

# Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance: Consultation on Draft Order to revise the procedures for complaints about Social work



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## December 2015

The SIAA believe that individuals and their carers who may wish to complain about social work should have access to independent advocacy. This would help ensure that they have a clear understanding of their rights, are able to articulate their views and wishes and are able to access the support and services they require.

We know that people are often unsure about how to complain about social work and find the system of complaints is often complicated and confusing. Furthermore there are also issues about people who use services and their carers lacking the confidence to challenge statutory services without fear of repercussions. Intervention from independent advocacy means that people often feel more confident about raising issues, are clearer about the outcomes they wish to see and are able to positively engage with services.

People with mental health issues have a statutory right to access independent advocacy under the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003. We believe that if they are not already receiving support from independent advocacy then any procedures around complaints about social work should make reference to independent advocacy. The procedures should remind statutory services of their duty to inform people of their right to access independent advocacy and refer a person to independent advocacy if they wish.

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**The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) is Scotland's national membership body for advocacy organisations. The SIAA promotes, supports and defends independent advocacy in Scotland. It aims to ensure that independent advocacy is available to any person who needs it in Scotland.**