

A Stronger Voice?

A scoping study of independent advocacy for people with learning disabilities.

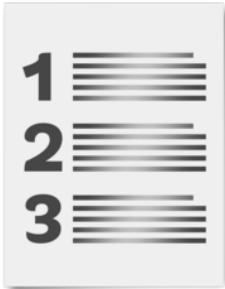
Key Findings



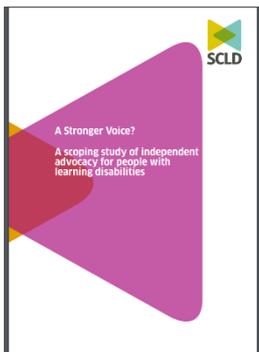
What this report is about.



This report is an Easy Read version of the key findings from a longer report written by SCLD.



The Key Findings tells you just the important points.



The full report is called A Stronger Voice? A scoping study of independent advocacy for people with learning disabilities.



The report is about some work SCLD did about advocacy.



SCLD talked to people with learning disabilities about advocacy.



SCLD also talked to people who work as advocates and their managers.



These people are called **advocacy providers**.



SCLD talked to the people who give the money to **advocacy providers** to give advocacy support.



These people are called **commissioners**.



You can read the full report on the SCLD website if you want. The website address is www.sclد.org.uk

People with learning disabilities have a right to advocacy.



Sometimes people with learning disabilities find it difficult to get the things they need.



Independent advocacy is there to help people to say what they want and to help them to make choices about their life.



People with learning disabilities have a right to advocacy.



This is written in a law called the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003.



People with learning disabilities might not be able to get an advocate in some parts of Scotland or might not know about advocacy.



A map of advocacy made by the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance has said that there might not be enough advocacy for people with learning disabilities.

How advocacy helps people



SCLD spoke to people with learning disabilities about the help they have had from an advocate.



The people we spoke to told us what is good about having an advocate.



Some of the people we spoke to were in an advocacy group.



These people told us what was good about being in a group.

What people said is good about help from an advocate.



Feeling more confident to speak up for themselves.



Being more able to say what they want with the help of an advocate.



It was good when the advocate was able to help to sort out problems.



Feeling more calm in meetings.



Being listened to.



Having things explained so they can understand.



Feeling like someone was on their side.

What people said is good about being a member of an advocacy group.



Getting to see people and make friends.



The person who organises the group can help members if they are having problems.



Feeling more confident about speaking up.

What people said was not so good about advocacy

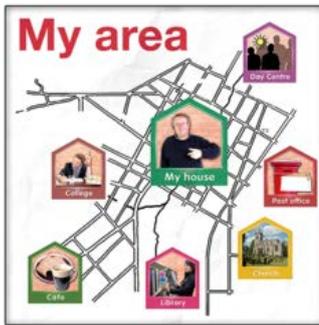


Not everyone was able to say that something had changed because of their advocacy worker.



Some people said that they would want to see their advocate more often.

Being able to get advocacy



The type of advocacy support you can get depends on where you live.



In some areas it is harder to get advocacy than in other places.



Advocacy organisations are getting less money and have more people wanting advocacy so it is hard for them to help everybody that wants it.



Advocacy is usually paid for by the council and the NHS.

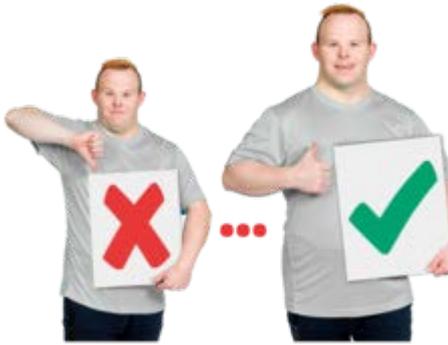


Council areas use different ways to decide what type of advocacy to offer.



Each **advocacy provider** uses different ways to tell how good their advocacy is.

What SCLD thinks could be made better



SCLD has looked at everything that people said about advocacy and suggests that there are some things that can be done to make advocacy better for people with learning disabilities.

Helping more people to get advocacy



Advocacy Providers and **Commissioners** should make sure that people with learning disabilities know that they have a right to advocacy.



Advocacy Providers and **Commissioners** should make sure that people with learning disabilities know how to get advocacy if they need it.

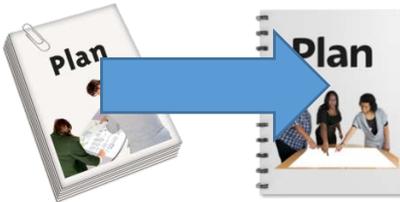


Advocacy Providers and **Commissioners** should make sure that people with learning disabilities do not miss out on their right to advocacy.

Planning advocacy better



Every area should have an advocacy plan.



These plans should be kept up to date.



People who have learning disabilities should help to make these plans.

Know how good advocacy is



Advocacy providers should get better at finding out how well advocacy is working for people.



They should also try to find out reasons why some people might not be getting advocacy.

Learn from each other



Advocacy providers and commissioners should work together so that everyone understands what advocates are supposed to do.



There should be easier ways for people who work in advocacy to learn from each other and share ways to do things better.