

Advocacy Newsletter

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Introducing our new team member

Marc Forster, Programme Development Officer for Partnerships

Marc joined Age Cymru at the beginning of this month as Programme Development Officer for Partnerships with Age Cymru's Golden Thread Advocacy Programme. Marc will work with new and existing advocacy service providers pan Wales to ensure they are ready to apply for advocacy tenders. He will be developing a range of workshops to support and build the capacity of organisations who may be interested in tendering for advocacy contracts. His role will also include building a database of advocacy providers which will assist in monitoring the availability of Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) services and capturing the impact of the implementation of Part 10, Advocacy, of the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Act. In addition Marc's work will involve engaging with potential users of the IPA service to develop a programme of raising awareness of IPA and people's rights, in certain circumstances, to advocacy under the duties in the Act. Marc will also be developing resources to support advocacy providers as the new duty around advocacy is implemented.



Having originally trained and worked as a teacher, Marc has spent most of his career working in Local Governments in West Wales. Following a period co-ordinating the Duke of Edinburgh's Award across Carmarthenshire and leading expeditions, he has primarily been a partnership manager in Pembrokeshire. Marc's career in partnership working followed the evolution of multi-agency working as the range of statutory partnerships County Councils were responsible for supporting initially expanded to cover a wide range of areas and then became rationalised under the Public Service Boards. Most recently, he managed a team of partnership co-ordinators who supported the different elements in the Single Integrated Plan and also gave officer support to elected members on overview and scrutiny committees.

You can contact Marc via email: marc.forster@agecymru.org.uk or call on 07932 989656

Independent Professional Advocacy and Qualifications

A key part in the commissioning of an Independent Professional Advocacy service is understanding what, in the context of the Code of Practice, an Independent Professional Advocate actually is.

There are a wide array of definitions of professional, and the advocacy sector has strong opinions on that subject, however, in the context of this article the part 10 Code of Practice defines an Independent Professional Advocacy as:

"...a one-to-one partnership between [an individual and] an independent professional advocate who is trained and paid to undertake their professional role as an advocate. This might be for a single issue or multiple issues. Independent professional advocates must ensure individuals' views are accurately conveyed irrespective of the view of the advocate or others as to what is in the best interests of the individuals."

The key element in this service definition defines an Independent Professional advocate as one who is "trained and paid" and a question that keeps reoccurring with commissioners, providers and other interested parties is what does "trained" mean? This article seeks to explain what formal training is currently available for advocates in Wales. A separate article will examine the current quality standards available for advocacy providers.

City and Guilds

Currently the main accredited training route for advocates, both professional and volunteer, is via a City and Guilds accredited qualification.

In summary, there are two broad qualifications offered in advocacy, at Level 2 and Level 3. Full details of these courses are available on the City and Guilds website.

The Level 2 award is "ideal for anyone wanting to acquire knowledge of Independent Advocacy. They might want to approach this qualification as an entry to the area or understand the basic principles of Independent Advocacy".

The Level 3 certificate and diploma "are for learners who are currently working as Independent Advocates, either on paid or voluntary basis."

The certificate and diploma "require candidates to complete the mandatory units plus some of the optional units. These qualifications are assessed by a Portfolio of Evidence".

As with most City and Guilds Qualifications the actual pathway that a learner may take to gain both the Certificate and Diploma is variable, not only by the type of advocacy they are studying (Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA), Independent Advocacy with Adults, Independent Advocacy with Children and Young People etc.) but also by the interest of the individual when choosing the make up of the credit portion of the Diploma. However, the certificates form a focused pathway whereby, for example those working in specific Advocacy services such as IMCA services would be expected to complete units specific to this work stream so as to be able to complete the certification. In all of the Level 3 certificates the following modules are mandatory and designed to provide a grounding in advocacy principles:

- 301 Purpose and principles of Independent Advocacy
- 302 Providing Independent Advocacy support
- 303 Maintaining the Independent Advocacy relationship
- 304 Understand the social context of Independent Advocacy

Continued...

For those who would like to further examine the full contents of the training packages they are available through this link which is a copy of the course handbook.

The GTAP has approached City and Guilds to discuss what steps are being taken to create a certificate specifically to mirror the one now available entitled Level 3 Certificate in Independent Advocacy (Providing Independent Advocacy Support under the Care Act 2014). At present Qualifications Wales are conducting a thorough review of all qualifications in the Social Care sector, advocacy included. This is an ongoing process which will necessarily lead to updated qualifications being produced. GTAP will keep all stakeholders updated of progress on this issue as it becomes apparent.

Non City and Guilds pathway training:

Other forms of training are available. Many providers who are readily accessed through internet search engines provide training in many subjects around advocacy in its many forms.

Training and Quality assurance

It is worth noting that, for those commissioning or providing advocacy who wish to consider the Quality Performance Mark, that in order to obtain this:

"All advocates are given access to relevant ongoing training and personal development opportunities, including training to meet any statutory requirement." (Sourced from the Quality Performance Mark Assessment Workbook (3rd edition) page 24).

Those organisations delivering IPA services which are either in possession of, or working towards the Quality Performance Mark, are required to have a policy statement regarding the time scale in which unqualified or newly employed advocates are expected to complete training to the agreed standard. It would be the responsibility of those designing the tender specification and those responding to it to set out how they would meet the standards required under the Quality Performance Mark in 'supporting advocates' with regard to the professional training of advocates.

Reference

1 [Social Services & Wellbeing \(Wales\) Act 2014 | Part 10 Code of Practice \(Advocacy\)](#) page 11

Huw Davies, Age Cymru

How ready are Commissioners to comply with their new statutory requirements?

The Golden Thread Advocacy Programme (GTAP) is being independently evaluated by the Welsh Institute for Health and Social Care (WHISC) at the University of South Wales. WHISC have developed a self-assessment tool for commissioners and a separate one for advocacy providers, to enable organisations to ascertain their readiness to comply with the Part 10 Code of Practice (Advocacy) and its strategic intent.

The Self Assessment Tool itself is structured in four sections reflecting the different stages of the commissioning cycle: analyse, plan, do, and review. It builds on the work of the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and the Institute for Public Care (IPC) in England who produced a similar self-assessment tool for independent advocacy – see <http://bit.ly/SCIEtool>. It is not an audit instrument through which a 'performance management' assessment might be made; rather, it should help the GTAP support commissioners to achieve the aspirations of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

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The GTAP team sent out the self-assessment questionnaire to commissioners in November 2015 and as commissioning teams get together to work through the tool and arrive at their own assessments we are starting to see completed responses being returned. The results will highlight the strengths and development needs of individual commissioners, teams and organisations in relation to commissioning Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA). They will also enable the GTAP team to tailor its support to fit commissioners' needs, and provide opportunities for commissioners to discuss any support needs they may require from GTAP. Additionally the findings will enable WIHSC to set a baseline for the evaluation of the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme.

The GTAP team's discussions with commissioners so far suggest that likely issues are, amongst other things; identifying need for advocacy services, co-production, market management, contracting and data collection. Some commissioners already have valuable knowledge and experience in some areas, which could be shared more widely to help others develop.

Many commissioners have said informally that they would like to share their experience with and learn from other commissioners across their own regions and across Wales. They have also informally expressed support for consistency in service access, quality and outcomes for citizens across Wales, for preventing a postcode lottery as far as possible, and for retaining an element of flexibility to suit local circumstances.

The GTAP team would like to draw on the results to: provide opportunities for peer learning among advocacy services commissioners; encourage dissemination of learning and good practice in commissioning advocacy services, and contribute to the development of a national approach to commissioning Independent Professional Advocacy (IPA) services across Wales, customisable to suit local circumstances.

As a first step, the GTAP team is already running workshops in Lampeter, Newport and St Asaph, bringing together commissioners with responsibility for advocacy services and others for this purpose. Further information about the workshops is available from the GTAP Programme Development Officers for Commissioning.

One of the outcomes of GTAP, agreed with Welsh Government, is a national framework for commissioning IPA services in Wales. This would need to be co-produced with commissioners themselves and with other stakeholders (citizens, service providers, etc), and would need to be adaptable to the different circumstances of different parts of Wales. This would fit well with commissioners' own expressed wishes for a balance of consistency and flexibility in commissioning IPA services across Wales. The workshops will provide an opportunity for commissioners to provide input to the early stages of developing a national approach.

When more of the results of the survey are in, we will publish an anonymised, aggregated overview of the results, possibly in the May newsletter. Watch this space!

Valerie Billingham, Age Cymru

Understanding co-production and its role in commissioning advocacy - part 2

Part 1 of this series, published in our January 2017 newsletter, briefly outlined co-production theory at individual and organisational/strategic levels, and through descriptive, intermediate and transformative approaches - with the latter identified as being what makes a real difference. Building on this, how should the co-production of advocacy services work in commissioning practice?

The Care Council for Wales learning resource *Planning, Commissioning and Co-production*¹ describes two different ways in which commissioners can introduce co-production into public services:

By commissioning for co-production – where commissioners require the principles of co-production to be reflected within the services they purchase. In this context, the Code requires that local authorities ensure providers from whom they commission services encourage and enable the involvement of all people in designing services and how they will operate to deliver personal outcomes. Providers are also expected to involve people in evaluation and review processes.

By co-producing commissioning – where people are involved in commissioning from the very beginning. This includes involvement in the assessment process (whether at an individual level or as part of the wider population assessment), agreeing what needs to change so that services can improve people’s lives, co-designing services and taking part in reviews and evaluations. In these examples, the commissioners themselves are involved in the co-production process and they involve people using services and carers in commissioning from the outset.

The paper clarifies that these are not ‘either/or’ options. Instead, both are necessary and “co-production requires a whole system approach which, as the (Part 2) Code emphasises, needs positive action at individual, community, service, organisational and strategic levels.”

In the first GTAP newsletter (September 2016) we briefly outlined the standard four phase “analyse-plan-do/secure services-review” commissioning cycle and the engagement cycle. The graphic we used shows citizens at the centre, with a circular arrow indicating that they should be involved at every stage of the cycle.

An alternative, three phase commissioning model produced by the New Economics Foundation (nef) is generating interest in commissioning circles. This model is outlined in *Commissioning for Outcomes and Co-production: A practical guide for local authorities*². Nef state that “Our approach to commissioning takes a new perspective on the phases a commissioner might go through, and the core intentions and methods applied to commissioning.”

Three core components are located in the centre of the model: co-production, partnership and reflection & evaluation. The intention is that these should be applied consistently throughout the commissioning process.

Three commissioning phases are identified instead of the standard four: insight, planning and delivery. The outer circle of the model describes the three main aims of commissioning: prevention, well-being and real value for money.

The Nef commissioning approach is based on a “dynamic model of well-being” which is underpinned by established psychological theory. This assumes that well-being arises when individuals’ needs for autonomy, competence (or self-esteem/meaning) and relatedness are met, supported by positive external conditions and adequate personal resources.

By enabling this process, co-production is shown to support and enhance individual and community well-being.

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Section 2 of the Nef paper provides a detailed and practical guide to commissioning for co-production and outcomes. This makes it clear that co-producing commissioning is a practice which requires careful thought and planning if it's to be done successfully and effectively. Importantly, the paper explains that:

“Co-producing commissioning means more than engaging people in traditional parts of the procurement process, such as interviewing providers. It means that people are involved throughout the commissioning cycle. They should help to articulate local needs and aspirations, identify local assets, make strategic decisions about the outcomes framework and quality characteristics, decide which providers are chosen and monitor and evaluate their performance. Co-production is a culture and mind-set that must pervade decision making throughout the cycle, and is not limited to specific engagement events or user involvement exercises.”

The new duty to commission IPA services, together with the inclusion of co-production as a core principle in the Act and the emphasis on co-production throughout the Codes of Practice, provides a timely opportunity for local authorities and health boards to consider introducing a co-productive approach to advocacy commissioning. With more co-production expert classes currently being hosted by the Care Council for Wales, alongside expert classes in advocacy and the SSWb Act, the time seems to be ripe for co-producing advocacy commissioning.

Resources

1. Planning, Commissioning and Co-production, Care Council for Wales: <http://bit.ly/CCcopro>
2. Commissioning for Outcomes and Co-production: A practical guide for local authorities, New Economics Foundation: <http://bit.ly/NEFcopro>

Paul Swann, Age Cymru

Consultation on statutory guidance in relation to Part 7 of the Act

The Welsh Government has launched a consultation on volumes 5 and 6 of the Working Together to Safeguard People statutory guidance. The consultation looks at the guidance to help local authorities and their partners implement Part 7 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The guidance provides advice on what should happen if an individual has concerns about the well-being or welfare of a child or an adult at risk, and the consultation focuses on the process to be followed in these circumstances.

The consultation will close on **25 April 2017**.

[You can view and respond to the consultation here.](#)

Guidance on handling individual cases to protect children and adults at risk

Welsh Government are consulting on guidance that helps local authorities and their partners implement Part 7 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

The guidance provides advice on what should happen if an individual has concerns about the well-being or welfare of a child or an adult at risk.

For more information, please visit the link below:

[Consultation guidance on handling individual cases to protect children and adults at risk](#)

Law Commission review of the DoLS - Publication of the final report and draft Bill

The Law Commission's report Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty was published on 13th March 2017. In the report, the Law Commission recommend that the DoLS should be replaced with a new scheme – which has been called the Liberty Protection Safeguards. In addition the draft Bill makes wider reforms to the Mental Capacity Act which ensure greater safeguards for persons before they are deprived of their liberty.

Alongside the final report the Law Commission also published an impact assessment, the consultation analysis, a summary of the report and an easy read version of the summary.

You can find the final report (which includes the draft Bill), as well as the other project documents, by visiting their website at [Mental Capacity and DoLS](#).

The report and draft Bill will now be considered by Government.

Useful Websites

Age Cymru Golden Thread Advocacy Programme

This website provides information regarding the Golden Thread Advocacy Programme and the Advocacy Newsletters.

[Golden Thread Advocacy Programme Website](#)

The Care Council for Wales Information and Learning Hub

The Care Council for Wales has worked with a range of partners to develop a national learning and development plan to support the full implementation of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The Information and Learning Hub includes training materials in different formats to help social care professionals implement the legislation in their day-to-day work.

[Care Council for Wales](#)

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)

UK resource of good practice and knowledge aimed at improvement of social care services with focus on central role of people who use services.

<http://www.scie.org.uk/>

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British Institute of Human Rights

Information available on updates, events, training and resources.

<http://www.bihhr.org.uk/>

Citizens Advice Bureau

Citizens Advice provide free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. Website provides latest information on campaigning, policy and media.

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Age Cymru's free Advice Line

Age Cymru's advice line can provides free, impartial advice to your constituents on a range of subjects.

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

Age Cymru can help with all these issues, and more – call us today on: **08000 223 444**

Useful publications

Time: Our Gift To You

The Older People's Advocacy Alliance (OPAAL) has launched a new publication telling a series of advocacy volunteering stories from its ground breaking Cancer, Older People and Advocacy programme. Called "[Time: Our Gift To You](#)", there are 19 separate stories of older people affected by cancer supporting their peers.

Claire explains why she volunteers: "Last year, I decided to volunteer as a peer advocate because I could see at first hand, as I was going through my treatment, that there were many people who were struggling to find their way through the healthcare system in our area and to access the support they needed. It seemed obvious to me that a person who has been treated for cancer is potentially in a very strong position to support another person going through the same or similar treatment and experience."

Claire goes on to say: "working with Sally has also been very rewarding for me. Cancer treatment is often quite technical and complicated and over time you are forced to become quite an expert in the healthcare system and how to get support. I am really glad to be able to put my experience to good use."

You can also read the real life stories of some of the older people supported by the cancer, older people and advocacy volunteers in [Facing Cancer Together](#).

Join OPAAL in the advocacy conversation on twitter using the hashtag #advocacyworks.

For more information contact Marie McWilliams, marie@opaal.org.uk

Useful publications

Reflections of an advocate

These 'reflections of an advocate' were shared at the National Advocacy Conference 2016 and struck a chord. OPAAL feels these words will be encouraging to advocates and so reproduces the text on their website with thanks to Age UK Cambridge and Peterborough.

Safeguarding: updates, statutory guidance and templates

A further three volumes of safeguarding statutory guidance have been added to the Hub. The four volumes of Working Together to Safeguard People: 1) Introduction and Overview, 2) Child Practice Reviews, 3) Adult Practice Reviews and 4) Adult Protection and Support Orders. Alongside the statutory guidance, the Welsh Government has produced a series of templates that can be used to support child and adult practice reviews. You can find them all on the [Codes of Practice and Statutory Guidance](#) page on the Hub.

The Welsh Government has also issued an update on the legislation for Part 7 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 on safeguarding. The briefing featured updates on the safeguarding board areas, the National Independent Safeguarding Board, and the All Wales Protection Procedures. You can read the [update here](#).

Contact us...

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

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