

Funding new opportunities in advocacy

Findings from a survey of SIAA member organisations

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
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**March
2011**

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Introduction

Independent advocacy aims to support people, particularly those who are in some way disenfranchised or disempowered, to express their needs and make their own informed decisions. It should be available to all who need it. Unfortunately, current provision of advocacy in Scotland is inconsistent and there are some significant gaps; as outlined in the *2010 Map of advocacy across Scotland*, advocacy for many groups in Scotland is limited and in some cases non-existent.¹

The *2010 Map* reviewed the national picture and identified the following list of groups for whom there is no independent advocacy provision or limited and patchy provision²:

- Acquired Brain Injury
- Alcohol related brain damage
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Asperger's Syndrome
- Black and Minority Ethnic communities
- Carers
- Children and young people – particularly in relation to the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- Homeless people
- Older people (particularly those who are not in residential care, do not have mental health problems or dementia)
- People with problem drug/alcohol use
- Physical disabilities
- Prisoners
- Sensory Impairment – including deaf and deafened people

Funders and independent advocacy organisations should be working to address these gaps cooperatively.³

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) was interested to understand more about how funders and advocacy organisations are seeking to address identified gaps in advocacy provision. To this end the SIAA conducted a short survey of SIAA membership organisations.

Broadly, the survey sought to better understand:

- Members' experiences of external requests to deliver advocacy to groups not supported by the member organisation's Service Level Agreement or contract at the time (referred to throughout this report as 'new groups')
- Members' reasons for accepting or refusing external requests
- Members' requests for support to work with new groups, and funders' responses to these requests

¹ Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (2010) *A Map of advocacy across Scotland 2009-2010 edition*. Edinburgh: SIAA

² Please refer to the *2010 Map of advocacy across Scotland* for a breakdown of gaps in advocacy provision by NHS board.

³ Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (2011) *Manifesto for Independent Advocacy*. Edinburgh: SIAA, p5

Participants were asked to provide information for instances occurring within the last five years.

The following report presents the key findings from this survey.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were conducted by SIAA staff with the manager or nominated representative of each SIAA member organisation. Interviews were completed between December 2010 and February 2011. Further information about methodology and a list of the survey questions is included at Appendix A.

Participants

All SIAA member organisations were invited to take part in the survey. 83 per cent (n=43) of member organisations completed an interview.

One organisation declined to participate. The interviewers were unable to secure an interview with a representative from the remaining organisations within the allocated time frame for the project.

Summary of key findings

External requests to deliver advocacy to new groups

- Just over half of participants had been asked on one or more occasion to deliver advocacy or bid for a tender to deliver advocacy to new groups.
- More than four fifths of all these requests were from statutory funders.
- Of all requests, one fifth were requests to work with groups in a new location. A similar number of requests were to work with children and young people.
- One in three requests did not include funding.
- Participants took on two thirds of all requests. One fifth of these did not include funding.

Organisation requests for support to deliver advocacy to new groups

- Just over half of participants had sought support to deliver advocacy to new groups.
- Two thirds of all requests for support were made to 'other' funders such as charitable trusts. The remaining one third of requests were made to statutory funders.
- Around half of all requests were seeking support to work with children or young people.
- Funders provided support for slightly less than half of all requests.
- Of requests made to 'other' funders, two thirds were supported. Less than one sixth of all requests made to statutory funders were supported.

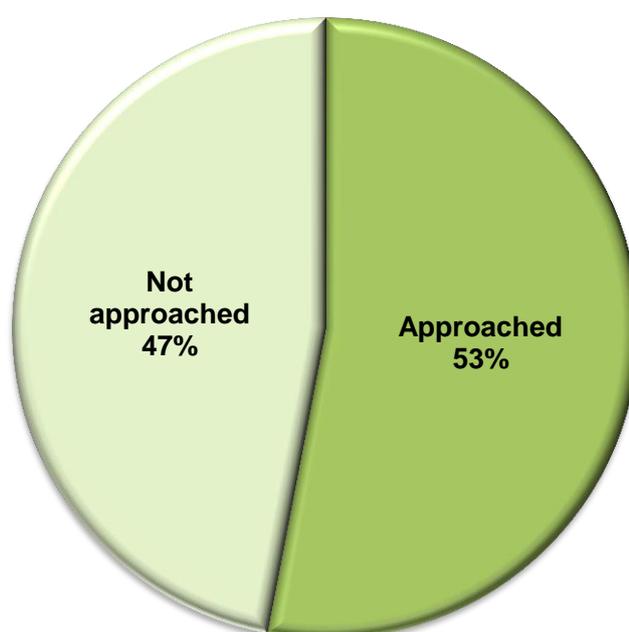
1. External requests to deliver advocacy to new groups

1.1 How many requests?

Participants were asked whether, within the last five years, they had been approached to deliver advocacy or to bid for a tender to deliver advocacy to any new groups.

There was very little difference between the numbers who had been approached (53%, n=23) and those who had not been approached (47%, n=20) [see Figure 1].

Figure 1: Percentage of organisations approached or not approached to deliver advocacy to new groups



The 23 organisations who had been approached reported a total of 30 instances of being approached with a request to deliver advocacy or to bid for a tender.⁴

1.2 Which groups?

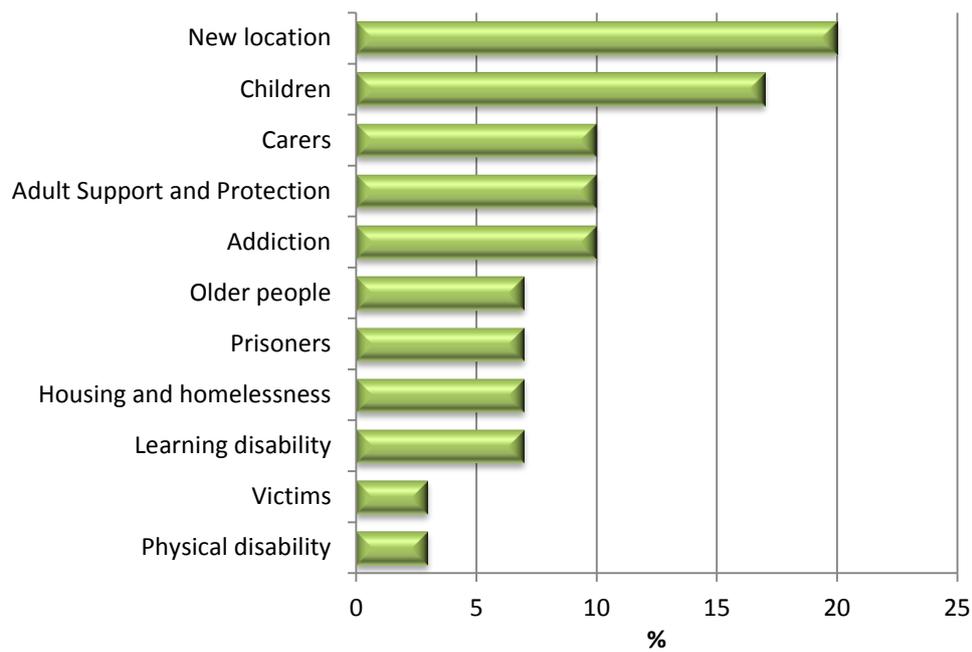
Organisations that had been approached were asked to identify which group or groups of people they had been asked to work with.

Of the 30 instances identified, the largest number (20%, n=6) related to expanding current advocacy provision to new locations; that is, to groups beyond the organisation's geographic or place (e.g. community, hospital etc.) remit.

Nearly as many instances (17%, n=5) were requests to work with children or young people. Specifically, this included requests to work with children and young people with mental health concerns, children younger than currently provided for, and cases in relation to child protection legislation [see Figure 2].

⁴ Instances of spot purchasing (n=5) have not been included for analysis.

Figure 2: Instances of being asked to deliver advocacy to new groups by identified groups

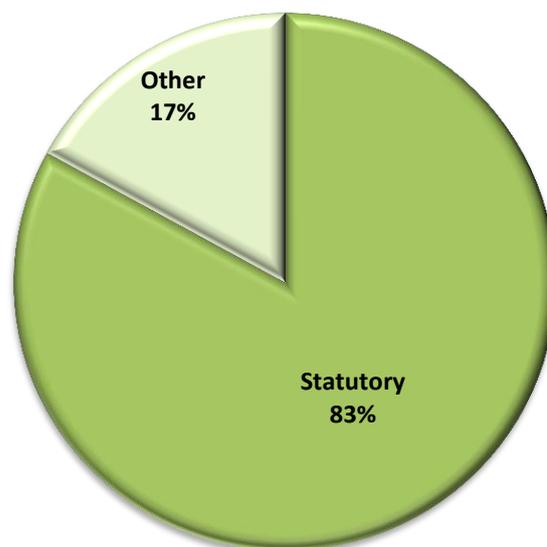


1.3 Who's asking?

Participants were asked to identify who had approached them.

Of the 30 instances identified, the majority (83%, n=25) were requests from statutory funders (the local authority, the health board, or both). The remaining 17 per cent (n=5) were requests from other funders including the prison service and voluntary sector organisations.

Figure 3: Instances of being asked to deliver advocacy to new groups by who made the request



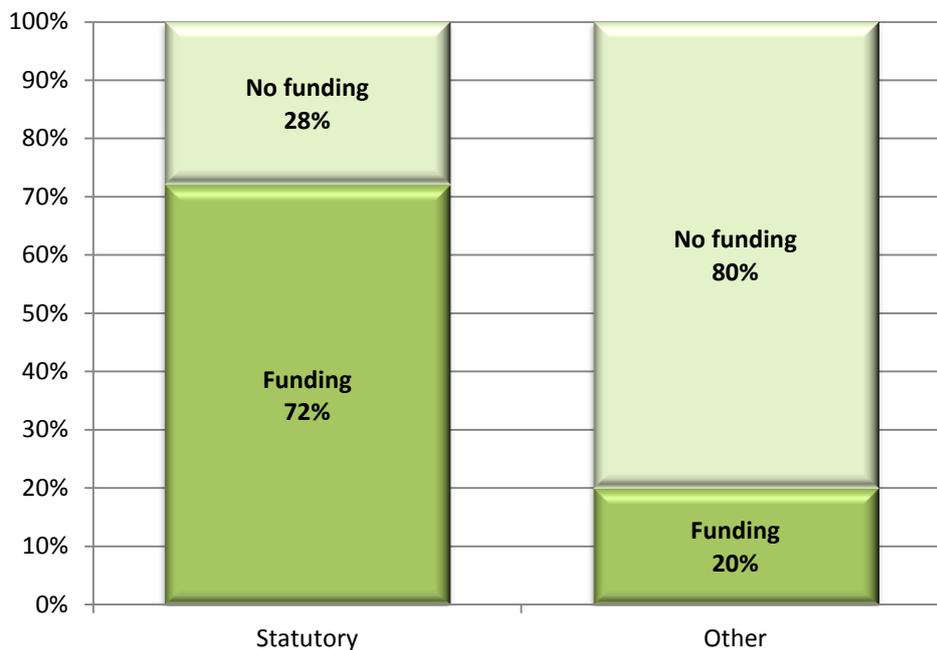
1.4 Are requests funded?

Participants were asked whether funding was included with each instance of being asked. Nearly two thirds (63%, n=19) of instances included funding, leaving around one third (36%, n=11) of requests made that did not include funding.

Figure 4 presents an analysis of these figures by who made the request. More than two thirds (72%, n=18) of requests from health boards and local authorities included funding. However, this leaves a significant 28 per cent (n=7) of requests from statutory funders that did not include funding.

The situation is reversed for requests from other funders: Four fifths (80%, n=4) of requests from other funders did not include funding.

Figure 4: Proportion of instances of being asked that included funding by who made the request



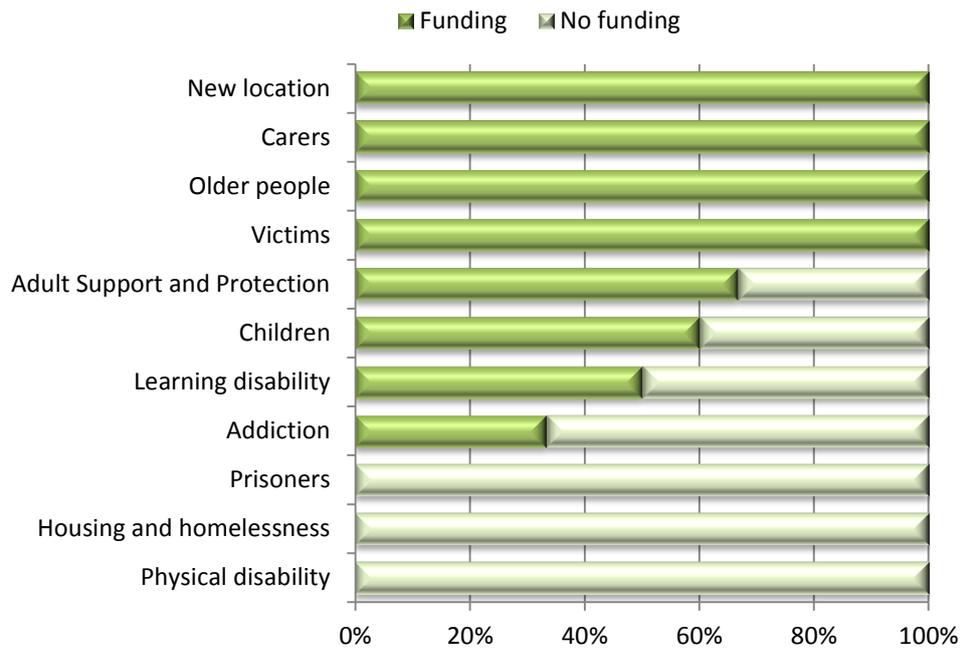
It is also interesting to review how requests to work with different groups are funded [see Figure 5].

Funding was included for all requests to work with carers (n=3), older people (n=2), victims (n=1), and groups in a new location (n=6).

Requests to work with certain groups were variably funded: Around two thirds of requests to work with adult support and protection cases (66%, n=2), and children and young people (60%, n=3) included funding; funding was included for half (50%, n=1) of requests to work with learning disability; and, only one third (33%, n=1) of requests to work with addiction included funding.

Funding was not included for any requests to work with prisoners (n=2), the homeless (n=2) and people with physical disability (n=1).

Figure 5: Instances funded and not funded by identified group

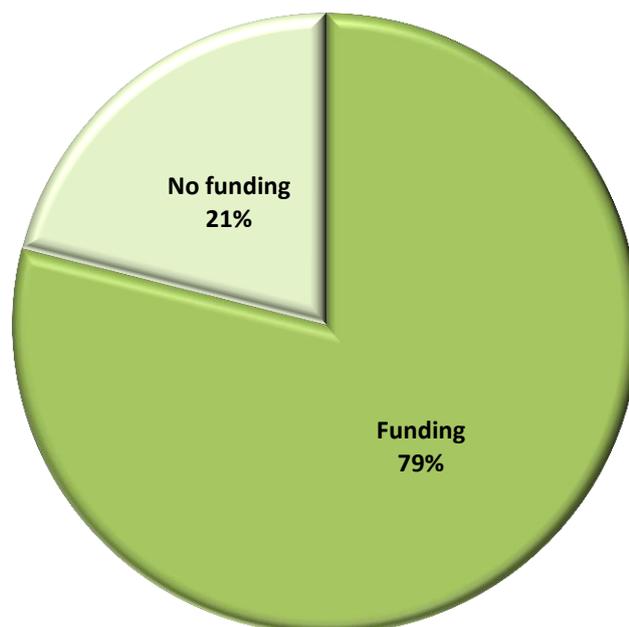


1.5 Requests accepted

Participants agreed to take on delivery of advocacy to new groups, or to bid for funding to deliver advocacy to new groups in 63 per cent (n=19) of all instances identified (n=30).

This included both funded (79%, n=15) and unfunded (21%, n=4) requests.

Figure 6: Proportion of accepted instances funded and unfunded



Where funding had been included, participants reported mixed experiences of the suitability of this funding.

Around half of participants reported that the funding had been sufficient to conduct the requested work to a suitable standard. However, of these, some indicated they would also have benefited from a greater level of non-financial support and interest from the funder.

Some were also concerned that although the funding had been sufficient the work was unlikely to be funded in the future.

Others reported that the money they were given was not enough for what they were being asked to do, in some cases reporting that this had a negative impact of service delivery and future planning.

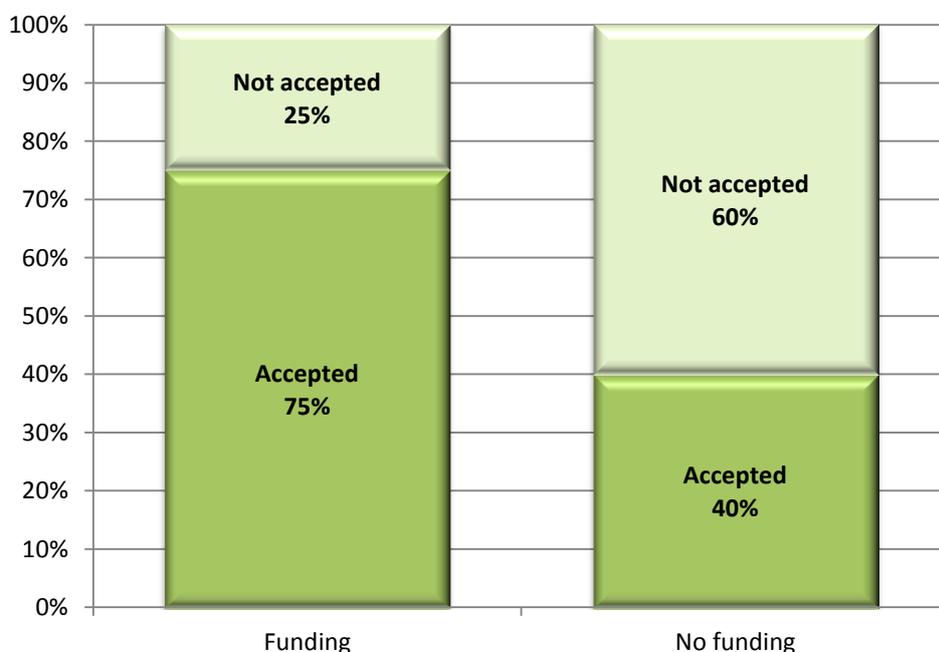
1.6 Requests turned down

Participants turned down 34 per cent (n=11) of all requests to deliver advocacy, or to bid for funding to deliver advocacy to new groups.

Participants turned down nearly two thirds (60%, n=6) of all requests that did not include funding. They cited the absence of funding as a key reason for turning down these requests. Other reasons included: lack of time; and constraints of the organisation's constitution.

One quarter (25%, n=5) of all funded requests were also turned down. Reasons for not accepting these requests included: belief that the funding offered was insufficient and would compromise the service quality; conflict of interest with groups already serviced; no guarantee of long term funding; stretched for time and resources.

Figure 7: Proportion of requests accepted and not accepted by funding status



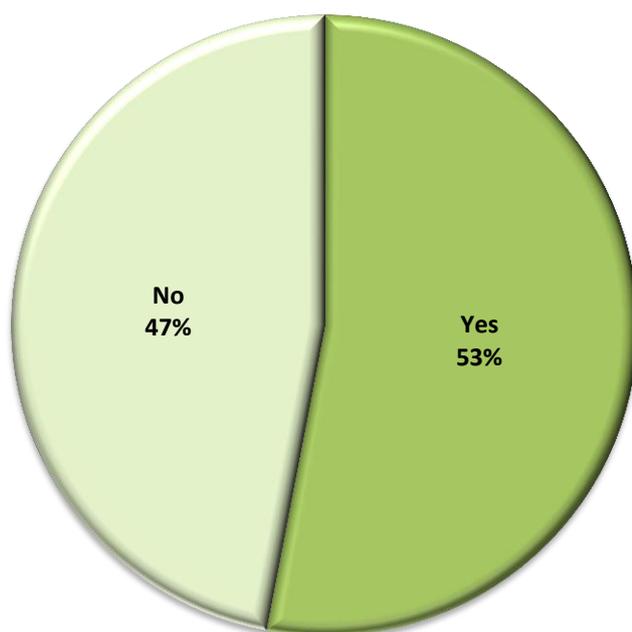
2. Organisation requests for support to deliver advocacy to new groups

2.1 How many requests?

Participating organisations were asked whether in the last five years, they had sought funding or non-financial support to deliver advocacy to new groups.

Just over half of participants (53%, n=23) had asked for support to deliver advocacy to new groups. Slightly less than half (47%, n=20) had not.

Figure 8: Proportion of participants who asked for support to deliver advocacy to new groups



Of those who had not sought to deliver advocacy to new groups, a significant majority reported that this was because of their very specific remit or constitution. This made it difficult for them to consider expanding their services. Others reported resourcing issues. Many were already very stretched for time and staff and so had consciously decided to focus on delivering their specified remit.

2.2 Which groups?

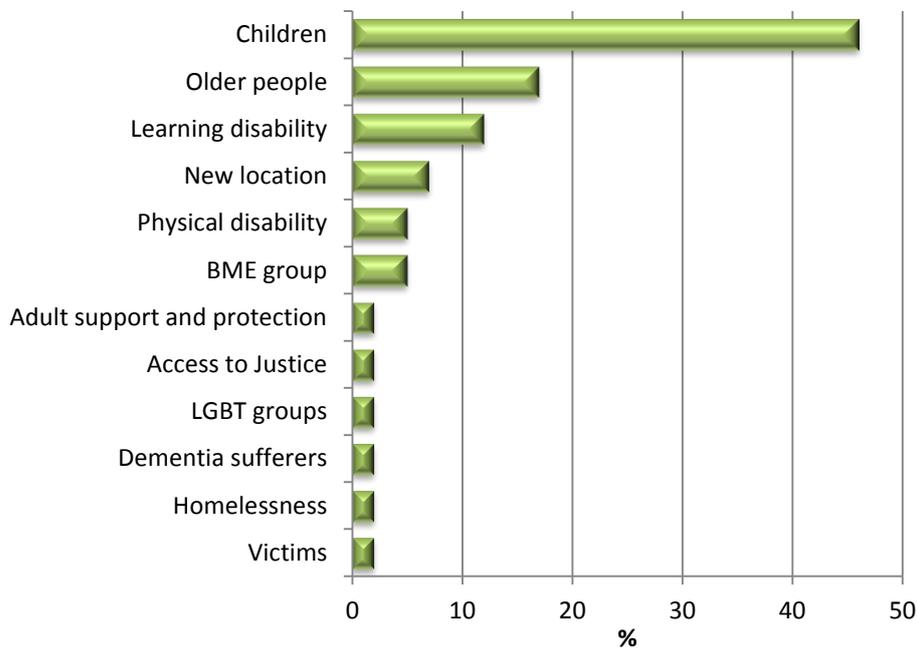
Participants identified a total of 41 individual instances of seeking support to deliver advocacy to new groups. They were asked to identify the new group or groups of people in each instance.⁵

In around half of all instances (46%, n=19), participants were seeking funding or support to work with children or young people. This was by far the largest number of instances for any one group.

⁵ Some instances refer to more than one group of people.

A full break down of the identified groups is included in the table below.

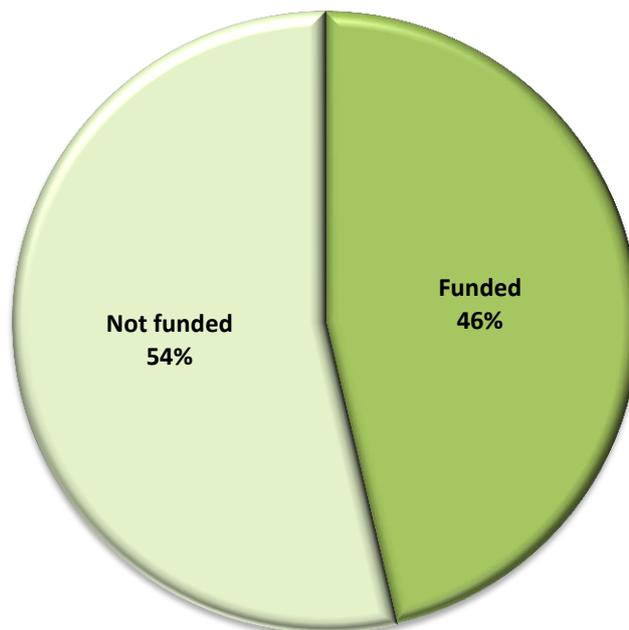
Figure 9: Instances of asking for support to deliver advocacy to new groups by identified group



2.3 What is funded?

Of these 41 instances, participants secured financial support for less than half (46%, n=19).

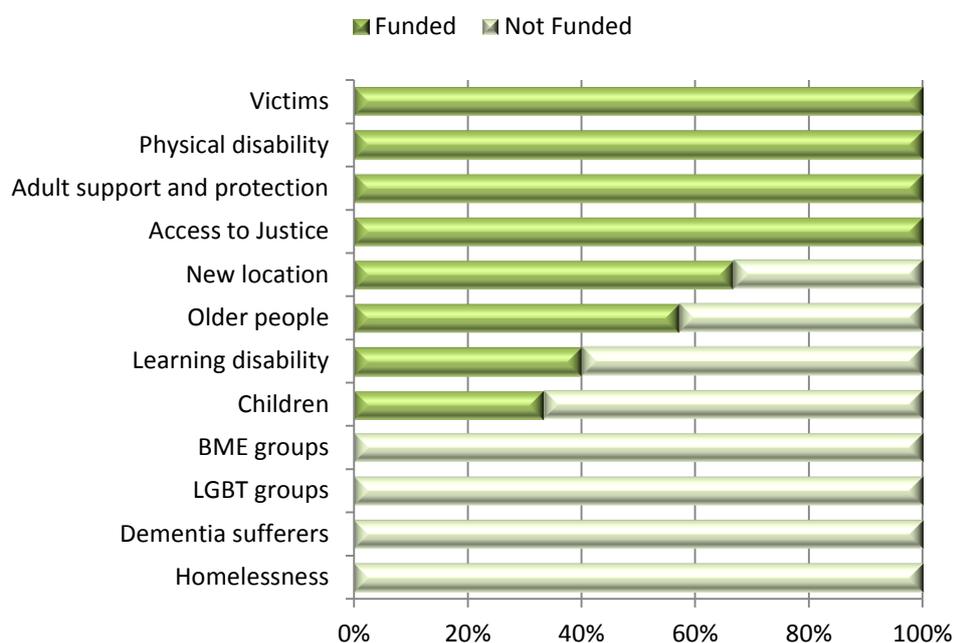
Figure 10: Proportion of requests for support to deliver advocacy to new groups funded and not funded



All requests to work with victims (n=1), physical disability (n=2), adult support and protection cases (n=1) and access to justice (n=1) were granted support. None of the requests to work with homelessness (n=1), dementia (n=1), LGBT (n=1) and BME groups (n=2) received support. However, given the very low numbers here it is difficult to draw conclusions from these findings.

Funding for certain groups was variable: two thirds (66%, n=2) of requests to work with groups in a new location were supported; 57% (n=4) of requests to work with older people were supported; less than half (40%, n=2) of requests to work with learning disability received funding; and of all requests to work with children and young people, only one third (33%, n=6) were supported.

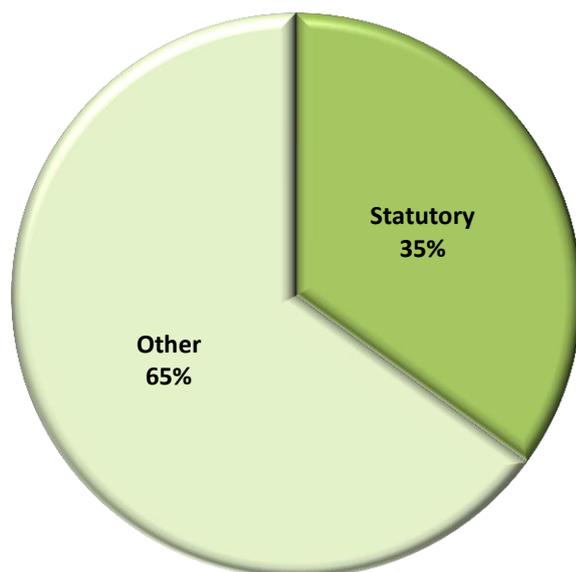
Figure 11: Proportion of requests for support funded and non funded by identified group



2.4 Who's funding?

Participants were asked who they approached for support in each instance. Around one third (35%, n=14) of all requests were made to statutory funders. Two thirds (65%, n=26) of all requests were made to other funders, including the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, and charitable trusts such as the Big Lottery and Children in Need.

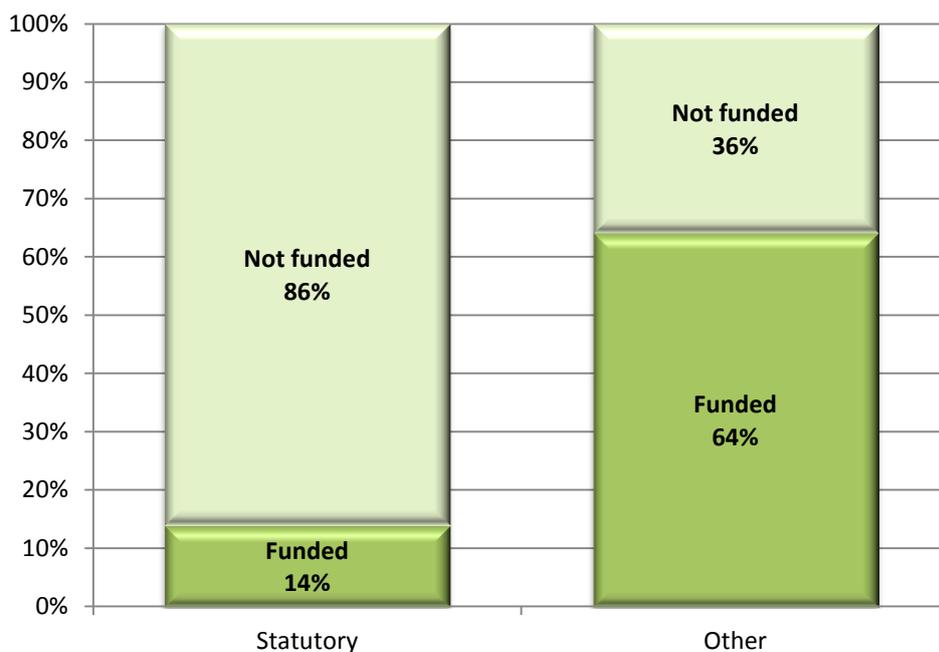
Figure 12: Proportion of requests for support made to Statutory and Other funders



Requests to other funders were successful more often than those made to statutory funders. Of those who approached other funders, 64% (n=16) of instances were successful, 36% (n=9) were unsuccessful. The vast majority of requests to statutory funders were unsuccessful (86%, n=12).

This may be because it is often clearer what other funders are likely to fund, and so organisations tailor their applications accordingly.

Figure 13: Proportion of requests supported by type of funding organisation approached



2.5 Requests funded

Nearly half (46%, n=19) of all requests for support were granted funding. Participants were asked to provide further details about this support.

Very few (14%, n=2) requests to statutory funders were supported. The experience of participants in these instances was mixed. One participant organisation reported that the funding received was sufficient to conduct their planned work; however the other reported that the funding they received was not nearly enough to meet demand.

Participants who had received support from other funders (64%, n=16) had a more positive experience. Most reported that the level of funding provided was sufficient to do the work they had wanted to do. Many of these had been awarded the amount of funding they had requested. In one case the organisation was given more money than requested.

However, in a significant number of instances, participants were not granted the full amount of funding requested. These participants consistently reported that the funding received was not enough to meet demand.

2.6 Requests turned down

Just over half (54%, n=22) of all requests for support were turned down. Participants were asked to recall what reason, if any, was given for turning down their requests for support.

The vast majority (86%, n=12) of requests made to statutory funders were turned down. The most common reason given was that there was no funding available and, in some cases, that their request was not a funding priority. On a couple of occasions, organisations were told that they were not considered the most appropriate service provider, either because of a potential conflict of interest, or because an alternative provider had been identified.

Around one third (36%, n=9) of requests to other funders were turned down. The most common reason given was that the funder did not recognise a clear need for the work they were requested to support.

Many participants were not given any reason for their requests being turned down.

Conclusion

It is clear from this research that both funders and advocacy organisations recognise that there are gaps in the provision of advocacy across Scotland. Funders had approached around half of our survey participants with requests to help address these gaps in provision, and a similar number of participants had approached funders for support in providing advocacy to new groups.

Unfortunately, inconsistent funding and support for expanding advocacy provision to new groups is a significant barrier for already resource sparse advocacy organisations. Around one in every three requests from funders did not include funding to support the request, and although some organisations were still able to take forward the requested work, most were already too stretched for resources to take on new work without funding. Lack of available funding was also cited by funders as a primary reason for not supporting requests from advocacy organisations.

The provision of advocacy to children and young people was a key area of need identified by funders and advocacy organisations. Nearly half of all requests to funders were for support to provide advocacy to children, and one in five of all requests from funders. However, there did not appear to be the finances to support these requests – only two thirds of requests from funders included funding, and only one in three requests to funders were supported.

This research has helped build a picture of the advocacy movement's experiences of opportunities and funding for delivering advocacy to new groups. It raises many questions for further research, both with advocacy organisations and with commissioners or other funders.

For example, it would be beneficial to complement this research with research with commissioners and funders. How do commissioners currently make decisions about areas of need? Why do they approach some organisations to deliver advocacy to new groups, but not others? What are the barriers to prioritising funding for new advocacy provision? And is there anything advocacy organisations can do to overcome these barriers?

With over half of all requests for funding turned down, further research could also support advocacy organisations to demonstrate the need for funders to prioritise new (and current) advocacy. Where are the priority gaps? Why is advocacy needed for these groups? And why are advocacy organisations best placed to deliver advocacy to these groups?

The current economic climate has increased competition for increasingly limited funding. Good quality evidence is essential for advocacy organisations to demonstrate the need and importance of advocacy to others, particularly funders; and knowledge of funders and funding practices can be a powerful step towards working in cooperation with funders to help deliver advocacy for all.

Appendix A: Methodology

The survey was conducted as short semi-structured interviews with the managers or nominated representative of SIAA member organisations. All interviews were conducted by SIAA staff between December 2010 and February 2011. The majority of these were completed over the telephone. A few interviews were completed in person if SIAA staff were presented with an opportunity to do so.

The survey included two sets of questions. Part A asked participants to recall each instance that their organisation had been asked by an external party to delivery advocacy or to bid for a tender to deliver advocacy to any new groups (i.e. groups that were not included in the organisation's contract at the time). Part B asked participants to recall each instance that their organisation had sought support from external parties to deliver advocacy to new groups. For both sections, participants were asked to provide details for instances occurring within the last five years.

PART A: External requests to deliver advocacy to new groups

1. Within the last five years, has **member organisation** been asked to deliver advocacy to any groups not included in your Service Level Agreement or contract at the time?
2. If yes, which group or groups of people have you been asked to work with?
3. Who approached **member organisation** with this request?
4. How much funding, if any, was attached to this request?
5. Was there a timeframe attached to the funding? Please specify.
6. Did **member organisation** take on advocacy for this new group?
7. If no, what were your reasons?
8. If yes, was the funding and support offered sufficient for you to deliver advocacy to this group?

PART B: Organisation requests for support to deliver advocacy to new groups

9. In the last five years, has **member organisation** sought funding or non-financial support to deliver advocacy to any groups not included in your Service Level Agreement or contract at the time?
10. If no, what were your reasons?
11. If yes, which group were you seeking support to work with?
12. Who did you approach for support?
13. Was your request granted?
If yes, please provide details.
14. If no, what reason was provided for turning down your request?