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This assignment is all about advocacy, when it first started and the theories of power and oppression when applied to the advocacy context.

Speaking up for yourself and others around you is nothing new it has been going on for years, but it only began to be a big thing towards the end of the 20th century. It was following the second world war, that people started to question the Western culture and whether it was right to lock people with learning difficulties and mental health problems away in a room for long periods of time. From the 1950's onwards a number of charities joined together for change concerning long stay hospitals, and by 1960's they had developed citizen advocacy. In 1966 in America Wolfensberger began the first scheme based on citizen advocacy. In 1983 Mental Health Act and Code of Practice was introduced. Independent representation for children in need (IRCHIN) started offering legal support to children and young adults who were going through family court proceedings and suits. 1984 led to international conferences on self-advocacy and supporters started the first ever People First group. The Children Act 1989 was then introduced to help children and young people who were getting care and or support from social services. These children and young people would then have an advocate to help with decisions affecting them. UKAN was established in 1990, to bring together several national and local mental health groups, 1991 introduced MISG funded the social care services for all types of people with mental health issues, which then went on to include some advocacy groups to speak on behalf of them. Three important legislative developments were brought in in 2001, first was Valuing People-a plan for making the lives of people with learning difficulties, carers and their families easier and better with more help and support. Secondly was Patient Advice and Liaison Services- this provided patients, family and health workers information, advice and support. Thirdly was Care Standards Act 2000-they introduced National Minimum Standards for Care Homes, which made sure the role of the independent advocate had rights in securing people's rights. Our health, Our care, Our say was set out in 2005 to provide people with NHS services and quality social care in communities where they live. In 2007 Independent Mental Health Capacity Advocacy was brought in and were instructed to make decisions on behalf of people who lack the capacity and had no family to act on behalf of them.

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The Qualification in Independent Advocacy was developed in 2009, which is when some marked a move into the professionalization of the sector. Mental Health (Wales) Measure was put in place to include patients under the Mental Health Act 1983, making the IMHA service available to a larger range of patients receiving treatment in Wales. 2015 introduced the long-awaited Care Act which ensures a Independent Advocate is available for anybody who needs help with planning, reviewing and safeguarding when they have no family or friends to help and support them.

Advocacy looks to ensure that people with vulnerable needs can have their voices heard, have their rights defended and safeguarded and have their views and wishes considered when decisions about their lives and welfare are being made. An advocate is someone who helps individuals express their views and concerns, access information and provide a service, defend and promote their rights and explore their choices, options and responsibilities. There are many different types of advocacy within our society, for example there's, citizen advocacy which is described perfectly by O'Brian 'A valued citizen who is unpaid and independent of human service social workers creates a relationship with a person who is at risk of social exclusion and chooses one of several of many ways to understand, respond to and represent that persons interests as if they were the advocates own.' (O'Brien,J.(1987)) another type is 'self-advocacy', where an individual will speak and represent themselves on matters concerning their health and wellbeing, they are able to tell people about their own thoughts and feelings. 'In some cases, failures are caused by hope triumphing over experience. Centuries of ill-treatment and ignoring people deemed 'mad' are forgotten in a wave of goodwill. People do not realise the extent of change needed to facilitate self-advocacy – it is assumed that the statement 'You now have permission to speak' will bring forth self-advocacy. (Lindow (1992)). Legal advocacy is another type where you would pay an advocate to represent or work on your behalf in a court room or instead of a lawyer. 'This type of advocacy has been described as 'a standing invitation to be clever at someone else's expense' (Harvey (1958) in Pannick (1993)).

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When describing and looking into advocacy we need to understand the power relations within society and how individuals and communities can develop skills to empower them to move from being oppressed to full agency.

When talking about power in social science and politics we know it is used to influence and control the behaviour of other people, or for a group to achieve their own goals even though they have people trying to make them fail. This is described perfectly by 'The ability of a person to impose his will upon others despite resistance.' (Peter M Blau (1963)). There are many types of power that we relate to, these are 'power to' where you would decide what you need to do and take action to get it, there's 'power with' which would be if you were two or more and then you jointly spoke and acted out. 'Power over' which is form of control or power that the strong has over the weak. We then have 'visible power' which is when an individual or group can make a decision that can be seen and understood easily, 'hidden power' can be a situation that may not be immediately obvious, and the decision making is done behind the scene. 'Invisible power' is when decisions are made based on influences that cannot be easily seen such as worldwide, religion, tradition of history and beliefs etc.

'Major attempt to enable people to speak for themselves, instead of being spoken for' (Bereford (2016)). Empowerment means to be able to have the freedom or control of what happens to yourself or given the authority to control what happens to someone else. 'The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any' (William P Martin (2004)). Another famous quote relating to empowerment is as Cambridge and Parkes argued, advocacy input into adult safeguarding can be helpful in shifting 'the balance of power in decision making towards the service users and away from professional interests' (Cambridge and Parkes (2004))

Agency is a person, group or business who provide a service on behalf of another person or business, or for people to act independently making their own choices and decisions. 'Agency as a concept, has been closely linked to the contradictory views of individual freedom for people to make their own and a stable social order. This is defined as the agency v structure '(Depelteau,2008)).

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Anti-oppressive practice is a type of work that looks for social barriers and structural circumstances in activities that are used and carried out by service users and workers. It makes sure that the individuals who use these services are cared for and their needs are met without considering their social status. 'You know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. (King, M L (1955)).

After looking at all the theories and how they fit within advocacy it is clear that whether you are an individual trying to help yourself, a group or community fighting for a better change, or if you work for a company that helps people or families, advocacy is an important role and is being used more and more all the time. A lot of people are unaware that advocates even exist and can be very helpful in many ways but as each year goes on and more legislations and acts are brought in, advocacy jobs and requirements are on the rise.

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