



Information for Social Care Professionals in relation to the Independent Professional Advocacy Service.

Watch our short information film about the 3CIPA service by accessing the link here: <https://youtu.be/8pPXVC5QM14> (English) or <https://youtu.be/b3yy42CkGHo> (Welsh)

This is a statutory service commissioned by the Local Authorities in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire as a requirement under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act and the role is defined within Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy) which sets out how the requirements **must** be met.

The service is designed to provide support to certain individuals engaged in key Social Services processes, specifically, **assessment, care and support planning, care reviews and safeguarding** who face barriers to full participation.

The key barriers are defined as impaired ability to **understand relevant information, retain information, use or weigh up information or communicate their views, wishes and feelings**. The Code also recognises other possible barriers, such as, an individual having difficulties identifying sources of information through emotional or physical difficulties, language barriers, familial conflicts of interest, etc. the key requirement is for any barriers to fully participating and promoting voice and control are addressed.

The advocacy support provided allows the individual to **fully participate** in these processes; a key requirement of the Act. This is done through the provision of information relating to the processes, explaining rights and entitlements, improved understanding of options and facilitating informed personal choices. Throughout engagement the individual will be facilitated to self-advocate to the best of their capacity. For those individuals unable to directly express their preferences and choices or who do not have capacity with regards specific decision making, the advocate will provide non-instructed representation based upon what can be ascertained through, discussion with and observation of the person, and from those who know the person, about the person's preferences and lifestyles, or the types of choices they may have previously made.

There may be other people, family or friends, (referred in the Act as an **appropriate individual**) who can be considered as someone who can assist the person to fully participate. However, the Code sets out some of the difficulties in using family and friends in terms of; their limited knowledge of processes, possible conflicts of interest, the individual not wanting them to provide support or them being implicated in an enquiry into abuse or neglect.



When there is no appropriate individual who is suitable to act as an advocate for the person experiencing barriers to fully participating, and the social care professional feels they cannot assist the person to fully participate, they **must engage** an **Independent Professional Advocate**. In other situations, they should always consider the benefits of engaging an Independent Professional Advocate. At all times this is either - with the consent of the person, or if the person lacks capacity to consent to a referral, on the basis of the person's best interests.

In Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire the Independent Professional Advocate Services is delivered by 3 CIPA (the Three County Independent Professional Advocacy Service), a collaboration between local independent advocacy providers with many years of advocacy experience. Four of the five providers hold the Independent Advocacy Quality Performance Mark and their advocates hold or train to achieve the recognised vocational qualification in Independent Advocacy.

If you feel someone should be receiving their legal entitlement to Independent Professional Advocacy support, or if you are unsure as to eligibility please contact the service and we will discuss each situation on its merits.

Freephone: 0800 2061387 or email info@cipawales.org.uk