



Introduction

This Advocacy Journal is intended as a way that Volunteer Advocacy Workers can more formally reflect on their advocacy practice.

We learn by doing, by trial and error. What helps us get from experience to a deeper understanding is reflection.

By offering a structure for reflection, the Advocacy Journal aims to give Volunteer Advocacy Workers the opportunity to spend focused time reviewing advocacy appointments in terms of their own feelings and behaviour, evaluating and analysing their own practice and actions and reaching action points that can help develop future advocacy practice.

The focus is on the Volunteer's own role rather than the detail of the issues the service user is raising and it is important that **total confidentiality** is observed. We ask you to use a first initial only for the person you were meeting. Please also only include the most brief outline of the advocacy request so that the person cannot be identified in any way. As you will be keeping the journal yourself and in your own home this is crucial.

You may wish to keep the journal solely for yourself. Or you may wish to meet with staff periodically to talk about what is coming out of your reflections and perhaps ways that you have identified that staff can better support you in your advocacy work. You may wish to use the journal after every piece of advocacy work or you may want to turn to it when you have found a piece of advocacy work particularly challenging or emotive. Any way you use it that works for you is fine.

You may also wish to adapt the format to one that better suits you and your own method of thinking things through. Again, this is absolutely fine. We all have our own ways of working and reflecting. Identifying how and when we reflect best is key to the process.

We hope you will find the Advocacy Journal a useful tool for the continued development of your advocacy practice. Please give us any feedback on your progress with the journal, let us know if you would like any support from staff and keep us up to date on how it is working for you.

Thank you.