



# Your Guide to... Independent Advocacy



Rutland County Council will involve you in any decision made about you and your care and support.

You might need support to be part of this.

The information in this leaflet will help you.

## What is an independent advocate?



An independent advocate is a person who can offer support to you if you are unable to speak for yourself.

An advocate will spend time with you to help you understand what choices you have.

They will make sure your views are understood by people who assess, plan and review your care and support. Your wishes, feelings and needs must be at the heart of any decisions made.

An advocate can represent your views too:

- If you want to disagree with a decision that has been made about you
- If you are involved in a safeguarding case

## If I can't understand information about my care and support, or if I can't give my views, what should I do?



The Council will try to work out how to make information easier for you to understand.

Some people might find it easier if information is in bigger print, or in braille if they are blind. Some people might need an interpreter.

The Council will try to provide information in a different way if that helps.

If you still have '**substantial difficulty**' in understanding what you need to know, the Council will support you by either:

- Making sure you have an **appropriate person** to help you. This might be a friend or a relative or an unpaid carer.
- Or, if there is no appropriate person to help you, the Council can arrange for you to see an **independent advocate**.

## What is meant by '**substantial difficulty**'



This means if you have difficulty with any of these four things:

- Understanding the information given to you
- Remembering the information
- Being able to think about the information
- Giving people your views, wishes and feelings

The Council needs to make sure everyone understands information when they are looking at their care and support.

The Council wants everyone to communicate their views, wishes and feelings.

This is why you might need an appropriate person to help you, or an independent advocate.

## Who is an appropriate adult?



This might be a friend or a relative or an unpaid carer.

The important thing is that you trust them to help you give your views.

You cannot choose someone who is giving you paid care or treatment. So it cannot be your GP, a nurse, a key worker or a paid care/support worker, for example.

If you are unable to give your consent, the Council will check to make sure you are supported by the right person.

There may be times when it is not appropriate to have a family member or friend to speak for you. The Council will tell you if this is the case.

## How can I find an independent advocate?



You can contact LCPT. They provide free advocacy services for adults in Rutland. Their details are:

Leicestershire Community Projects Trust (LCPT)

Telephone: 0116 222 9522

Email: [info@lcp-trust.org.uk](mailto:info@lcp-trust.org.uk)

They have a website where you can read about their services:

[www.lcp-trust.org.uk](http://www.lcp-trust.org.uk)

# What to do if you are unhappy with any decisions...

## What can I do if I am unhappy about any decisions made about my care and support?



If you can, first try to talk about your concerns with the people you have dealt with.

If you don't agree with a decision, you may be able to appeal against it. This means you may be able to ask officially for someone to look again at how they made the decision.

You should contact the Council on 01572 722 577 or email [enquiries@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rutland.gov.uk) to find out if you can appeal.

If you are still unhappy, you can make a complaint to Rutland County Council.

If you make a complaint it will not affect how we treat you and your care.

## Let us know...



Rutland County Council would like to hear your views on services generally.

These views could be about services that you think work well, or things you think could be improved. Or you might want to make a complaint.

To tell us, please telephone 01572 722 577 or email [letusknow@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:letusknow@rutland.gov.uk).

# Safeguarding: Important Information

## Keeping you safe



The rules about eligibility for services do not apply to safeguarding situations. This might be where there are concerns about the safety of a vulnerable person. Rutland County Council will always respond to those situations.

If the Council believes that you or someone else in Rutland is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect they must check this out. This is the same if the person doesn't normally live in Rutland but they are in Rutland at the time.

If you are worried about yourself or another person, please contact the Adult Duty Team on 01572 722 577. Or you can email [dutyteam@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:dutyteam@rutland.gov.uk).

There is more information about safeguarding on the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Board website: <http://lrsb.org.uk/adults>.





# Rutland

County Council

- a** Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP
- t** Telephone: 01572 722577
- e** [enquiries@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rutland.gov.uk)
- w** [www.rutland.gov.uk](http://www.rutland.gov.uk)