



# Impact review of grant funding stream for adult learning disability advocacy

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FINAL

This document summarises the findings of a review of a Welsh Assembly Government grant programme for advocacy for adults with learning disabilities which has been administered by the British Institute for Learning Disabilities.

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## Executive summary

Action for Advocacy were commissioned to evaluate the funding stream for advocacy for adult with learning disabilities and those with autistic spectrum disorders which is managed by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD). The aims of the evaluation were

1. To map the current availability of adult learning disability advocacy services across Wales.
2. To consider how the grant scheme fits within the overall policy direction set by the Welsh Assembly Government and developed by the Learning Disability Implementation Advisory Group.
3. To assess
  - the impact of the grant funded advocacy provided on the lives of people with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders.
  - the effectiveness of BILD in managing, implementing, administrating, monitoring and evaluating the grant scheme.
  - the effectiveness of the decision making processes linked to the application rounds.
  - how effective the management of funded groups is in delivering their objectives as set out in their applications.
  - how successful funded groups are in identifying alternate funding streams to sustain their ongoing work beyond the life of the grant funding
  - how well best practice has been identified and disseminated

The evaluation consisted of an initial mapping exercise followed by a review of monitoring data, interviews with service users, self advocates, managers, funders and BILD staff.

The programme was clearly designed and implemented to tie in with the policy framework geared at making advocacy provision accessible to people with learning disabilities in Wales. It has aimed through 2 specific grants to spread knowledge and practice which will improve the ability of services (both advocacy and non-advocacy) to respond effectively to people from Black and other Minority Ethnic communities.

Decisions about how the grants should be awarded were made in a structured way and included a number of relevant stakeholders. The focus on identifying outcomes did encourage groups to think of the impact of their intended activity. The majority of grantees have been successfully supported to achieve their stated outcomes. An attempt to ensure that all groups could identify co-funders for their work was less successful and alternative sources of funding for continuation of activity have not been reliably achieved so far.

Monitoring systems for the grant have been largely effective. The linking of activity monitoring to organisations reporting on some aspects of advocacy standards appears to have improved the robustness of management processes in some advocacy organisations. BILD have sought to be flexible enough to meet the needs of a diverse range of grantees and this has worked up to a point.

However, a more structured means of monitoring could have led to stronger evidence of the scale and depth of impact created by funded groups.

Standards appear to be improving and there is a clear commitment to quality from the sector itself. However, there is still a need to ensure focus and clarity of role, particularly in self advocacy.

The funding programme is clearly having an impact in people's lives. It is helping to make sure that people are supported to address significant issues and enabling them to develop skills and confidence to be more independent and included members of society. It is also helping people with learning disabilities to have more influence over the services they access.

If the work of funded groups is to continue and flourish there is a need to identify a strategic direction for advocacy and sources of funding this. This is the only means by which the hope of many groups to be mainstream funded by statutory authorities is likely to be achieved. Should this not be possible, a strategy is needed to identify how adults with learning disabilities in Wales are actively supported to take place in decisions about their lives as full and equal members of society.

**Martin Coyle**

**Head of Quality and Development, Action for Advocacy**

## Background

The Welsh Assembly Government provided funding for the further development of advocacy for people with a learning disability and for those on the Autistic Spectrum available for a period of up to 2 ½ years from October 2008 until March 2011. Action for Advocacy was commissioned to evaluate the effectiveness of the grant scheme and BILD's role in administering it so far. The grants programme is now at the midpoint of its cycle.

To be eligible for a grant groups needed to meet all of the following criteria:

- They must be an independent organisation that does not provide any kind of community care services for people with a learning disability or people on the autistic spectrum, or be part of a larger organisation that provides community care services.
- They must provide advocacy for people with a learning disability or people on the autistic spectrum (including Aspergers Syndrome), or plan to provide advocacy. This may be offering one-to-one advocacy support or facilitating self-advocacy groups
- They must be able to show that they meet the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) advocacy standards.
- They must be able to provide evidence that they have matched funding from other sources to cover the full costs of their project.

The scheme allocated £1,778,876 in total for the period 2008 to 2011. Monitoring figures for the period until June 2009 (by which point approximately £711,550 had been spent) show a minimum of 533 individuals had benefitted from the advocacy supported by the programme. A further 46 agencies were said to have had their practice influenced by grant funded activity. This report evaluates the effectiveness of the funding programme so far using a combination of monitoring information, surveys of providers, interviews with service users, self advocates, unsuccessful bidders and advocacy commissioners.

This information gives us a clear indication that the programme has already had a real and positive effect on the lives of a substantial number of people with learning disabilities in Wales. The oversight of the grant by BILD has been guided by a desire to promote the highest standards in both one to one advocacy and self advocacy, combined with a pragmatic flexibility. This has led to a generally high level of satisfaction from funded organisations with the grants process.

Organisations were routinely able to show clear management processes in place – and this is partly due to the emphasis of tying funding to attainment of the Good Practice in Advocacy and Advocacy Standards (BILD 2007). Real attempts have been made to develop the skills and practice of groups through training events and action learning sets. These have allowed groups to share experiences and have a raised level of expectation and allowed BILD to identify some areas where future action may be needed.

In their turn, many groups have engaged with quality standards. There is a commitment to try to demonstrate impact which was encouraged through the whole grant process, from an application process requiring the identification of outcomes to the use of bespoke monitoring for each group. However, there is a widespread lack of clarity about the difference between outcomes and outputs

in the Third Sector as a whole and this is reflected in the variable quality of defined outcomes in the funding programme. Therefore it could be argued that this flexibility in monitoring has been a double edged sword; encouraging groups towards impact assessment but not providing a sufficiently robust tool with which to do this.

## Policy Context

Advocacy services for adults with learning disabilities sit within a number of legislative and policy contexts. The Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability sets clear expectations that people should have access to a range of advocacy services. However, advocacy also needs to be seen in the context of the Mental Capacity Act (2005); the Mental Health Act (1983, amended in 2007); “Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities – the Strategy for Social Services in Wales Over the Next Decade (2007)”<sup>i</sup>; “The Third Dimension – a Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme(2008)”<sup>ii</sup>; the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategic Action Plan for Wales<sup>iii</sup> and Learning Disability Strategy: Section 7 Guidance on Service Principles and Service Responses<sup>iv</sup>.

The Welsh Assembly Government’s Learning Disability Strategy: Section 7, Guidance on Service Principles and Service Responses states that a range of advocacy services should be available to facilitate communication to ensure that the service user is put at the centre of care assessment and service planning. “Authorities should ensure that access to an appropriate range of advocacy services is available to give a voice to individuals to ensure their views are fully taken into account in the individual planning process” (paragraph 16, page 3) adding that it may be necessary for people to make extensive use of advocacy services to assist active participation. A clear expectation is contained in the statement, “Where an individual’s disabilities inhibit understanding of the issues involved in decision-making, they have should access to an appropriate range of advocacy services.” (Section 2, page 9 – Person Centred Approaches to Individual Planning).

Both the Mental Health Act and The Mental Capacity Act sets out the statutory requirement to provide advocacy in certain situations. For the Mental Health Act these situations relate to people who are subject to the compulsory powers of the act; whereas for the Mental Capacity Act, advocacy must be in place for situations in which people are deemed to lack capacity to make a decision (IMCA services). However, the Mental Capacity Act also places a responsibility on decision makers to ensure that “A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help him do so have been taken without success.” (S1.3). The Code of Practice suggests that advocacy may be helpful in this situation.

The “Third Dimension” sets out the role of advocacy organisations in bringing about its vision of empowering people and communities (4.57). Recognising the patchy distribution of advocacy services across the country, it sets the challenge of developing effective strategic approaches to improve the coverage, independence and quality of information, advice and advocacy services, with one of the indicators being the adoption of an Advocacy Strategy for Wales by September 2008.

The Strategy for Social Services in Wales over the Next Decade (Fulfilled Lives, Supported Communities) states that people should be supported to have control over the life they wish to live (1.8). It also points to the role of independent advocacy in the context of personal budgets for care.

The Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategic Action Plan for Wales points to a role for independent advocacy in the unified assessment process. Later, the document states that a person's autonomy and freedom to make choices is a central part of their independence.

The provision of advocacy for people with learning disabilities may be seen as one of the reasonable steps which can be taken to work towards equalities in Wales. It is worth noting in this regard that the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategic Action Plan for Wales states that the range of services (including advocacy services) for individuals from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities is generally poor in Wales. This brings into sharp focus the need for advocacy services that are able to work with diversity to reduce the risk of double discrimination.

In 2007, The Welsh Assembly Government issued a "Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability". In the introduction, the then Minister for Health and Social Services drew particular attention to the "powerful messages" within the preface written by All Wales People First.

In this preface, advocacy is specifically mentioned as one of the topics which All Wales People First consider vital. Their statement that, "Without self advocacy we could not speak out or get the support from other people" flags up the need for self advocacy groups to be able to fulfil this significant obligation. However, advocacy has a role to play in facilitating many of the other areas of interest including person centred planning, transition, day opportunities, employment, accommodation and independent living. In effect, the work of advocacy (both one to one and self advocacy) is to ensure that learning disability is not a barrier to leading an ordinary life.

Amongst the common difficulties faced by those with learning disabilities listed in the document, are two which advocacy seeks to directly address namely; "Understanding and using information" and "Making choices and decisions". It is thus unsurprising that the statement goes on to say that, "Many people with a learning disability will require support to assist in making their views known and advocacy has an important role in such situations".

The document goes on to say that,

*"6.8 Statutory authorities and other non-statutory service provider organisations should ensure that access to an appropriate range of advocacy services is available to give a voice to individuals to ensure their views are fully taken into account. The empowerment of individuals so that they do play a full role in decisions surrounding and affecting their lives is a key element of the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic approach".*

Not only is the provision of advocacy vital to this strategic approach, it can also play a key role in ensuring that decision makers are meeting their obligations under the Mental Capacity Act.

Monitoring information and interviews with the beneficiaries listed below demonstrates that organisations funded through this programme have indeed been supporting people to expect and achieve respect, equality and independence. Resources developed by North Wales Race Equality Network should prove invaluable in equipping advocacy services to respond appropriately to diverse ethnic communities.

## Evaluation – interviews

### Views from British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD)

An in depth interview was held with Janet Badger, who formerly managed the grants programme. Further information was also obtained in a telephone interview with Keith Smith, Chief Executive of BILD.

Key trends and drivers were identified which set the context for the current grant round. The application process and general theme of funding decisions was discussed and it became clear that the thrust of funding policy was to fund those projects that would make the biggest difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities.

Monitoring visits to funded organisations have taken place twice per year to support advocacy organisations to deliver on their objectives and to ensure that the grant manager was in touch with the reality on the ground. This process has also enabled better use of monitoring against standards – something which was said to have been particularly useful.

Some issues were raised about particular needs of self advocacy groups. Some discussion ranged around the need to ensure the clarity and focus of self advocacy groups<sup>1</sup>. A further question was raised about the degree to which members of self advocacy groups are supported to have true control over the management and direction of their organisations. This was seen to be an area where further development and support is needed.

BILD designed the monitoring system to give flexibility and to encourage groups to bring more quantitative detail about the impact of advocacy into the programme. There was a belief that self advocacy groups may not lend themselves so well to written evaluation and this was seen to be true in the written monitoring. However, one to one advocacy groups have also struggled to some extent to use the power of advocacy stories or vignettes in monitoring despite the fact that such stories poured out of groups during monitoring visits.

There was a strong sense that BILD has gone to considerable lengths to ensure that groups are strongly encouraged to take part in the support aspects of the funding programme, including action learning sets and workshops. Emerging themes such as the increased level of support given by advocacy services to parents with learning disabilities suggest that organisations will need support not only to effectively run their organisations, but also to effectively support advocates to work with issues of increasing complexity and import.

It was clear from the interviews that BILD is proud of its work in managing and monitoring the grant programme for learning disability advocacy in Wales and felt especially privileged to be able to continue and develop an area of work which began in earlier funding rounds. The organisation has demonstrated a long standing commitment to ensuring the clarity and accountability of advocacy provision (including tying the release of funding to the return of monitoring information) and is committed to continuing to support advocacy organisations across Wales in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> This view was echoed by a number of interviewees, including some self advocacy facilitators.

## View of funded organisations

Twenty funded groups were contacted and invited to complete an online survey. Meaningful responses have been received from seventeen organisations. Nine of these organisations would be classed as focused on self advocacy, the remaining eight deliver one to one or representational advocacy. Feedback on the nature of the application process was positive, with 74% of respondents making comments that were positive.

Some groups had difficulty separating out the work which is funded by this grant programme from that funded through other sources. This may be indicative of organisations with less robust monitoring mechanisms or lower I.T. capacity. One example of the difficulty of finding the actual number of people supported directly through this programme is a difficulty in evidencing the number of beneficiaries when there is an educational aspect or when work includes representation at partnership boards. For example, in response to the question, “How many people have benefitted directly from this funding so far?” one of the responses said 371 as “there are 371 people [with learning disabilities in XXXX]... All of those people are represented by the work of the organisation”. This may help explain the difference in average number of beneficiaries. The average number of beneficiaries listed by self advocacy schemes was 158, compared to 30 in 1 to 1 advocacy schemes.

## Benefits listed by organisations – key themes

A striking aspect was the examples of impacts that are categorised as “a normal life”. In these situations, the issues of one person are picked out as an example of the impact made. The need for advocacy interventions to enable people to live independently, decide who comes into their homes or to have relationships that are not controlled or limited by others shows the ongoing discrimination which people with learning disabilities are routinely battling. This shows that advocacy is directly addressing the desire to lead an ordinary life, as stated in the Statement on Policy and Practice. The data also shows that advocacy is having an impact in enabling people to be more confident in making choices and decisions, making their views known and being empowered in care planning.

Self advocacy focused projects tended to elicit more responses in the area of training activities whilst one to one advocacy focused on empowerment in care planning. Both approaches laid equal claim to impacts on making people’s voices heard, helping people to speak up and ensuring more appropriate services and supports.

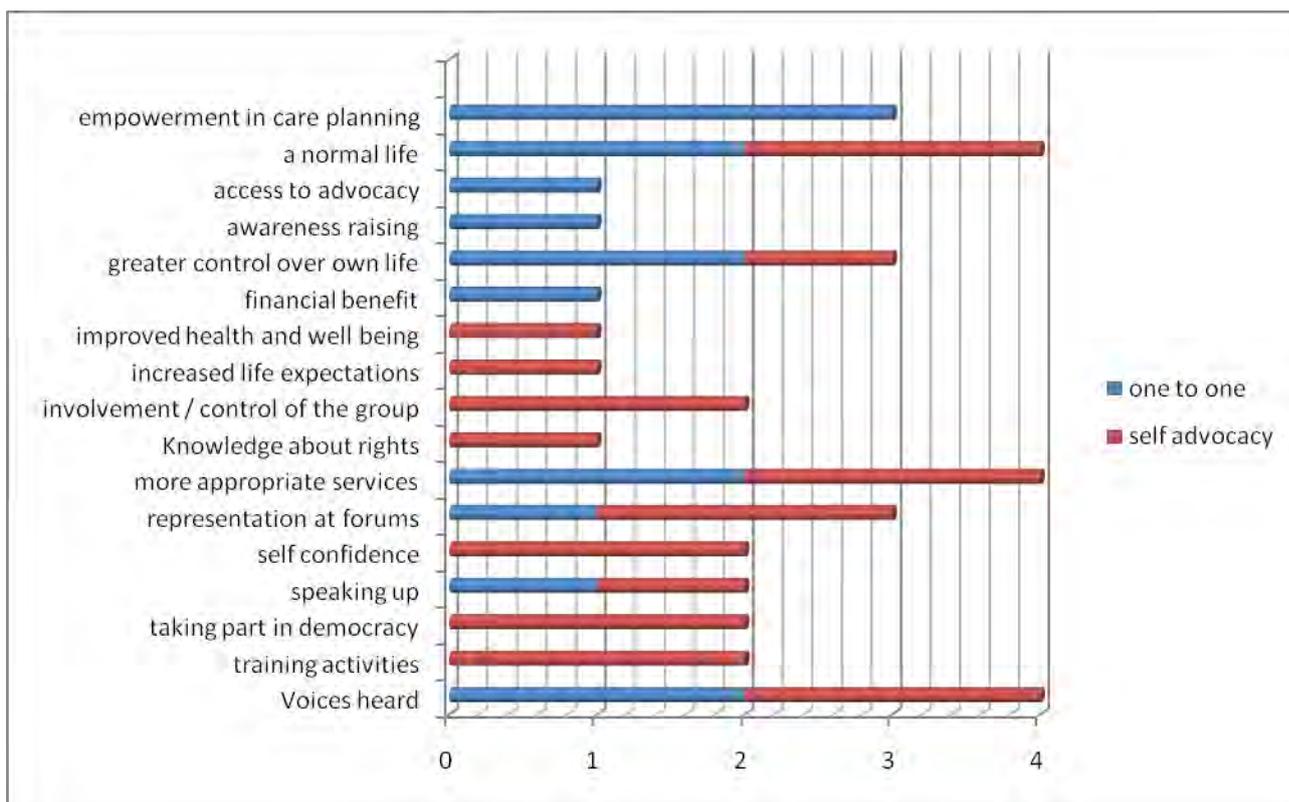


Figure 1 - individual areas of benefit

### The importance of this funding

15 respondents said that without this funding stream there would be either a reduction in or absence of advocacy or self advocacy. Four self advocacy schemes said that the organisation would have ended without this funding. This leads to interesting questions when considered in conjunction with the ways in which groups anticipate being funded in the future. Interviews with three groups who were unsuccessful in their applications suggest that there was a reduction in service in all cases. No group was identified which had stopped operating, however one did state that it had come close to closure.

### Source of future funding

One aspect of the feedback from the survey was the plans for funding the work after the current funding runs out. Only one respondent had a clearly identified exit strategy for the project, four were clearly unidentified. Two had plans to try to generate some funding through charging for other services. However, the majority of respondents will be aiming to continue the work via funding through local statutory sources or through charitable trusts. Later we will see that interviews with some of the local commissioners suggest that the viability of this is far from certain (see below).

Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government

Welsh Assembly Government

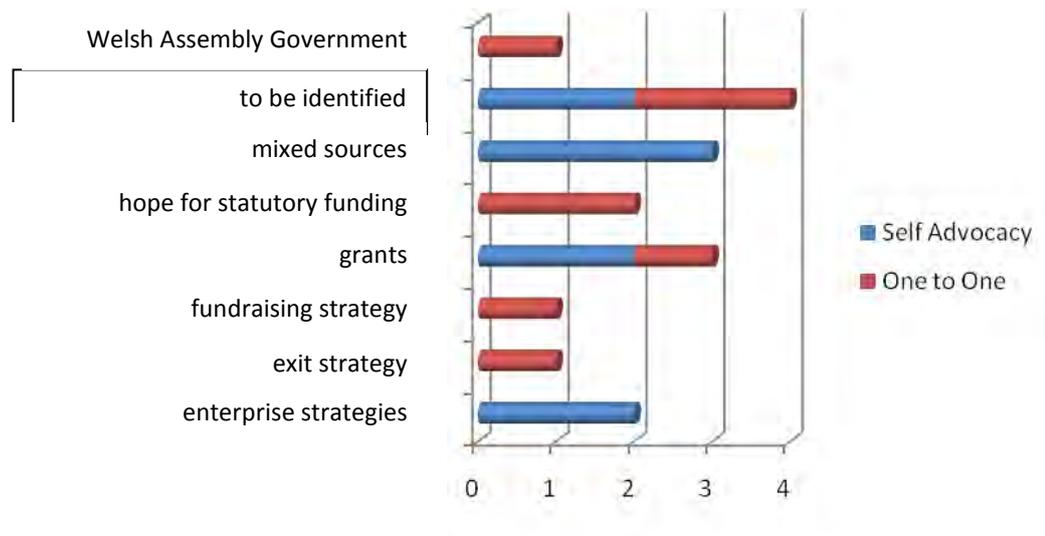


Figure 2. Expected sources of future funding

### Standards and good practice

Sixteen groups said they could meet the WAG/BILD standards and were generally confident that they had the documentation to support this. However, some were unable to indicate a document that supports their independence and ten were unable to indicate a safeguarding children policy. This may reflect an attitude based on what people know rather than what the organisation knows.

Eleven groups had attended BILD run events to support them in this grant, however although good practice was discussed at these events very few indicated that they had been asked to contribute to best practice materials.

Good practice resources received by groups were listed as the BILD/WAG advocacy standards, Making Advocacy Count and a4a's QPM workbook. The groups listed other standards being worked to as:

- MAP (created by All Wales People First)
- Action for Advocacy Quality Performance Mark (QPM) and
- Action for Advocacy Quality Standards for Advocacy Schemes

Amongst the funded groups was Advocacy Matters Wales who were the first organisation in Wales to achieve the Quality Performance Mark. One group also said that they were working towards gaining Investors in People.

### Views on Monitoring

Fifteen respondents felt that current monitoring arrangements allow them to wholly or mainly reflect the impact that their work is having. Two respondents said that important work was not reflected in their returns but could not offer any suggestions for how monitoring could be improved. Three schemes said that they were not currently meeting their targets, however they were confident that they would be meeting them soon.

## Views from the funders - commissioners

Telephone interviews were carried out with seven local authority advocacy commissioners. Interviews were carried out on the basis that information given would be passed on but would not be attributed to an individual or organisation. The questions asked are given below with a summary of the aggregated responses.

### **Are you clear on the quality expected of advocacy services?**

All funders said that they were clear on the expectations of quality advocacy services. All referred to the Good Practice in Advocacy and Advocacy Standards (BILD 2007) with some also making reference to Action for Advocacy's Quality Performance Mark. There was a general sense that commissioners had made significant efforts to understand the advocacy sector.

### **Are you happy with current monitoring arrangements?**

Commissioners spoke of receiving relevant and timely reports from advocacy services and of checking this against feedback from other stakeholders. Some concerns were raised about the robustness of the monitoring arrangements, particularly in its ability to deliver evidence of impact rather than activity. Only one commissioner stated that they were actively seeking to strengthen the robustness of monitoring arrangements.

### **What expectations do you have for funding over next 3 – 5 years?**

Only one respondent was able to foresee any rise in funding in the coming 5 years, and that was contingent on identifying money to support advocacy as a tool for more personalised services. Overwhelmingly, there was an expectation that advocacy funding will at best be maintained but is more likely to reduce. One respondent hoped to achieve this through efficiency savings, another through the more specific targeting of the most in need of advocacy.

### **What kind of advocacy will you be most likely to fund in the future?**

All funders said that they hoped for a combination of self advocacy and one to one advocacy. The majority of respondents said the statutory advocacy services (IMHA and IMCA) will be the priority in a restricted funding scenario. A strong trend towards consolidation of existing services emerged. No commissioners said that they would prioritise new areas of work.

## Views from the funders – grant making bodies

Interviews with Big Lottery Fund staff showed that they will be continuing with their policy of not funding continuations of previous projects. Current funding programmes are only partially related to advocacy, however a programme called Citizen Voice is currently being developed which is more likely to have scope for including advocacy work. It is likely to be launched in 2011-12.

The only other grant making bodies identified by advocacy groups were the Baily Thomas Charitable Fund and Lloyds TSB Wales. Lloyds TSB Foundation made grants totalling £2,186,694 to organisations in Wales in the last year for which figures are available (to the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009). £185,186 was granted to advocacy organisations, of which £99,986 was allocated to learning disabilities advocacy organisations. Figures for the levels of Baily Thomas funding were not found, however as their guidelines states that groups are not eligible to reapply for a grant within one year of previous funding, continuation funding is unlikely.

## Review of Monitoring data

The bespoke nature of the grant monitoring makes it difficult to draw overarching themes about impact from the data submitted. The monitoring system had three main components;

1. a section for organisations to detail progress made and individual impacts
2. A review of progress against the initially named outcomes
3. Details of any supervision or training undergone by project staff

Areas 2 and 3 give sufficient information for the grants manager to review progress against targets, however it is in the first section that the real impact of the grants starts to become apparent. Where this is done effectively it gives a powerful sense of the impact this funding is having as you can see below.

## **Examples of the impact of advocacy on real lives**

**A mother with learning disabilities supported to challenge an accusation of child neglect and lack of parenting skills. Since advocacy has been involved, the Social Worker commented on the mother that “where before she would sit silently in meetings now she feels able to ask questions and relate relevant information and is not intimidated” The child has now been returned to its mother.**

**The people in the People First group informed us that they were unhappy with the way in which they were treated at their training centre when they had health checks there. This resulted in a formal complaint. People had the confidence to tell us about this, and not the confidence to tell the staff at the day centre as they feel there would be repercussions for them. People’s views were listened to, recorded and acted upon, which makes a huge difference to the way in which they are treated on a day to day basis.**

**For many years a client had been harassed by a member of his family and it had been affecting his mental health and well being – he self referred to the advocacy service who had supported him in approaching the police who dealt with the issue very quickly. The client has now had 3 months of peace.**

**A young female woman has been caught up in the middle of a battle over where she is to live. Her parents have split up and although her mother moved out of the country, her father still resides in Wales at the family home. The advocate’s involvement has enabled her with support to voice her own wishes and say for herself where she wants to live instead of the decision being made for her and the chance of her being unhappy with it.**

These vignettes tell in a few lines the difference advocacy has made, affirming someone's right to a family life, affecting service delivery and feelings of dignity for all members of a day centre, ensuring that distressing and prolonged harassment is dealt with, allowing someone to say where they want to call home. These are important issues which should be communicated to funders in a clear and powerful way to ensure that the importance of advocacy can be recognised. However, the ability of groups to do this was inconsistent.

Of the thirteen organisations that had provided this kind of information, eight were clearly able to demonstrate impact, three gave relevant but unclear information in their statements and two appeared to be giving irrelevant information. Often, the reason that information was less successful was that it stated that contact with advocacy / self advocacy created empowerment or independence without giving any means of identifying this in practice.

The effective use of such vignettes is important. They provide a direct link from funder to beneficiary, reminding all stakeholders that the funding is there to make a difference in people's lives. Organisations showed no difficulty in generating these stories in monitoring visits which suggests that there is a need to support groups in capturing and recording this information more effectively.

However, divorcing this rich information from the quantitative information weakens the ability of self advocacy and one to one advocacy groups to show how many people they provide this kind of impact for. A more formal mechanism should be developed to ensure this is captured in future monitoring. This need has been recognised by BILD who rightly see the current monitoring arrangements as an evolving system, improving on the past arrangements but with some distance left to travel. Action for Advocacy has developed a resource which may help in this regard.<sup>2vi</sup>

On a process level, all organisations listed the supervision and training of project staff. Only one organisation did not indicate a structured approach to staff supervision. However, only two organisations were able to list training which had been attended in the period. This picture jars somewhat with the information from the providers' survey, where groups stated the range of training that they routinely provided, although both sets of data suggest that training for self advocacy facilitators is far from routine.

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<sup>2</sup> Lost in Translation, Action for Advocacy 2009

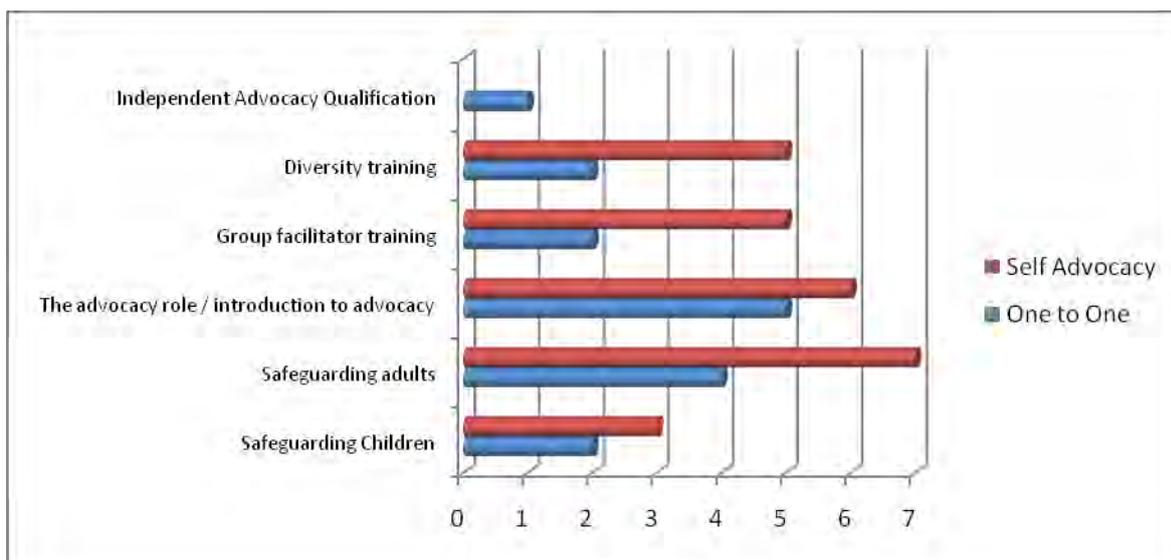


Figure 3. Routine training accessed by groups

### Interviews with beneficiaries, self advocates and providers

Action for Advocacy staff met with seven organisations; two crisis advocacy – one peer advocacy group – one citizen advocacy group – one issue based – one research and development- one self advocacy. Twenty one people supported by advocacy were interviewed- ten individuals, one married couple, one group of six peer advocates, one group of three from a self advocacy group. In addition, eight managers/advocates/facilitators were interviewed.

Interviews with people supported by advocacy were based around a number of questions which were expanded upon and developed as appropriate with each person being interviewed<sup>3</sup>. Advocacy organisations were sent the planned questions prior to the meeting and if asked if there were any specific communication needs we needed to consider. All groups have been sent an accessible version of questions for people supported by advocacy and support was offered if they needed further development.

Interviews with people supported by advocacy lasted no more than half an hour and it was explained to each person that they could stop the interview at any time. One person out of fifteen asked for the interview to stop after approximately ten minutes. Interviews with advocacy staff again were based around a number of questions which were expanded upon and developed in the course of each interview.

### Understanding of advocacy by people accessing advocacy support.

Understanding of advocacy and/or the role of advocates role ranged from “it helps me” to understanding that it is independent and is there to support the individual or group to express their own views. Some individuals did have a strong understanding of some of the finer details of advocacy such as the advocate is not there to do everything and supports the individual to develop their own skills to express themselves as well.

<sup>3</sup> See appendix 1

## Overview of issues dealt with and support given:

People supported by advocacy gave a wide range of examples of the range of issues dealt with and advocacy support given to them.

Issues dealt with	Support given - one to one advocacy	Support given - Self advocacy
<b>Housing</b>	Maintaining provision or supporting people to access appropriate living accommodation	
<b>Personal care and support</b>	Supporting individuals through care planning and reviews. Making sure care and support is appropriate Accessing more appropriate levels of care and support.	
<b>Personal behaviour</b>		Supporting individuals identify triggers in service provision that cause difficult responses.
<b>Court proceedings: Child protection - Parents having children taken into foster care Criminal court proceedings Guardianship orders</b>	Supporting individuals to understand court proceedings Understanding bail conditions. Making sure the individuals have the opportunity to express themselves. Attending meetings with legal professionals such as solicitors.	
<b>Life plans</b>	Supporting individuals to develop life plans to explain to others their own preferences and needs, expressing who is important in their lives and what is important.	
<b>Bullying by support staff</b>	Support to identify and address bullying by a member of staff in a supported living home	
<b>Family relations</b>	Supporting individuals to develop independence to make decisions. Supporting family relations to understand the potential of person with learning disabilities.	Negotiating appropriate steps so that individual with learning disability can become more independent in making decisions.
<b>Personal choice</b>	Being able to access social events when others have tried to deny access.	Supporting individuals to develop confidence and capacity to make independent personal choices. Support to develop confidence to access events with friends and not just at the whim of support staff.
<b>Health promotion and understanding</b>	Individuals supported to get a diagnosis of a particular condition where other professionals do not accept a condition even exists. Attend meetings with individuals. Support individuals to feel less	Development of accessible resources to explain health issues. Supporting health professionals to develop greater understanding of learning disabilities.

Issues dealt with	Support given - one to one advocacy	Support given - Self advocacy
	stressed and anxious either by being with them at meetings or supporting them to understand situations more clearly.	
<b>Finance and debt</b>	Awareness of benefits. Support to access debt support resources to understand and take control of their own debt situation	
<b>Employment</b>	Support people through disciplinary process at work.	Supported individuals to gain confidence to access work opportunities

### Does advocacy help the individual to develop skills?

In advocacy, the changes noticed by the individual are just as important as the issue worked with. If advocacy is to remain distinct from casework or problem solving, it must attempt to release and develop the skills and abilities of those whose voice is less likely to be heard. Information from the interviews with beneficiaries of advocacy suggests that this positive change is being achieved in groups funded through this programme. A summary of the changes that individuals had ascribed to the advocacy process is given in the chart below.

This suggests that self advocacy makes people feel more confident, more involved and greatly enhances their ability to train and present to others (thus affecting wider changes to services). However it also flags up the ability of individuals to develop new skills and feel more able to speak up for themselves as a result of contact with one to one advocacy.

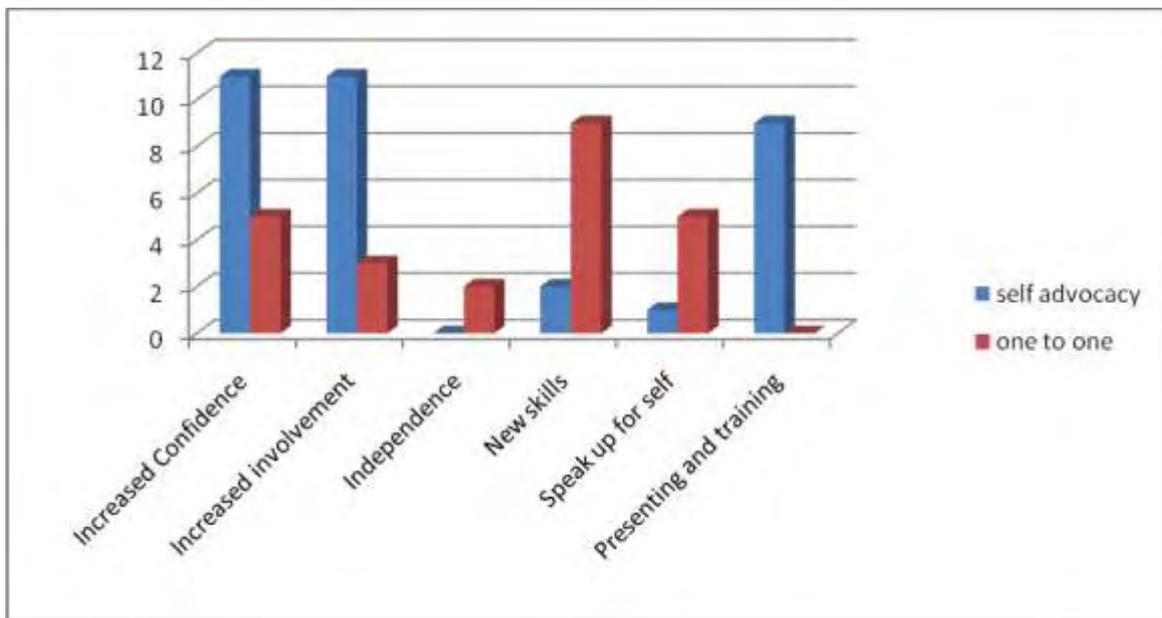


Figure 4 skills developed through advocacy

## Mapping Current advocacy providers

A mapping of advocacy provision for adults with learning disabilities in Wales was undertaken using data from Action for Advocacy, Advocacy Wales and Welsh Council for Voluntary Services along with some internet and telephone research. This initially produced a spread of 105 organisations. Further investigation of the organisations has shown that a number of these organisations do not actually deliver advocacy as independent advocacy or facilitate self advocacy groups. This leaves 85 organisations, 35 providers of one to one advocacy of varying scale and 50 self advocacy groups, many of which are individual groups at a day centre. These are listed on at the rear of this report. A map of organisations funded by this programme is also included.

## Conclusion

The evaluation shows that BILD has been effective in its oversight of the grants programme. This can be demonstrated in the instances that:

- Grant funded advocacy is having a clear, often profound, impact on the lives of people with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders.
- These impacts are in line with expectations set out in policy and strategy documents.
- Some resources have been developed which will support advocacy organisations to work more effectively with ethnically diverse populations.
- Decisions about the grant were made effectively, using an appropriate use of stakeholders and clear criteria.
- The use of an outcomes focused approach enabled all parties to set, monitor and demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of advocacy.
- Monitoring information shows that groups have been effective in delivering the objectives set out in their applications.
- Interviews with service users show that advocacy groups have been effective at communicating their role and promoting independence and empowerment.
- Data demonstrates that the impact of advocacy closely matches the desired outcomes of advocacy as named in the Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability.
- By linking monitoring returns to the release of funding BILD has ensured timely returns of information.
- Monitoring progress against advocacy standards has also enhanced the level of management and supervision required to deliver high quality advocacy.

However there are areas which show the need for further development:

- A number of organisations are unable to capture the impact and extent of their work in methodical written way.
- Funded groups have not been successful in identifying future funding streams and this could pose a significant weakness to their future development.

- Organisations do not sufficiently feel that they have been used to disseminate best practice and do not name many resources which they have received in this field
- Although the use of the Good Practice in Advocacy standards has been effective in some regards (e.g. governance and management) it has been more difficult to assess against them in other regards. There is a particular weakness in the area of training and potentially one in the area of clarity of role, purpose and control of self advocacy groups.

## Proposals for future

The following steps should be taken to ensure sustainable, high quality advocacy is accessible for people with learning disabilities in Wales:

- Address issues of quality in self advocacy through a resource to set clearer expectations for members of self advocacy groups and training of self advocacy facilitators.
- Capacity build advocacy organisations to communicate effectively with local commissioners.
- Train and support organisations to record and communicate the stories and outcomes of advocacy.
- Meet the challenge of creating an advocacy strategy for Wales.

A number of key stakeholders had a perception of poor practice in some parts of the self advocacy movement, particularly some self advocacy groups are becoming social groups rather than having an advocacy focus. This perception is partially backed up in monitoring information which highlights a lack of self advocacy facilitation training. A clearer test of quality is necessary to boost confidence and improve practice. This must enable members of self advocacy groups to understand what they should expect of the group and link to clear training for self advocacy facilitators. Means of clarifying expectations and roles within groups should be developed to empower members of self advocacy groups.

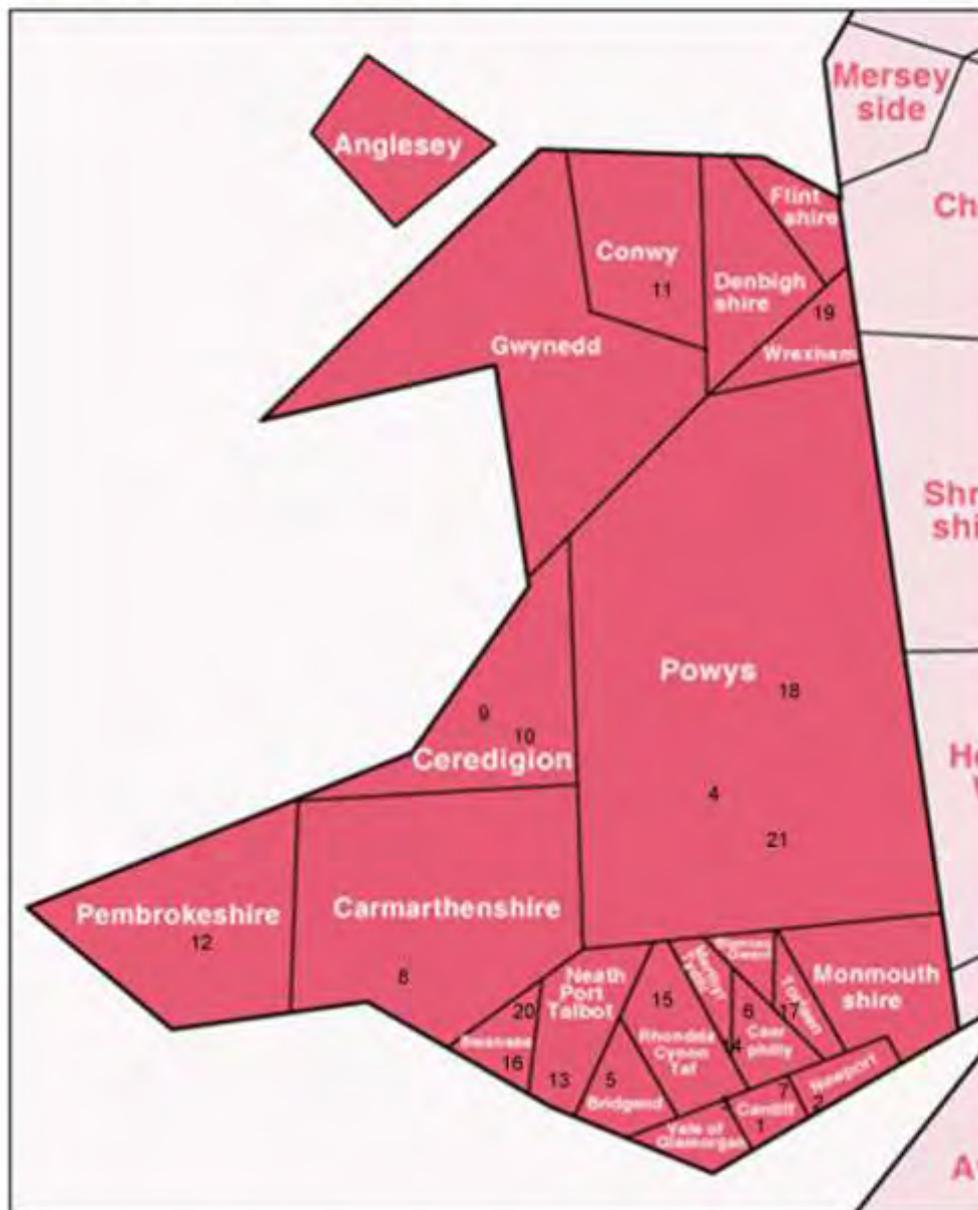
The decision to provide grant funding to groups without other funding sources was understandable but may signal a lost opportunity. In particular, the decision to allow the use of free reserves to provide the additional funding may have presented problems. In the instances where no other sources of funding have been developed, this has merely allowed advocacy services to reduce their financial security at a time of increased financial risk.

Consideration must be given to how the work of organisations can be maintained after the grant funding finishes. This may be difficult to achieve given suggestions from funders that their focus may need to turn towards statutory advocacy provision. In the short term, capacity building approaches could be used to increase the ability of advocacy organisations to engage with and influence commissioning bodies. This approach would be significantly strengthened if it included support to record and communicate the impact and outcomes of advocacy, both one to one and self advocacy.

In combination with this, the Welsh Assembly Government should seek to follow up on its commitment to develop an advocacy strategy to realise the expectations outlined in the developing policy context and particularly in the Statement on Policy and Practice for Adults with Learning Disability and the Third Dimension – a strategic action plan for the voluntary sector scheme. The strategy should set clear expectations about minimum levels of access to advocacy and give clear indications about the level and means of achieving core funding for advocacy groups to ensure accessible coverage across the country.

## Map of funded organisations

Geographical Distribution of Grant Funding



- |                            |                                      |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 ABCD                     | 8 Carmarthenshire People First       | 15 RCT People First            |
| 2 Advocacy Action Wales    | 9 Ceredigion People First            | 16 Swansea People First        |
| 3 Advocacy Matters (Wales) | 10 Eich Dewis Chi                    | 17 Torfaen People First        |
| 4 BCA                      | 11 North Wales Race Equality Network | 18 Tros Gynnal                 |
| 5 Bridgend People First    | 12 Pembrokeshire Advocacy            | 19 Voice Wrexham               |
| 6 Caerphilly People First  | 13 People First Neath Port Talbot    | 20 Your Voice Advocacy Project |
| 7 Cardiff People First     | 14 Person to Person Citizen Advocacy | 21 A Voice for You             |

## Advocacy Providers by Area

### *Anglesey*

Canolfan Mona Self-Advocacy Group	<b>sa</b>
Self-Advocacy Group (Holyhead)	<b>sa</b>
Self-Advocacy Group 1, 2 &3 (Porthaethwy)	<b>sa</b>
Vooght Advocacy	

### *Blaenau Gwent*

Blaenau Gwent People First	<b>sa</b>
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### *Bridgend*

Advocacy Matters (Wales)	
Bridgend People First	<b>sa</b>
Mental Health Matters Wales	
Person To Person Citizen Advocacy	

### *Caerphilly*

Caerphilly People First	<b>sa</b>
Self-Advocacy Group (Risca)	<b>sa</b>

### *Cardiff*

Access for BME Children with Disabilities	
Cardiff People First	<b>sa</b>
People First	<b>sa</b>
Person to Person Citizen Advocacy	
Rhiwbina Self Advocacy Group	<b>sa</b>
Self-Advocacy Group (Ely)	<b>sa</b>
Self-Advocacy Wednesday Group	<b>sa</b>

SNAP Cymru

Swansea Neath Port Talbot Advocacy Project

Tros Gynnal

Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People

Advocacy Matters (Wales)

### *Vale of Glamorgan*

Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People

Advocacy Matters (Wales)

### *Carmarthenshire*

3 Counties IMCA Service

All Round Self-Advocacy Group **sa**

Carmarthenshire People First **sa**

Johnston Self-Advocacy Group **sa**

Newcastle Emlyn Self-Advocacy **sa**

People First **sa**

Service User Group (Llanelli) **sa**

### *Ceredigion*

3 Counties IMCA Service

Ceredigion People First **sa**

Eich Dewis Chi Your Choice

### *Conwy*

Aberconwy Service Users Council **sa**

Advocacy Experience

Bryn y Neuadd Self Advocacy Group **sa**

Canolfan yr Orsedd Self-Advocacy Group **sa**

Self-Advocacy Group (Colwyn Bay) **sa**

Self-Advocacy Group (Llanfairfechan) **sa**

### *Denbighshire*

Advocacy Experience

Systems Advocacy Service

Vale of Clwyd Self Advocacy **sa**

### *Flintshire*

Advocacy Experience

Systems Advocacy Service

North East Wales Self Advocacy **sa**

### *Gwynedd*

North Wales Advice and Advocacy Association

Self-Advocacy Group (Bangor) **sa**

Self-Advocacy Group (Ffestiniog) **sa**

### *Merthyr Tydfil*

Merthyr Tydfil People First **sa**

### *Monmouthshire*

WordsWorth Independent Advocacy Service

### *Neath Port Talbot*

People First Neath Port Talbot

### *Newport*

Advocacy Action Wales

Clients Council **sa**

Newport People First **sa**

Self Advocacy Group Dents Hill **sa**

### *Pembrokeshire*

3 Counties IMCA Service

Connect Disability Rights Advice

Pembrokeshire Advocacy

Portfield Self-Advocacy Group **sa**

The Self-Advocacy Group (Pembroke Dock) **sa**

The Self-Advocacy Group (Tenby) **sa**

### *Pontypridd*

Person to Person Citizen Advocacy

Dewis Centre for Independent Living

### *Powys*

A Voice for You Ltd

Citizen Advocacy Powys - Children's Project

Disability Powys

Powys People First **sa**

Self-Advocacy User Group **sa**

BCA Independent Advocacy Services

### *Rhondda-Cynon-Taff*

Clients Committee **sa**

HAF Hensol Advocacy Forum

Mountain Ash People First **sa**

Rhondda Cynon Taff People First **sa**

### *Swansea*

Caer Las

Self Advocacy Group **sa**

Swansea People First **sa**

West Glamorgan Forum **sa**

Your Voice Advocacy Project **sa**

### *Torfaen*

Advocacy Action Wales

Torfaen Advocacy Service

Torfaen Peoples First **sa**

### *Vale of Glamorgan*

Tuesday Self Advocacy Group

Vale People First

### *Wrexham*

North East Wales Self Advocacy

Age Concern North East Wales

### *All Wales*

All Wales people first **sa**

Down's Syndrome Association Wales

National Youth Advocacy service

## Self Advocacy Groups A-Z

Aberconwy Service Users Council	Powys People First
All Round Self-Advocacy Group	Rhiwbina Self Advocacy Group
All Wales People first	Rhondda Cynon Taff People First
Blaenau Gwent People First	Self Advocacy Group
Bridgend People First	Self Advocacy Group Dents Hill
Bryn y Neuadd Self Advocacy Group	Self-Advocacy Group (Bangor)
Caerphilly People First	Self-Advocacy Group (Colwyn Bay)
Canolfan Mona Self-Advocacy Group	Self-Advocacy Group (Ely)
Canolfan yr Orsedd Self-Advocacy Group	Self-Advocacy Group (Ffestiniog)
Cardiff People First	Self-Advocacy Group (Holyhead)
Carmarthenshire People First	Self-Advocacy Group (Llanfairfechan)
Ceredigion People First	Self-Advocacy Group (Risca)
Citizen Advocacy Powys - Children's Project	Self-Advocacy Group 1, 2 &3 (Porthaethwy)
Johnston Self-Advocacy Group	Self-Advocacy User Group
Merthyr People First	Self-Advocacy Wednesday Group
Mountain Ash People First	Service User Group (Llanelli)
Newcastle Emlyn Self-Advocacy	Swansea People First
Newport People First	The Client Representative Group
North East Wales Self Advocacy	The Self-Advocacy Group (Pembroke Dock)
People First	The Self-Advocacy Group (Tenby)
People First Neath Port Talbot	Torfaen Peoples First
Portfield Self-Advocacy Group	Tuesday Self Advocacy Group
	Vale of Clwyd Self Advocacy
	Vale People First
	West Glamorgan Forum

## One to One Advocacy Organisations A-Z

3 Counties IMCA Service

A Voice for You Ltd

ABCD (Access for BME Children with Disabilities)

Advocacy Action Wales

Advocacy Experience

Advocacy Matters (Wales)

Age Concern NE Wales

BCA Independent Advocacy Services

Caer Las

Cardiff and Vale Coalition of Disabled People

Connect Disability Rights Advice

Dewis Centre for Independent Living

Disability Powys

Down's Syndrome Association Wales

Eich Dewis Chi Your Choice

HAF Hensol Advocacy Forum

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National Youth Advocacy service

North Wales Advice and Advocacy Association

Pembrokeshire Advocacy

Person To Person Citizen Advocacy

SNAP Cymru

Swansea Neath Port Talbot Advocacy Project

Systems Advocacy Service

Torfaen Advocacy Service

Tros Gynnal (Powys Advocacy Service)

Vooght Advocacy

WordsWorth Independent Advocacy Service

Your Voice Advocacy Project

## Appendix 1 – Service user interview information

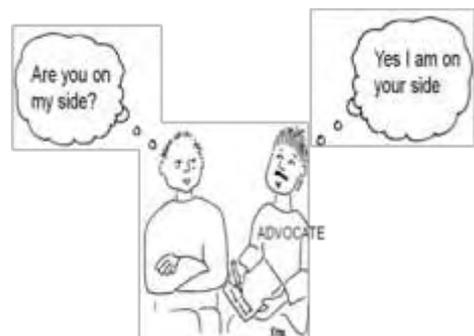
Hello !



My Name is Bali Khuman I work for Action for Advocacy



I have been asked to find out about groups that got money to support **Advocacy**



I am here today to ask you some questions about how advocacy has supported you



## Questions for people supported by advocacy

What is **Advocacy**



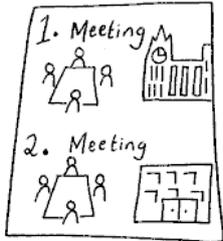
How does advocacy support you?



Do you feel your life has got better because of advocacy support?



If you think you can, will you tell me what issues advocacy has supported you with?



Meetings



Work



Health



Rights



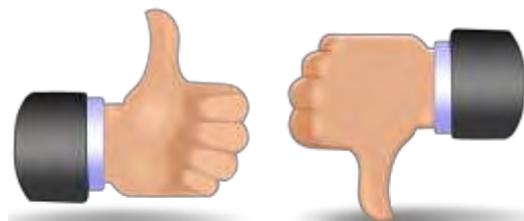
Where to Live?



Other things?

Why do you think advocacy support has been useful for you?

What is good and bad about advocacy?



If **Advocacy** stops

Or **Advocacy** did not support you

~~Advocacy~~

How would you feel?



## Appendix 2. - Questions for advocacy groups and organisations:

The following questions will be starter questions that will lead into further discussion.

### Questions for organisations

- Was the funding stream relevant and effective in its stated intentions?
- Was the funding stream appropriately accessible for learning disability advocacy?
- What did the funding stream benefit? Were you able to develop new provision? Was existing provision widened? Were you able to give greater access to BME communities? Give details
- If you have not accessed continued funding for the provision that the Bild funding supported can you think of reasons why?
- Do you feel stronger as an advocacy provider through accessing Bild funding?
- Are there any considerations you would want to pass on for any future funding streams?

Everything will be anonymously written up.

## References

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- <sup>i</sup> A Strategy For Social Services In Wales Over The Next Decade: Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities, Welsh Assembly Government (Feb 2007)
- <sup>ii</sup> The Third Dimension: A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme, Welsh Assembly Government (January 2008)
- <sup>iii</sup> Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Strategic Action Plan for Wales (April 2008), Welsh Assembly Government
- <sup>iv</sup> Learning Disability Strategy: Section 7 Guidance on Service Principles and Responses, Welsh Assembly Government (August 2004)
- <sup>v</sup> Statement on Policy & Practice for Adults with a Learning Disability, Welsh Assembly Government (March 2007)
- <sup>vi</sup> Lost in Translation, Towards an Outcomes Focused Approach to Advocacy Provision, Action for Advocacy 2009

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