

sam

Swindon Advocacy Movement

Annual Report

2023-2024

We will be respectful and non-judgemental, putting people at the centre of our work.

We will be truthful, independent, outcome focused and we will learn from all we do.

We will do what is right, not what is easy and we will bravely challenge injustice.

**Total number of people we
have worked with**

614

Non-instructed Advocacy

A high percentage of the clients' that we work with lack capacity to make some (or all) decisions for themselves.

Other clients have fluctuating capacity.

These individuals have no family or friends who are appropriate, they have advanced dementia, acquired brain injuries, significant mental health difficulties or other care and support needs that results in them being unable to communicate their wishes or speak up for themselves.

The role of advocate in these circumstances is essential.

The non-instructed advocate will uphold the person's rights; ensure fair and equal treatment and access to services; and make certain that decisions are taken with due consideration for all relevant factors which must include the person's unique preferences and perspectives.

We estimate the number of clients who lack or have fluctuating capacity to be at 70%. It is vital that the lived experience of these individuals is somehow included in designing of any future services in and outside of SAM.

Statutory Advocacy

Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHA)

These specialist advocates support people detained under the Mental Health Act to:

- understand their rights whilst detained
- talk to their doctors
- share how they feel about their treatment and
- challenge their detention through tribunal or hearing

This service has supported 153 people.



Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCA)

These highly skilled advocates are trained in the Mental Capacity Act. They ensure that those who lack capacity to make important decisions for themselves are represented when other professionals make a best interest decision on their behalf:

- Serious Medical Treatment
- Where the individual should live
- Safeguarding

This service has supported 104 people.

Statutory Advocacy

Independent Care Act Advocates

The Care Act 2014 is a powerful piece of legislation written to ensure (amongst other things) promotion of individual wellbeing. These knowledgeable advocate's help those living with care and support needs and who have substantial difficulty engaging or be represented in vital processes such as:

- Care assessment
- Carers assessment
- Safeguarding

This service has supported 144 people.



Relevant Person's Representative (RPR)

It is often a family member or friend of the person. Where there is not an appropriate person to be an RPR for a person, then a paid RPR (PRPR) is appointed. All of our PRPR's are qualified IMCA's and play an essential role representing and protecting the human rights of those who lack capacity to decide or agree to where and how they live.

This service has supported 90 people.

Community Advocacy

Our Community Advocacy project continues to grow from strength to strength, supporting Swindon residents that have a learning disability or autism to Access services, maintain their family life and their independence.

One of the strengths of this project is that clients can self-refer without having to go through a third party or statutory service. This means that the advocacy support can start as soon as the individual realises that they need help or a crisis occurs.

This year we have worked with 144 cases of which 67% were self-referrals.

Community Advocacy

This project has helped people across the following domains:

Maintaining Independence

Advocacy support to 62 individuals encourage and maintain relationships with professionals across services such as housing, health. Improvements made in relationships can lead to individuals being able to raise future issues directly with housing or health without any further advocacy support.

Maintaining Family

Advocacy involvement to ensure parents understand their rights and what choices are available to them and their family. Enabling parents to have their voices heard in meetings with professionals who have influence over decisions around their children. We have supported 28 parents to do this.

Accessing services

We have provided Advocacy intervention to 54 individuals to make sure people understand what help is available to them in a crisis eg Citizen's Advice for help in claiming benefits, help speaking with professionals to gain access to mental health services and other community support such as emergency food parcels.

Project Boost



Project Boost has enabled **92** people with learning disabilities to learn new skills, gain confidence and independence.



31 people achieved an AQA unit award.

70 people have been supported to access community activities, sports or courses with other organisations.



22 people have accessed the Peer community support group.

Project Boost

**SKILLS
FOR LIFE
MULTIPLY**

37 people accessed the Government's Skills For Life Numeracy sessions - Multiply.

A big thank you to our Boost volunteers!

We have an amazing team of seven volunteers who between them have delivered **331** hours of sessions which included cookery, reading, music, community activities and sign language.



Oliver McGowan



Oliver McGowan
Mandatory
Training in
Learning Disability
and Autism

The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism aims to provide the social care and health workforce with the right skills and knowledge to provide safe, compassionate, and informed care to autistic people and people with a learning disability.

An essential element of this training is that it is delivered by those with lived experience.

Twelve Boost members, supported by a SAM enabler, have taken part in training to become Oliver McGowan Co-trainers.

The Co-trainers have successfully delivered training across the southwest to over 10,000 NHS staff, this is the highest number across the UK.

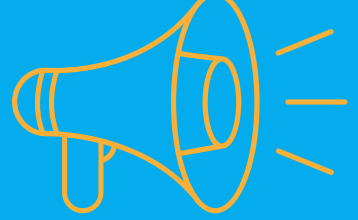
The Co-trainers attended the first ever Oliver McGowan conference where they were able to network and meet other trainers.

The majority of trainers deliver their sessions face to face, but two trainers chose to deliver theirs virtually.

One trainer has gone onto become a Lead Co-trainer.



Speak up! Group



SAM is an inclusive charity that wants to support self-advocacy and to ensure the services reflect the needs of the clients. With this in mind, we have asked members, ex-clients and other Swindon residents to join SAM's new Speak up! group.

The group now has 15 individuals who are willing to share their lived experience, speak up about things that concern them and support each other. 6 people have kindly agreed to help shape how SAM runs, they will be giving us feedback on easy read documentation, attending committee meetings, sitting on interview panels and much more!

The group have decided that the Community Hub is the best place to meet.



Future Plans

The Speak Up! group would like to be involved in the relaunch of the learning disabilities partnership and tea and chat meetings.

The speak up group hope that more Swindon residents with learning disabilities will join.

In the future, the Speak up group will work together to challenge, change and inform both SAM and Swindon Borough Council and other services across the local authority. Those people in the group will be given opportunities to build their confidence and new skills.

Advocacy at work

clients

"I couldn't have challenged without your support, my support is much better and I know who to speak to now if i have any problems."

"I feel safe now"

"Tell your boss you get 100%"

"reassuring you had my back and were conveying my side...I do trust you...you are the light for me in this situation...thank you so much for going to the meeting."

"Will you stay with me please, I know what I want to tell the doctors, but I would like you to stay with me"

"They don't judge or criticise you"

Advocacy at work

Collaboration

“doing what you do best, raising the voice of your clients.” Exec Adult social care

“Great advocate and really helped the service user voice their views and feel listened to.” professional

“[The advocate] working with R had in her words “ changed his life”, building his confidence, giving him a voice, everyone involved was saying what an amazing job [the advocate] had done.” Professional

“The person expressed his views and wishes about how/where he would like his care needs to be met. The person’s views and wishes were clearly presented at meetings and in a detailed report by the advocate which contributed to a positive outcome for the person.” professional

Case study

Ben is 45 and as a result of a serious injury he is an inpatient on a long stay ward where he receives an intensive programme of rehabilitation. Due to the type of injury sustained and to keep him safe he is not allowed to leave the hospital ward whenever he wants.

Anyone deprived of their liberty in this way may be eligible for a special type of advocate called a paid Relevant Persons Representative. Ben has such an advocate who visits him once a month to maintain contact with him and to support him in matters of his deprivation of liberties.

Prior to Ben's admission a decision had been made that he needed a Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) feeding tube. There were concerns around malnutrition due to complications related to his injury, swallowing risks etc.

During one of his advocate meetings Ben mentioned he did not like his feeding tube and felt he no longer needed it. Ben said *'it's always getting caught in my clothes and its blooming uncomfortable.'*

The advocate spoke to the team supporting Ben, they said there were ongoing concerns, they said they felt it would not be appropriate to remove the PEG.

The advocate used her visit to view Ben's daily notes giving her a view over several months.

The advocate planned to take note of how many times the PEG tube was used but found the only time it had been recorded was when it had been flushed to be cleaned.

Ben continued to express to the advocate how he wanted the PEG tube removed, so the advocate challenged the medical team again using the information she had found about the PEG tube not being used.

The medical team agreed that although the PEG tube was no longer needed, a decision had been made, in his best interest, to keep it in. The reason given was that if Ben's health dipped again resulting in him needing a PEG he may not be robust again to undergo the procedure.

Ben's advocate asked if a mental capacity assessment (this is a type of assessment to determine if someone has the ability to make specific decisions about themselves or not.) has been carried out on Ben relating to the removal of his PEG tube, and it had not.

A mental capacity assessment was then carried out on Ben and he was found to have capacity. Ben's health records had shown that the PEG tube was not being used and his clear desire for the tube to be removed. A hospital appointment was made for the removal of the PEG tube.

Financial review

Income

£620,166

Expenditure

£620,895

Difference

-£729

Reserves

£244,853

**With thanks to our
funders**

NHS

**Bath and North East Somerset,
Swindon and Wiltshire**
Integrated Care Board



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**The
Henry Smith
Charity**

founded in 1628

Future plans:



Working closely with the SAM Speak Up! group we will look to broaden the membership of our Management Committee.



We will review SAM's Objects and legal structure to ensure that they are still fit for purpose and in time to celebrate SAM's 30th anniversary in 2025.



We will continue to review staff terms, conditions and benefits which support our staff and encourage them to work for us in the future.

