

How do I contact the IMHA Service?

You can ask for an IMHA yourself by contacting the service directly. You can be referred by anyone including medical staff, social care staff, your nearest relative or family.

The medical or social care team should do everything possible to ensure you understand the IMHA support available and how to access it as soon as you are subject to the Act. They should also give information to your family, unless you request otherwise.

You get to choose whether to receive an IMHA's support and can change your mind at any time.

Contact details for IMHA services in the Northumberland Tyne and Wear area are provided on the back of this leaflet. You should contact the service that covers the area where your GP is based:-



Newcastle

Newcastle Advocacy Centre, NCVS
MEA House, Ellison Place,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8XS

☎: 0191 232 7445

☎: 0191 230 5640

✉: advocacy@cvsnewcastle.org.uk
www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk

Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland

Mental Health Matters
7a Villa Place, Bensham,
Gateshead, Tyne and Wear,
NE8 1RY

☎: 0191 477 8790

☎: 0191 490 0579

✉: imha@btconnect.com
www.mentalhealthmatters.com

North Tyneside

Independent Advocacy (North Tyneside)
62 Howard Street, North Shields,
Tyne and Wear, NE30 1AF

☎: 0191 259 6662

☎: 0191 296 3767

✉: mail@independentadvocacynt.co.uk

Northumberland

Spiral Skills
Chevyside, Yetholm Place,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE5 4EB

☎: 0191 271 5353

☎: 0191 271 4922

✉: info.spiral.skills@learningfirst.org.uk
www.spiralskills.org



Advocacy support for people treated under the Mental Health Act



Can an Independent Mental Health Advocate (IMHA) work with you?

You are entitled to an IMHA if you are detained or 'sectioned' under the Mental Health Act. They can also work with you if you are conditionally discharged under Guardianship or Supervised Community Treatment.

If you are an 'informal' patient, you will also be able to get support from an IMHA if you are being considered for serious surgery, like neurosurgery for mental disorder, or are under 18 years old and are being considered for Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT).



What is an IMHA?

An IMHA is a trained and experienced advocate who can work with you around your care and treatment under the Mental Health Act.

Free

An IMHA is independent which means they are separate from your medical and social care teams and work for a different organisation.

IMHAs do not replace existing advocacy services. IMHAs can work with other advocates whilst supporting you.

What will an IMHA do?

An IMHA can work with you:

- To inform you of your rights and make sure they are upheld.
- To gather information to help you consider your choices and make decisions.
- To help you to understand your care and treatment.
- To have your views heard by standing by you and supporting you to speak up.
- To attend ward rounds, appeals and meetings.
- To represent you when you are unable / do not want to attend meetings.
- In private, when possible.
- To speak to your medical or social care team for you in private to discuss issues or to access records held about you.

Independent

An IMHA will not tell you what he or she thinks is right for you, but help you to decide what you want to do. They will only act on your instructions and will not judge you.



How will an IMHA work with you?

An IMHA is free so you don't have to pay for the service.

It's confidential so your discussions and information will only be shared with medical and social care staff if you ask for it to be shared or if there is a very good reason to do so. An IMHA will share with you any information they get about you. An IMHA does not affect your right to a solicitor. They will not give you advice, but will help you to consider your options and support you to make decisions.

Confidential