



Job Title: **Independent Health Complaints Advocate**

Salary: **£26,203**

Hours of Work: **Full Time - 37.5per week**

Contract Duration: **1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2028** (potential extension for a further 2years dependent on funding)

Location: Hybrid working - **remote and outreach locations across Coventry.**

Applications Closing Date: **Rolling recruitment until successful candidate found**

Start Date: **ASAP**

Service Aim
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Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) is seeking to recruit an Independent Advocate to join our team. IHCAS is part of Citizens Advice Mid Mercia and delivered as a complementary service with Healthwatch Coventry.

IHCAS is commissioned by **Coventry City Council** as a free independent complaints advocacy service for Coventry residents that supports people who wish to make a complaint about NHS services, but for a wide range of reasons find it difficult to navigate the complaints system themselves.

The service provides practical support and direction to complainants to assist the individual with finding a resolution to a complaint about Health Services.

IHCAS works closely with organisations—including Healthwatch Coventry—that gather insight and collect information about people's views and experiences of NHS services in Coventry. Together, they contribute to a broader understanding of how people experience NHS services

IHCAS is split into two levels of support:

**Level 1** – Information and advice to enable people to self-advocate

**Level 2** – Direct Advocacy

The Role
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The IHCAS Advocate will report into the Healthwatch Coventry Service Manager and provide independent advocacy support throughout the NHS complaints process, empowering individuals to self-advocate where possible. The role will ensure that complainants know their rights, options and next steps in the complaints process.

## **Service Delivery**

- ✓ Triage and assess incoming enquiries, signposting clients to alternative support if outside service scope.
- ✓ Provide clients with appropriate information to identify options and consider next steps (Level 1).
- ✓ Assist clients in preparing complaint letters, completing forms, writing emails, and attending meetings to achieve early resolution (Level 2).
- ✓ Help clients monitor complaint progress and understand the NHS complaints system, including outcomes and further options (Level 2).
- ✓ Represent clients, when necessary, accurately expressing their views (Level 2).
- ✓ Support clients in making complaints to the Ombudsman and understanding decisions (Level 2).
- ✓ Listen to concerns, understand situations, provide advice, and advocate for clients' rights to ensure their concerns are heard.

## **General Responsibilities**

- ✓ Work within the principles of the Advocacy Charter, Advocacy Code of Practice and relevant code of practice for statutory advocacy (IMHA, IMCA and Care Act)
- ✓ Establish and maintain contact with referrers and eligible advocacy partners, where relevant and appropriate, throughout the advocacy support
- ✓ Explain the role and scope of the independent advocate including all aspects of Confidentiality
- ✓ Record and maintain accurate, detailed case notes on the case management system in a timely manner
- ✓ Manage a client caseload
- ✓ Ensure that interpreters, including BSL, Makaton, are sourced to attend meetings or discussions where the advocacy partner's first language is not English and/or where the advocacy partner is unable to, or does not wish to, communicate in English
- ✓ Prepare accurate quarterly reports on the service provided
- ✓ Prepare a report for the responsible body outlining any concerns which may arise about the way in which decisions have been made or about the outcome itself where appropriate.
- ✓ Raise any safeguarding issues in accordance with Coventry City Council and CAMM Safeguarding policies.
- ✓ Work closely and alongside Health Watch Coventry
- ✓ Conduct appointments / meetings within various settings including home visits / hospital wards / GP Surgeries
- ✓ Advertise and undertake promotional campaigns / ongoing activities
- ✓ Actively obtain and seek feedback from partners / customers and stakeholders

<b>Person Specification</b>
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**Essential**

- ✓ Strong verbal and non-verbal communication skills with experience working across a diverse range of people.
- ✓ Ability to challenge professionals, where relevant and appropriate to ensure decisions are being made in the advocacy partner's best interests.
- ✓ Excellent organisational skills and knowledge of IT including MS Word, MS Excel and using case management applications.
- ✓ Ability to travel across Coventry to various outreach locations as needed – driving licence essential.
- ✓ Excellent people skills, enabling relationships to be built and maintained internally and externally, with experience actively representing and contributing at external meetings.
- ✓ Ensure high quality service delivery through adherence to quality assurance standards
- ✓ Have a good understanding of the local Health landscape

**Desirable**

- ✓ Previous experience of handling complaints
- ✓ Knowledge of the Advocacy Code of Practice and Advocacy Charter
- ✓ Previous experience of working with people who lack capacity
- ✓ Hold an accredited Advocacy training qualification

In accordance with Citizens Advice national policy, the successful candidate will be screened by the DBS.

**Probation Period:** 9 months

**Benefits:** 28 days annual leave plus bank holidays pro rata, up to 5% pension contribution.

<b>Overview of Citizens Advice Mid Mercia</b>
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Citizens Advice Mid Mercia is an independent member of the Citizens Advice network, which is made up of the national charity and a network of local Citizens Advice members.

Citizens Advice Mid Mercia delivers free, impartial, independent and confidential advice, training, peer support Services are delivered across South Derbyshire, Derby City, East Staffordshire (Burton-upon-Trent and Uttoxeter) and Tamworth.

Citizens Advice Mid Mercia has over 60 members of staff and many volunteers delivering services from four main offices and community venues.

**Our CORE values**

- ✓ **Communicate:** We will be consistent, positive, passionate, and listen.
- ✓ **Ownership:** We will be accountable, make a difference, meet deadlines, keep promises and have solutions.
- ✓ **Respect:** We will be honest, work with integrity, trust each other, be fair, tolerant and stand for equality.

- ✓ **Effective:** We will deliver quality, focus on detail and be professional.

### **Positive Employment**

A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to you being able to take up the job.

We welcome applications from people with disabilities.

<b>To Apply</b>
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If you want to chat about the role further, you can contact:

- Elizabeth Holt (Head of Implementation & Operations) 07814 918993
- Emma Crosby (Bid Writer) 07749 302538

**Please visit our website to complete an application form:**

<https://www.citizensadvicemidmercia.org.uk/vacancies/>