

Confidentiality

Spiral Skills offers confidentiality to all people using the service and unless you want us to share your information we will keep it private. The only exception to this is when we think you or other people are at risk or if we are ordered by a court to share information or when working as an IMCA.

An IMCA will share information with the decision-maker to support the reaching of a best interest decision. The decision-maker is responsible for the subsequent appropriate sharing of the IMCA report to interested parties.

Comments

We are interested in what you think about the work that we do. All comments whether verbal or written will be replied to. If you are unhappy with our service and wish to complain you should speak to a member of the advocacy staff as soon as possible. They may be able to sort it out immediately or alternatively will assist you to put your complaint in writing.

Could you be a Volunteer?

If you are interested in supporting people in being heard, improving services and enabling individuals to make choices then please contact us.

Who are we...

Spiral Skills is part of a registered charity called Learning First.

Spiral Skills operates a free and confidential advocacy service for people using health and social care services in Northumberland, Durham and the North East. Our services reflect many years experience in the independent advocacy sector.

When can I contact Spiral Skills?

The Spiral Skills service is available from 9 to 5 Monday to Friday. We are not an out of hours emergency response service.

Spiral Skills Advocacy Service
Chevyside
Yetholm Place
Newbiggin Hall
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE54EB

Phone 0191 2715353

Fax 0191 2714922

Email spiral.skills@learningfirst.org.uk

www.spiralskills.org



The Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) Service



Who is eligible for an IMCA?

The IMCA Service is for persons ages 16 years or older who have been formally assessed to be lacking mental capacity, who do not have friends or relatives to support them, and do not have decision making arrangements in place (such as Powers of Attorney) in specific situations.

An IMCA must be instructed when ..

- A decision must be made on the person's behalf regarding either, the provision, or the withdrawal, or the withholding, of serious medical treatment.
- A decision must be made on the person's behalf regarding long term accommodation in a hospital, or residential, nursing or other form of supported care environment.

An IMCA may be instructed when ..

- A review is proposed, or a review is already in progress, of the qualifying arrangements which have been made by a responsible body as to the person's accommodation, or;
- Irrespective of whether the person has family or close friends available, it is proposed to take protective measures under adult protection procedures.

How do I make a referral?

In Northumberland the IMCA service is provided by Spiral Skills. You will find our contact details on the back of this leaflet. Referrals should be made in writing by completing a referral form.

The referral form is available from the Spiral Skills website and has been circulated to IMCA leads in Health and Social Care.

What if a person is living in one area and is subject to a decision in another?

- In respect of persons requiring Serious Medical Treatment, the responsible body for the location where the person is being treated should instruct the local Service.
- In respect of long term care the Code of Practice states that: "The organisation that must instruct the IMCA is the one that is ultimately responsible for the decision to move the person. The IMCA to be instructed is the one who works wherever the person is at the time that the person needs support and representation".

We would be happy to come and talk to your group or work team about our service.

Can the IMCA make decisions for a person who lacks capacity?

NO—the IMCA cannot make decisions, propose solutions or choose from a range of options. The role of the IMCA is solely to provide information which the relevant decision-maker must then take into consideration in reaching a best interests decision.

What will an IMCA do?

The IMCA role is set out in the Code of Practice, but will include:

- Meeting in private with the person who lacks capacity and attempting to communicate with them using whatever means are appropriate
- Speaking to the decision-maker and any other relevant professionals to understand what is being proposed
- Getting the views of anybody else who can give information about the wishes, feelings, beliefs and values of the person who lacks capacity
- Consulting any relevant records
- Finding out what support the person who lacks capacity has had / needs to help them make the specific decision
- Identifying any alternative options
- Reporting their findings to the decision-maker