

Applied Mental Health Advocacy Skills

Ruth Groff – Module Leader
An Introduction to Advocacy in
Mental Health

MODULE AIM

- To develop the skills of Mental Health Advocacy and evaluate the wider context of mental health diagnosis
- To understand the legal framework of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Mental Health Act of 2007 and critically explore mental health service provision

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Upon the successful completion of this module, the learner should be able to:
- Determine, adapt and use appropriate methods and skills.
- Take responsibility for and exercise the necessity to keep information about clients confidential within the limits of the duty of care.
- Exercise autonomy and judgment in the application of ethical principles, values and moral concepts inherent within mental health.
- Exercise autonomy judgment in the application of individualised care and treatment within the Mental Health field to combat discrimination and social exclusion.
- Employ appropriate academic conventions in the production and presentation of work.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

- The content of this module will consider the current discourses and disputes associated with the field of mental health, the current legislation, current diagnostic tools and regional and international strategies. This will contextualize the place of mental health advocacy whilst learners develop their skill.

ADVOCACY



ACTIVITY

Spend a few moments thinking about a situation where you have been involved in an advocacy role. Note the main issues involved. What were called to do? Were there any difficulties or dilemmas for you? Where do you think the real power lay? What was the outcome of the advocacy? How did it make you feel.



Defining Advocacy

Concise Oxford Dictionary that for the verb 'to advocate', 'plead for, defend, recommend, support' Bateman (2000)

Mind (2010) 'In its simplest form, advocacy can mean just listening respectfully to someone.'

- What is Advocacy
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yvurHII8LA>

'An advocate is someone who can both listen to you and speak for you in times of need.' Mind (2010)



Practice of Advocacy

- In court, a solicitor or barrister will advocate on your behalf by providing detailed and sometime legally complex information and opinions the magistrate or judge.
- Social workers and health workers will, from time to time, speak up on behalf of their service user, client or patient to support their claim for a particular welfare benefit or a claim to housing.

- A social worker or youth worker may well speak up for a young person who is finding it difficult to find employment, and help them to obtain a job interview.
- A Citizen Advice Bureau adviser will represent you and speak on your behalf at a tribunal.
- Someone involved in Citizen Advocacy may act as a befriender or as an encourager to someone who lacks confidence, perhaps because of emotional difficulties, medical problems or a learning difficulty and will help them put forward their views.
- A group of people may get together as a self-advocacy or organisation to help further their cause or to seek and improvement in their circumstances. This is sometimes referred to as Peer Advocacy

MIND

Advocacy is a process of supporting and enabling people to:

- express their views and concerns
- access information and services
- defend and promote their rights and responsibilities
- explore choices and options.



MAIN FORMS OF ADVOCACY

- Self Advocacy
- Group Advocacy
- Peer Advocacy
- Formal, Professional, or Paid Advocacy
- Citizen Advocacy
- Legal Advocacy
- 'Best interests' (non-instructed) advocacy



Activity 2

- Think now of an occasion where perhaps you needed an advocate. How did that make you feel? What would be your expectations? How would you define good advocacy or poor advocacy? How would each make you feel?