.org.au)

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