Standards Australia

Using an Advocacy Service in Aged Care or Disability Support



If you are using an Advocacy service to assist you in navigating your care options, it is important to know that they are increasingly required to meet certain criteria to qualify for funding under government programs. Beyond this, industry has come together to develop a standard on the quality of the services provided. While this standard is not mandatory, they are basic principles that your advocate or service should be adhering to.

Supporting your Human Rights

- You have the right to freedom of expression, self-determination, and to make your own decisions.
- Advocacy Services need to consider your beliefs and needs, and always respect your will and preferences
- Advocacy Services need to respond if you are experiencing or at risk of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation, and if necessary, report it.

Access to Advocacy

- You should have fair and equitable access to Advocacy Services, who need to provide clear information in ways you can understand (e.g., written, verbal, pictorial, or with communication aids).
- Advocacy Services provided should respect and accommodate your cultural, linguistic, religious, and personal background.
- If the Advocacy Service cannot provide what you need, they need to refer you to an alternative Advocacy Service or other agency

Safety and Wellbeing

- Advocacy Services provided should be free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination.
- If you are at risk of harm, you should be prioritised for support.
- Advocacy services need to provide trauma-informed staff.

Your Voice Matters

- The Advocacy Service needs to inform you of your rights and the services available to you.
- Your Advocacy services needs to involve you in decisions about your support.
- You and your Advocate should work together to create a plan that suits your needs and is easy to understand.
- You have the right to give feedback or make complaints about your Advocate, anonymously if you wish, and to receive a response from the service.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Your privacy and confidentiality should be respected at all times.
- You should be told how your information is used and stored.
- Your consent is needed for actions taken on your behalf, except in emergencies or as required by law

Your Advocacy Service Needs to Ensure

- Staff are trained, competent, and available to meet your needs.
- Services are regularly reviewed and improve their services if needed, based on your feedback and best practice.
- Contact details, including how to access support and make complaints, should be easy to find and understand.

Working Together

- Your Advocate should work with your chosen family, carers, and other supporters if you chose to have them involved.
- Advocacy Services should be connected with other Advocacy Services and organisations to help you get the support you need.

If You Need Help or Have Concerns

- You can make a complaint about your Advocacy Service using its complaints process, or you can complain to independent bodies like the Human Rights Commission or an Ombudsman.
- You can ask for an Advocate from another Advocacy Service to support you to make a complaint.

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To read the relevant standard, AS 5391:2024, *Advocacy in Ageing and Disability,* visit our Reader Room at readerroom.standards.org.au