

## INDEPENDENT MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY

### WHAT IS INDEPENDENT MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY?

If you are an adult and restricted or being detained under the Mental Health Act, you are legally entitled to help and support from an Independent Mental Health Advocate.

This applies to hospital patients and those who are on a Supervised Community Treatment Order (CTO) or under Guardianship.

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#### What does it mean 'being detained'?

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Being detained under the Mental Health Act is when you are made to stay in hospital for assessment or treatment against your wishes.

Being detained is called 'sectioned' because the law has different sections.

Your rights depend on what section you are under.

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#### What is a Community Treatment Order?

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A Community Treatment Order (CTO) allows a person who has been detained in hospital for treatment to leave hospital (discharge from detention) and get treatment in the community.



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#### What is Guardianship?

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Guardianship is used to help you live outside of hospital. Your guardian (this could be your Local Authority or someone your Local Authority has agreed) can decide things for you, like where you live. Under Guardianship you should still be free to come and go.

Also eligible for an IMHA includes:







-  Those being considered for section 57 treatment
-  Under 18 and being considered for ECT

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#### What do St. Helens Advocacy Hub's IMHAs do?

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An IMHA can support you to:

-  Be fully involved in your care planning
-  Access Mental Health Review Tribunals, preparing for them and understanding decisions made
-  Access other support or services
-  Discuss appropriate aftercare
-  Understand how to raise concerns about your experience/care
-  Exercise your rights

An IMHA will:

-  Listen carefully to what you tell us about your views and feelings
-  Support you to speak up or speak up on your behalf if needed
-  Make sure you are fully involved in decisions being made about you

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### What is the Mental Health Act?

The Mental Health Act is a law which tells people with a mental health disorder what their rights are and how they can be treated.

'Mental health disorder' means any disorder or disability of the mind.

It is important that you know what happens to you when you are detained, what your rights are and where you can seek help. The Mental Health Act Code of Practice tells everyone how to use this law and what they must do.

### How can I make a referral?

Mental Health professionals have a duty to inform patients in their care and their nearest relative about the IMHA services available to them. These measures ensure that each patient who is entitled to receive IMHA support is aware of their right to approach the service.

Referrals to the IMHA service are usually made by Health or Social Care professionals, however, St. Helens Advocacy Hub will accept IMHA referrals from the person themselves or family.



**TO LEARN HOW ADVOCACY  
CAN HELP PLEASE GET IN TOUCH**

**The St. Helens Advocacy Hub offers a  
SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT for all advocacy enquiries in the area**

**For more information or to make a referral:**

Tel: **0300 3030 202**

Website **[www.sthelensadvocacyhub.org.uk](http://www.sthelensadvocacyhub.org.uk)**

Email: **[referral@sthelensadvocacyhub.org.uk](mailto:referral@sthelensadvocacyhub.org.uk)**

Online chat: **<https://www.n-compass.org.uk/get-support/advocacy/>**