

The Care Act sets out some 'key principles' on how health and social care professionals should work with individuals needing support. This is true for everyone regardless of any diagnosis or disability.

- *Empowerment*
- *Protection*
- *Prevention*
- *Proportionality*
- *Partnership*
- *Accountability*

These six principles underpin the work of professionals and other staff who work with adults with learning disabilities and autism.

The Act requires local authorities to involve adults in their assessment, care and support planning and review. Considering the person's views and wishes is critical to a person-centred system.

If a client has a 'substantial difficulty' and has no family or friends who are suitable and willing to act in this role, an advocate should be employed to act in their best interest to help them understand the process and contribute as much as possible.

A 'substantial difficulty' means needing help to:

- Understand information about the decisions
- Remember information
- Use the information to be involved in the decisions
- Be able to communicate views, wishes and feelings

An advocate can support clients to help them understand what is happening and to verbalise or explain their views if they are unable to do so themselves. An advocate can also help to raise any complaints if the need arises.

The Elfrida Society can provide advocates on a spot purchased basis for any local boroughs surrounding Islington.

When requesting advocacy on behalf of a client, please be aware of the following points:

- Invoices for completed work are issued a month in lieu to ensure evidence is collated accurately.
- A spot purchase agreement must be signed and returned before any work can commence, along with clear guidance on the main contact in your organisation responsible for Finance.
- Hours claimed by advocates can change from month to month depending on the quantity of upcoming meetings and legal instructions. Cases can become dormant in between meetings so advocates would only claim for contact made with the client to maintain their working relationship in the meantime.
- Where the communication needs of an individual are complex, helping them to fully understand information can occasionally take longer than expected. Preparation and de-brief meetings are crucial for the advocate to explain procedures in detail.
- To provide the client with specialist wraparound support, signposting and community engagement with external partners may be necessary. Advocates may need to make onward referrals throughout the process which will be evident on their claimed hours.
- Our advocates work with clients across London and their travelling time must be factored into the work they do. Invoicing will include the time they require to get to and from any meetings as evidenced from their travel documents.
- Travel expenses are not included within the £36p/h fee.

To avoid any confusion, advocates will inform you as soon as possible if there are any issues arising which may affect the duration of their work or may require actions in addition to what may be anticipated.