

## Making a Referral

We operate a flexible referral process and will accept self referrals and referrals from other agencies or services and family and friends. We will always give priority to referrals that involve statutory work.

## Data Protection and Confidentiality

Your confidentiality is of fundamental importance to the advocacy process and is as highly valued by us as by you. Any information you give your advocate remains confidential within our service, with the exception of disclosure that reveals serious harm to yourself or to others.

We run in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (GDPR) which means you have a legal right to see all information we hold about you.

## Feedback

We are always looking for ways to improve the service that MHAP provides. If you have worked with or are currently working with our project and wish to provide feedback, please feel free to contact us.

If you would like this leaflet in a different format please contact us.

## Mental Health Advocacy Project (West Lothian) SCIO

Mental Health Resource Centre  
Strathbrock Partnership Centre  
189a West Main Street  
BROXBURN  
EH52 5LH

Phone: 01506 857230  
Email: [admin@mhap.org.uk](mailto:admin@mhap.org.uk)  
Website: [www.mhapwl.org](http://www.mhapwl.org)



We are a full member of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.

MHAP (West Lothian) SCIO is funded by West Lothian HSCP and NHS Lothian

**Do you experience mental health issues and/or problems with drug or alcohol use?**

**Do you feel you are not being listened to?**

**If so our advocacy service may be able to help you.**



*...Services for you,  
influenced by you...*

*Scottish Charitable Incorporated  
Organisation Charity No. SC011560*

## What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is about helping people to speak up for themselves or speaking on their behalf when they feel they are not being heard.

Advocacy is about helping people to access the information they need to be able to make informed choices and decisions to have control of their lives.

Advocacy can help you become more aware of your rights, help you to explore your options and help you to influence decisions that are being made about your future.

## About MHAP

Our service aims to provide people with the opportunity to stay in control of their own lives. We will help people to exercise choice based on their needs and wishes, and have their voice heard and their human rights upheld.

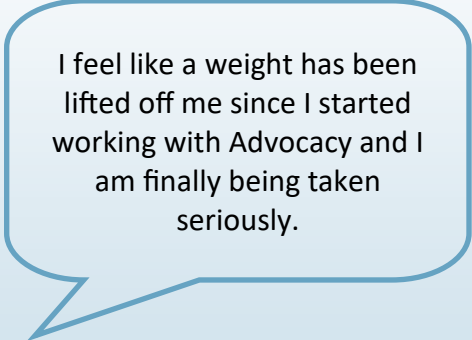
We provide both individual and collective advocacy services for people aged between 18 and 65, who have or have had mental health issues and/or addictions problems and who live in, or are receiving treatment in West Lothian. Our project is independent which means we can work with people in a way that is completely free from any conflict of interest.

## Individual Advocacy

Our professional advocacy workers will work with you on a one-to-one basis to help provide you with support on a specific issue. They will listen to what you have to say, discuss your options and how they may be able to help. We work with people in hospital, the community, HMP Addiewell and we can help with a range of different issues.

Your advocacy worker can communicate on your behalf or support you to speak to others yourself. You may feel you need support with:

- Speaking to people involved in your care and treatment such as medical, legal and social work professionals.
- Help to find information about services and how to access them.
- Helping you know your rights and how to access professional advice.
- Helping you to make sure your human rights are recognised and respected.



I feel like a weight has been lifted off me since I started working with Advocacy and I am finally being taken seriously.

## Collective Advocacy

Collective advocacy forums offers people with similar experiences the opportunity to come together to discuss issues and take forward views that may influence change. It offers a collective voice that can be stronger and harder to ignore. It can help:

- Enable people to raise awareness and influence service planning and provision from a service user perspective.
- Make use of people's shared experiences so that they can have a more influential collective voice.
- Address difficulties that people are encountering with their care and treatment.
- Challenge stigma and discrimination.
- Reduce an individual's sense of isolation when raising a difficult issue.

Our project facilitates collective forums in West Lothian as part of our commitment to challenging inequality. These include The West Lothian Mental Health Service Users Forum and The Voice, a collective group for those who experience problems with drugs or alcohol.

Our forums aim to provide a place where people can air their views, discuss relevant issues, gain information and support members to express their views on issues that affect them.