



Your rights when using our service



As an individual using Advocacy in Barnet you have the right:

- To a welfare benefits volunteer advocate who will work in partnership with you and treat you as an equal
- To be kept fully informed at all times
- To confidentiality
- To have access to any information Advocacy in Barnet keeps about you
- To ask for your welfare benefits volunteer advocate/s to be changed
- To withdraw consent from working with welfare benefits volunteer advocates.



Equal Opportunities

- Advocacy in Barnet believes that everybody should be treated fairly regardless of what they believe in, look like, how they live, their sexuality, gender, age, or chosen lifestyle.
- Advocacy in Barnet has a policy of non-discrimination. That means we want to make sure that everybody is treated equally and with respect when they use our services or work for us.
- We feel this is so important that we produced a document called the 'Equal Opportunities Policy'.
- Advocacy in Barnet also expects people who use our service to respect our policy about treating people equally.
- Advocacy in Barnet will not tolerate abusive, violent or threatening behaviour towards its welfare benefits volunteer advocates.
- If anybody does not respect the equal opportunities policy, the service will be taken away from them.



Confidentiality

- What you tell your advocate will be private. Sometimes they will have to talk to the Co-ordinator about it.
- We need to keep some information about you to help us do our job properly. We will not give anybody else this information about you unless you say it is alright to do so.
- Any papers or electronic documents that we keep about you will be kept in a safe place. We will only keep information about you that is necessary for your advocates to do their job.
- At very rare times your advocate may think that you are in serious danger of being hurt or that you are going to hurt someone else. In this case they may have to tell someone about it but will let you know they are planning to do this. They may have to do this even if you do not want them to so that you or another person remains safe.



How to make a complaint or withdraw your consent

- If you are unhappy about something your advocate or anyone else at Advocacy in Barnet has done, you should tell someone about it.
- If you are unhappy about something you should speak to your advocate as a first step.
- Sometimes talking to somebody about your problem can help. Your advocate will see if they can put it right.
- If you are still unhappy or feel you can't speak to your advocate, then you can speak to Lizzie Sturm at Advocacy in Barnet lizzie@advocacyinbarnet.org.uk 020 8201 3415
- She will have a telephone meeting to talk about your complaint. Then she will see if she can help you in a way that makes you happy.
- If you are still unhappy you can write to The Board of Trustees of Advocacy in Barnet.
- They will look at your complaint and decide what to do.
- Your letter should be in an envelope marked confidential and for the attention of The Board of Trustees and sent to the address below.
- Advocacy in Barnet will have to keep notes in their records about your complaint.
- Your complaint will be dealt with in confidence. That means that it will not be talked about to other people without your permission.
- Copies of our policies and procedures are available on request.