

Advocacy Newsletter

Issue No 7 October 2023

Advocacy News

HOPE Advocacy Project

We are approaching the three quarter point of the project and want to take this opportunity to remind everyone what HOPE is all about and the service and opportunity we provide.

Age Cymru's HOPE project provides independent advocacy support to local older people (50+) and carers so they can help shape the key decisions affecting their own lives and thereby avoid getting into a crisis situation.

HOPE is a Welsh Government funded project running until the end of March 2025 and is in partnership with Age Connects Wales and local Age Cymru partners. HOPE is committed to helping others participate and engage through independent volunteer advocacy support, raising awareness of advocacy, and developing volunteer skills.

The project helps people who may need information and support with issues such as housing, accessing services, dealing with loneliness and isolation or dealing with service providers such as utilities companies. HOPE also helps older people to engage with professionals, take part in community activities, understand their rights as an older person, access information to make informed choices and have their voices heard.

HOPE has established a programme of training, workshops and events enabling advocates across Wales to further develop their skills and knowledge. Training and workshops will also be available to other professionals who would benefit from greater awareness of advocacy and how to access it.

For more information on the support available from HOPE please email advocacy@agecymru.org.uk or go to HOPE's website: <https://bit.ly/AC-HOPE>.

To make a referral to HOPE, please use this form: <https://bit.ly/HOPE-REFERRAL> or scan this QR code:



Become a HOPE Volunteer

Would you like to become an Age Cymru Independent Volunteer Advocate?

Our HOPE (Helping others participate and engage) project needs your help to support older people (50+) and carers in your community. HOPE is making a huge difference to the lives of many older people who currently don't know how to deal with their concerns or don't have the confidence to speak up about what they really need.

If you're an adult and can spare a few hours or more a week and wish to help older people (50+) and carers to gain the support they need, when they need it, HOPE would love to hear from you. No qualifications are required and there is no age limit. Volunteers should have a positive and friendly manner, be reliable and be a good listener. HOPE will support and train you to provide independent advocacy to help older people and carers avoid getting into crisis situations.

Our trained Independent Volunteer Advocates help older people and their carers access services like utilities, GP, housing and benefits.

Join us and we'll train you to provide support to local older people and carers so they can help shape the key decisions affecting their lives and avoid getting into a crisis situation. <https://bit.ly/VolAdvocate>

Contact the HOPE team about becoming a volunteer advocate by emailing advocacy@agecymru.org.uk

Or scan the QR Code here:



HOPE Advocacy Ambassadors

HOPE identifies and supports Advocacy Ambassadors, who will promote awareness of rights and choices, and the importance, benefits and outcomes of advocacy. HOPE promotes advocacy in all its forms to show how important it is and what a difference it can make.

We're so delighted to share this contribution on the benefits of becoming a Volunteer Advocate with the HOPE Project from one of our Advocacy Ambassadors Harry Garstang.

What's it like to be a HOPE Independent Volunteer Advocate?

By Harry Garstang, Law student, UWE Bristol

During my time with the HOPE Advocacy Project, I've found it incredibly rewarding to make actual, positive impacts on the lives of older people in Wales. Building trusting relationships with clients, supporting them to explore their options and ultimately support them to resolve their frustrations has been a fantastic use of my spare time at university.

What's it like to be a HOPE Independent Volunteer Advocate? (cont)

The comprehensive training and continued support provided by my supervisor and the wider HOPE team have been invaluable. Whenever I have felt uncertain, there has always been someone I can turn to for advice or just a second opinion.

Volunteering has been more than beneficial for my own personal development, it has added a lot of value to the time I've spent studying my degree. The skills I have improved in communication and client relations while getting to help people is not only fulfilling, but also provides you with practical experience and a sense of real responsibility. These skills gained at HOPE were fantastic to be able to talk about in interviews and helped me be successful in securing a paid summer internship in Bristol. I would absolutely recommend volunteering for the HOPE Project.

The work is rewarding, the opportunity for personal development is second to none, and the impact you have is something you can feel really proud of.

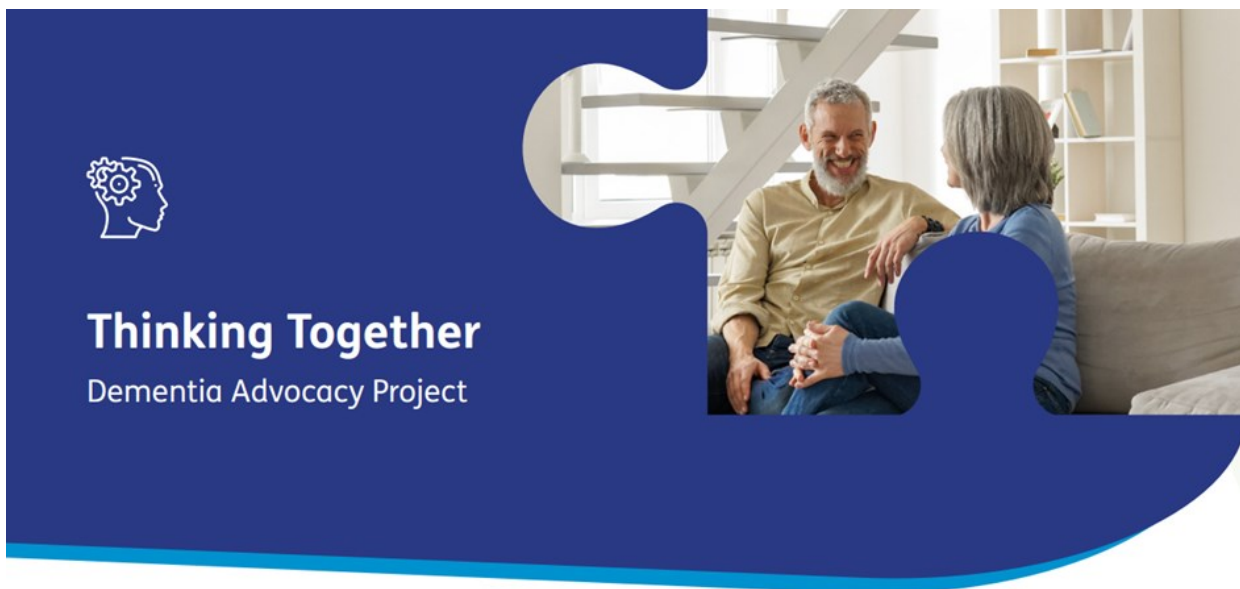
<http://bit.ly/VolAdvocate>

Contact the HOPE team about becoming a volunteer advocate by emailing advocacy@agecymru.org.uk

For more information about the HOPE project, please visit our website - www.agecymru.org.uk/advocacy

Dementia Advocacy Project

There is a new Dementia Advocacy Project booklet now available, please use the link below to view it:



www.agecymru.org.uk/advocacy
dementiaadvocacy@agecymru.org.uk
029 2043 1555


Creu Cymru oed gyfeillgar
Creating an age friendly Wales

DAPBooklet

The Dementia Advocacy Project are also proud to share their information video about the project and the service that they can offer. Please click the link below to access the video:

[Dementia Advocacy Project Information Video](#)

Advocacy Networks

A range of regional advocacy provider networks have been developed across Wales to complement the work of the National Network for Adults Advocacy in Wales. The networks are an opportunity for services who currently provide advocacy, and those who would like to in the future, to get a better understanding of the current situation in the region, potential future commissioning opportunities and to have space to network and share information and ideas.

Below are the details of the next round of advocacy network meetings which will take place via Zoom or Teams

Powys 9/1/24 10-11.30	National Network for Adults Advocacy 14/12/23 10-12
3 Counties in West Wales 16/1/24 10-12	Gwent 16/1/24 2-3.30
Cwm Taf Morgannwg 18/1/24 10-11.30	North Wales 23/1/24 2-3.30
Cardiff and Vale 25/1/24 10-11.30	Neath Port Talbot and Swansea To be confirmed

Advocacy Awareness Week



This year's 6th annual Advocacy Awareness Week (#AAW23) will take place from 6 - 10 November 2023.

This year's theme is going back to basics and exploring **All About Advocacy** – what Advocacy is, what Advocacy isn't, what Advocates do, why advocacy is important and how Advocacy can help people. We hear all the time that lots of people don't know enough about advocacy and so this year we

want to help explain what advocacy is to as many people as possible.

Advocacy Awareness Week is an opportunity to celebrate great advocacy and share stories about the power and impact advocacy can have. The week-long campaign is co-ordinated by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) who have created a wide range of resources for everyone to use. [Download the logos and resources](#) to help share your stories and raise awareness about what advocacy is doing in your communities and organisations.

Coming soon - Advocacy Counts 9 survey

Advocacy Counts is the series of reports highlighting what the provision of independent advocacy is for adults in Wales.

We'll be soon be undertaking the latest survey in the series - **Advocacy Counts 9**. The survey link will be e-mailed to all adult advocacy services in Wales during **November**.

Your views and opinions gathered in these surveys are important. They help to build a body of evidence that can be used to influence the development and sustainability of services. The evidence can highlight gaps in services, develop a Wales wide and a local view on availability which can be used to influence local service commissioners and funders.

You can find the previous Advocacy Counts reports [here](#).

Advocacy Training news

The Advocacy “Big Events” 2023

Following the success of the virtual Advocacy “Big Events” for the last three years, the HOPE team will be hosting for the fourth year running The Welsh Adult Advocacy Sector “Big Events” once again over two weeks during November 2023.

We’re excited to be able to share with you the dates and Eventbrite links for these virtual events and to invite you to book onto these sessions using the links below. These events will provide learning and development opportunities for adult advocacy providers in Wales and also a fantastic opportunity to meet other advocates and share your experiences of advocacy. We truly hope you’ll find these events useful and informative. The events run in conjunction with Advocacy Awareness Week and National Safeguarding week and also time is given for your own wellbeing as advocates we’d like to offer this well-deserved, precious and important time.

If you work with adults as an independent advocate in Wales, please have a browse at the sessions available below and click on the Eventbrite link next to each event to register and we look forward to seeing you there:

In conjunction with Advocacy Awareness week:

“Diving Deeper into the Advocacy Principles”

Tuesday 7 November 2pm-4pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/728750561547?aff=oddtcreator>

The Advocacy Charter, Code of Practice and Quality Standards-how they underpin our sector, practice and make Advocacy “Advocacy” with Guest Speaker Gail Petty, NDTi”

Thursday 9 November 10am-12pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/728837160567?aff=oddtcreator>

In conjunction with National Safeguarding week:

“Advocacy and Adult Safeguarding”- “Self-Neglect” and “Safeguarding and Loss of Capacity”

with Guest Speakers Professor Suzy Braye and Dewis Choice

Tuesday 21 November 1pm-4pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/730425070047?aff=oddtcreator>

“Wellbeing for Advocates”

Thursday 23 November 10.00am - 12.30pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/731060239857?aff=oddtcreator>

Thank you very much for supporting The Advocacy “Big Event” and if you have any queries or questions, please don’t hesitate to contact: Kath Hawkins, Training Officer, HOPE Project

katherine.hawkins@agecymru.org.uk



Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru Older People's Commissioner for Wales

A message from Helena Herklots - Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Older people's access to GP services is a longstanding issue and recent research I have undertaken has found that over 40% of older people were less likely to try to get a GP appointment or contact an out of hours GP service because of reported pressures on the NHS.

The shift to providing some services digitally, such as online booking and telephone-based services has been helpful for some but has created barriers for others, particularly those who are isolated with no-one nearby who could help them.

To learn more about the kinds of issues and challenges facing older people when accessing GP services, I am inviting older people to share their experiences with me and I have produced a simple survey to capture this information.

I would be grateful if you could help me to reach out as widely as possible by sharing this survey, so I can engage with older people throughout Wales.

[Survey Link](#)

The survey will run until the end of November 2023.

It can be completed by using the links above OR by downloading and completing the attached word document which can be sent to ask@olderpeople.wales by email or returned by hard copy to:

**FREEPOST RTHR-HYZC-RRAX
Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff
CF10 5FL**

If you would like to receive a hard copy by post, please contact us on 03442 640 670 or ask@olderpeople.wales

Many thanks in advance for your support.

Heléna Herklots CBE
Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Contact information:

Tel: 03442 640 670.

Email: ask@olderpeople.wales

Post: Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Cambrian Buildings
Mount Stuart Square
Cardiff CF10 5FL

Age Cymru Advice

Age Cymru's advice line can provide free, impartial advice on a range of subjects.

Perhaps they may want advice about how much they should be paying for a loved ones care? Or perhaps they may want to know if they're eligible for Pension Credit and want help with claiming it?

Age Cymru Advice can help with all these issues, and more – call us today

0300 303 44 98

Contact us...

- To subscribe to the e-bulletin or newsletter
- If you have any comments or questions about the articles
- If there's anything you would like to see in the next e-bulletin or newsletter

Email: sue.vaarkamp@agecymru.org.uk

T: 02920 431565 Ext 565

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