

Would you be interested in making a difference to carer's lives?

The Carer Advocacy Service relies on people with a good understanding of what it means to be a carer, to train as carer advocates. This is an opportunity to develop your skills, gain real satisfaction and use your experience and knowledge.

We would expect advocates to offer a couple of hours a week, which can be in the evenings, during the day or at weekends. We would also expect advocates to attend training and support sessions which will usually be during the day.

In return we will provide you with a comprehensive induction training course; individual and group support, ongoing training opportunities and all out of pocket expenses.

If you would like to know more about becoming a carer advocate please contact Sharon Brownjohn on 0131 622 7625

Contacting the Carer Advocacy Service

If you feel that speaking to an advocate may help, or you would like more information then please contact:

**Sharon Brownjohn
Carer Advocacy Service
VOCAL Carers Centre
8 - 13 Johnston Terrace
Edinburgh EH1 2PW**

**T 0131 622 7625
E advocacy@vocal.org.uk
W www.vocal.org.uk**

If no one is available to take your call please leave a message on the answerphone and we will call you back at the earliest opportunity.



Charity Number SCO 20755



Advocacy for Carers

A free and confidential service for carers by carers

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy means supporting someone in expressing their views and feelings about their situation.

Why is Advocacy needed?

Often carers find themselves in situations where their wishes and needs are not being taken into account. It can sometimes take all their time and energy to get what they want for the person they are caring for, leaving them with little for themselves. An advocate can support the carer in making sure that the carer's needs and wishes are taken into account. An advocate can be an extra voice if you want them to be. Or they can give you the extra support that enables you speak out for yourself.

Who are the Advocates?

The Carer Advocacy Service recruits and trains carers and former carers as advocates. All the advocates are volunteers. They will have passed a selection interview and attended an extensive training programme. They all receive regular supervision.

How could an Advocate help me?

The first thing an advocate will do is listen to you and what you have to say about your situation. They will try to understand your situation from your point of view. The advocate can then:

- work alongside you to support you in finding the best possible outcome to your situation.
- help you to find things out.
- help you to write letters or make phone calls on your behalf.
- come to meetings with you and, if you want them to, they can speak on your behalf.

Advocates are not there to tell you what to do, they are there to support you in your choices and decisions.

Carers supporting carers.

How confidential is the service?

Anything that you tell anyone within the Advocacy Service will be treated as confidential. An advocate will only speak to anyone on your behalf if they have your permission.

How can I arrange to meet an Advocate?

Just contact the project. We will arrange to meet with you, at a convenient time. We will explore your situation and together we will decide if an advocate could help you. If so, then we will arrange for you to meet with an advocate. After this it is up to you and the advocate to decide what needs to be done and how.

Will it cost me anything?

The service is free to all carers so it won't cost you anything and may save you time and worry. We might even be able to help with travel and sitter costs.