## JOB PURPOSE

Getting Heard (formerly Oxfordshire Advocacy) is passionate about empowering individuals to have their voices heard. Our advocates enable disadvantaged individuals to have greater involvement in decisions that affect them.

We offer Instructed and Non Instructed Advocacy to Oxfordshire residents who are 18+ who have a wide selection of needs including as a result of: mental and physical ill-health, learning and physical disabilities, sensory impairment, autistic disorder spectrum, old age or being a carer.

Our advocates work across a range of advocacy services; including Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA) and Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA). Where our clients have capacity the advocate’s role is to facilitate their client’s involvement in a wide range of decisions that affect them. Where a client lacks capacity the advocate will work in their best interests, engaging with those involved in their client’s care to understand their wishes, feelings, beliefs and needs.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

**Service Delivery:**

1. Where clients have mental capacity to:
   a. Support them to understand what is being considered around their care and support and the impact of any decisions that might be made.
   b. Explain their options and rights and support them to communicate their wishes so that they can participate as fully as possible in the decisions affecting them.
   c. To prepare them for, and to support and facilitate their participation, in meetings about them, including assessments, eligibility, care and/or support planning and care reviews and safeguarding enquiries and safeguarding reviews.
   d. Where required, to prepare a report for the local authority outlining any concerns which may arise about the way in which decisions have been made or about the outcome itself.
2. Where clients do not have mental capacity to:
   a. Work creatively, where necessary, using non-instructed communication methods, to establish as far as possible the service user’s views, wishes and/or feelings.
   b. Where it is not possible to obtain the views of the client directly, explore alternative methods of identifying their preferences by means of files, impressions of their views as understood by those known to the person, and/or material written by the person prior to lacking capacity.
   c. Ensure the service user’s human rights are protected, and due regard is given to ensuring that the least restrictive option is pursued.
   d. Provide a clear written report to decision-makers, promoting the service user’s best interests with regard to the course of action being considered, based on what it has been possible to elicit with regard to the service user’s views.

3. To check and challenge local authorities and/or care professionals as appropriate to ensure they are acting in the best interests of the client, that due process has been followed and that positive outcomes are achieved for the vulnerable person.

4. To raise any safeguarding issues in accordance with Getting Heard’s safeguarding policy with the relevant local authority.

5. To work with interpreters for any meetings or discussions where the client’s first language is not English and who does not want to or cannot communicate in English.

6. To deliver Independent Advocacy in line with Instructed and Non Instructed Advocacy principles.

General:

7. Relationship Management: To maintain and build good working relationships with the client, their social worker, other professionals involved in their care, family members and friends, being mindful of professional boundaries and promoting a positive image of Getting Heard.

8. Record Keeping: To ensure all contacts with clients are accurately documented, recorded electronically in accordance with Getting Heard’s policies and procedures and ensure copies are provided to authorities in accordance with the code of practice and data protection legislation.

9. Team-working: To assist colleagues, attend team meetings, seek creative solutions and share learning with colleagues to promote a culture of continuous service improvement and support.

10. Service promotion: To champion the use of advocacy services and the user’s voice in all activities. To participate in various activities to support the winning of new work and maintain existing income streams. To assist in developing new relationships and targeting specific work in support of our strategic plan.

11. Policies & procedures: Become familiar with, and work within, the policies, procedures and protocols of Getting Heard, paying particular attention to Getting Heard’s Equality and Diversity Policy. Comply with individual responsibilities in relation to health and safety in the workplace in accordance with Getting Heard’s Health & Safety Policy & Procedure.
12. Personal: To adhere to Getting Heard’s values through own behaviour and by inspiring/guiding others in the way we work with people. To be proactive with own personal development and undertake any training deemed appropriate.

13. Confidentiality: Information relating to users must be treated in the strictest confidence and discussed only within the project with the appropriate members of staff.

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post. Getting Heard reserves the right to update the Job Description from time to time to reflect these changes in or to the post after consultation about any proposed changes.

SIGNATURES

________________________________________
Post Holder                                            Date

________________________________________
Director                                               Date
# PERSON SPECIFICATION

## PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

- As an advocate (E)
- As a statutory advocate (D)
- With people who lack capacity (D)
- With a range of vulnerable people with a wide variety of communication needs (E)

## KNOWLEDGE

- An understanding of principles of Advocacy (E)
- An understanding of mental ill-health issues and/or cognitive impairment (D)
- And of the statutory regulations and other key guidance covering this work: Care Act, Mental Capacity Act, Advocacy Code of Practice, Advocacy Charter (D)

## SKILLS AND ABILITIES (All Essential)

- Ability to communicate clearly both in writing, verbally and with non-verbal means using a range of communication tools
- Ability to facilitate the involvement of clients in the process they are going through
- Ability to check, challenge and negotiate with people at all levels of seniority.
- Good report writing skills
- Representing an organisation externally
- IT skills – a working knowledge of Word, Excel and using databases
- Good relationship building skills
- Positive “can do” attitude

## MOTIVATION (All Essential)

- Strong commitment to service excellence, to supporting people to have their voice heard and to working alongside Volunteer Advocates
- Ability to be committed to working alongside other partnership agencies

## ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (All Essential)

- IAQ qualified or be willing to study for and pass within 12 months (E)
- Able and willing to travel across Oxfordshire - access to a car essential (E)