



Advocacy West Wales (2024)

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Module Code: ECAY4005

Explore the barriers and challenges to interacting with other organisations within a multiagency setting



Adobe (2024)

Introduction

In this poster presentation we will be looking at barriers and challenges that are faced within multi-agency settings.

We will firstly explore what multi-agency working is and look at what barriers and challenges are and what they may look like in a multi-agency setting.

We will then look a local organisation and what barriers and challenges they may have.

What is Multi – Agency Working?

Training Express (2024) states ‘Multi-agency working is where professionals from different agencies collaborate to achieve a joint mission. They share tasks, responsibilities and goals to support children and families at risk of safeguarding and those with additional needs.’

Supported by Wate and Boulton (2015, P.210) an assessment of an individual at risk can be developed by appropriate professionals from the relevant agency settings working together. From this developing an appropriate support package.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 was established to improving the well-being of people and reforming social services law to enable provisions about co-operation and partnership by public authorities.

What is a barrier or challenge?

Collins (2024) describe a barrier as something being made impossible or difficult to achieve by a rule, or a law or policy.

Atkinson (2002. P.115) explores the key barriers or challenges to multi-agency working.

- These being:
- Fiscal resources
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Competing priorities
 - Resources, such as time, staff, space
 - Communication
 - Professional and agency cultures
 - Management

Advocacy West Wales

Advocacy West Wales (2024) describe themselves as ‘A voice when you need it most in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.’

Advocacy West Wales state their aim is

‘To relieve the effects of mental health problems, disadvantage and disengagement amongst those people affected who live in West Wales, and those areas of Wales commissioning advocacy in partnership with West Wales, through the provision of a comprehensive independent advocacy service’.

Advocacy West Wales explains an advocate is a person who will support you in making a decision for themselves, by assisting and offering support to ensure their views and wishes are listened to and enabling their rights to be protected.

Barriers

What are the barriers faced by Advocacy West Wales?

Language and Communication barriers - According to Office for National Statistics 7.1% of people living in Wales do not speak English as their main language.

Advocacy West Wales have an English/Welsh bilingual language facility on their website, but no other language.

Khasnabis, C. *et al* (2010) clarify the importance of successful advocacy can be dependent on the communication of important messages.

Fiscal resources - Mind (2024) suggest professional advocacy services are independent from NHS and Social Services, usually available through organisations and charities, such as Advocacy West Wales.

Advocacy West Wales states their service over the years was initially funded by Children In Need, over the years services they have provided have changed and some have received additional funding and some other services have had their funding cease.

Recent funding has been received from the Independent Mental Health Advocacy Service.

Gov.Uk (2013) explores how funds can be raised for a charity, when there is a governing document and trustees are in place.

However, Charities Aid Foundation (2024) argue that charities are facing financial pressure, due to donation amounts falling, rising operational costs and increased demands, also obtaining grants is becoming more challenging, due to lack of public funding.

Resources (time) - Atkinson *et al* (P.126) explain how more time is needed to work with other agencies than for them to work within an individual agency system, some companies are not used to working with time limitations, where some are.

Additonal barriers as identified by Atkinson *et al* (P.135) can be:

- Data collection and data sharing
- Staff Training
- Geographical factors (rurality)
- Issues specific to the client group

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