

## How Independent Advocacy has made a difference in people's lives:

*Caspar was introduced to peer advocacy when he went along to an advocacy group. He decided to try it and had four weeks of training. He loved the training and thought 'This is for me!' Now three years on, when asked about his role he reported 'I absolutely adore what I do.'*



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If you would like this leaflet in a different format, further information about the SIAA or a membership pack please contact us.



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The SIAA Guide to  
**Peer Advocacy**

# What is the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA)?

A membership organisation, devoted to promoting, supporting and defending Independent Advocacy in Scotland.

## What do we do?

- Represent advocacy organisations at various levels.
- Work as a central agency to gather and distribute information to the membership, and other interested parties.
- Raise awareness and understanding of Independent Advocacy across Scotland.
- Provide training on Independent Advocacy and related issues.

You can find out about Independent Advocacy in your area by visiting the SIAA website [www.siaa.org.uk](http://www.siaa.org.uk) or by telephoning 0131 260 5380.

## Peer advocacy

Peer advocacy is about individuals who share significant life experiences. The peer advocate and their advocacy partner may share age, gender, ethnicity, diagnosis, or issues. Peer advocates use their own experiences to understand and empathise with their advocacy partner.

Independent peer advocacy works to:

- Increase self-awareness, confidence and assertiveness so that the individual can speak for themselves
- Lessen the imbalance of power between the advocate and their advocacy partner.

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## Other types of advocacy include:

- Citizen advocacy
- Collective or group advocacy
- Professional advocacy
- Self advocacy

## What is Independent Advocacy?

- Independent Advocacy is about standing alongside people who are in danger of being ignored
- Independent Advocacy is a process of helping people have their say and increase their confidence
- All forms of Independent Advocacy aim to promote self advocacy in their work and would view this as the ideal form of advocacy.

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## Independent Advocacy includes:

- Safeguarding people who are vulnerable, discriminated against or whom services find difficult to serve
- Empowering people to express their own needs and make their own decisions
- Enabling people to get information, explore and understand their options, and to make their views and wishes known
- Speaking on behalf of people who are unable to do so for themselves.