

Annual Report 2004



The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance promotes, supports and defends the principles and practice of independent advocacy across Scotland.

Chair's Report

My year as Chair of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance has been an eventful one, to say the least. I am proud of the development of this relatively new organisation in these last 12 months, and in particular of the quality of service that has been delivered to the advocacy movement. However, I am mindful that we have not been able to deliver the quantity of services that we had hoped for. We have experienced significant staffing issues, and I would like to acknowledge the hard work that Shaben and the Personnel Sub Group of the Board have carried out to bring us to the current situation of stability. Delivering services to the movement will be our focus in the coming year.

Any new organisation faces growing pains, and as a national representative body, we have faced more than most. I believe that we have met our challenges head-on and listened when our members have spoken. We will continue to do this as the world of advocacy matures and develops.

The profile of independent advocacy has been raised further this year by inclusion in new legislation and other key policy documents. In the year ahead, we must ensure that this high profile is maintained in order to provide more effective support to the people who need advocacy most. With your support, the SIAA, as the voice of the advocacy movement, will be at the very heart of this work.

Chris Mackie

Director's Report

The past couple of years have been a very exciting time to be involved in the advocacy movement in Scotland. We have seen the results of many years of hard work materialise in the Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003. This has meant that for the first time, there has been a legal duty on authorities to provide independent advocacy to individuals. This positive development has been an important milestone of achievement for the advocacy movement. It has also raised a number of challenges for us in terms of planning and preparing for the expected rise in the demand for advocacy. The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance is leading the way in meeting these challenges and enabling the advocacy movement to overcome them.

At the moment we are in the process of organising training on the different aspects of the Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003 for our members. We are also preparing reference materials that will make the difficult work of advocates a little easier. In addition, we plan to continue providing high quality, specifically tailored training on independent advocacy to service providers and other professionals who come into contact with advocates.

The next few years will highlight and possibly test the strengths of the advocacy movement in terms of the work being carried out at the grassroots level, steering and influencing strategic decisions being made at a national level and vice versa. This is an important asset that we, as a movement possess, because it highlights the value of small independent organisations being members of a national organisation that is influencing awareness and thinking around the value of advocacy.

Shaben Begum

Types of Advocacy

Professional Advocacy

- aims to support people to represent their own views.
- aims to represent the views of the individual if the person is unable to do this themselves.
- provides support on specific issues.
- provides information not advice.
- provides short and long term support.
- advocates may support several people at any time.

Group/Collective Advocacy

- is a group of people who are all facing a common problem who get together to support each other.
- individual members of the group may support each other over specific issues.
- the group as a whole may campaign on an issue that affects them all.
- the benefits include – reducing the individual's sense of isolation when raising a difficult issue and/or the collective voice can be stronger than that of the individual: groups are more difficult to ignore.

Self Advocacy

- is an identified group of individuals.
- is made up of users, likely users, or past users of care or support services which are provided by, or on behalf of, local authorities or health boards.
- points of view to be put forward are identified collectively.
- the group is free to decide how to act.
- the "group may or may not have a formal structure, name, and so on."

Citizen Advocacy

- encourages ordinary citizens to become involved with the welfare of those who might need support in their communities.
- is based on trust between the person being supported and the advocate.
- the advocate's loyalty is to the person being supported not to the advocacy organisation.
- the advocate is not paid and not motivated by personal gain.
- the advocate will support their partner using their natural skills and talents rather than being trained in their role.
- the advocacy relationship will be on a 1-to-1 basis and long-term.

Review of the Year

The Scottish Executive Health Department agreed to fund the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance because it has a commitment to strengthen independent advocacy throughout Scotland. This was an acknowledgement that the advocacy movement in Scotland has made a great deal of progress over the last decade.

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance was established in September 2002 and our overall aim has been to help create a climate where the worth and value of advocacy would not be repeatedly questioned. Also, it was to support the development of new independent advocacy in the wider context of society.

Beside the day-to-day support, advice and assistance we provide to our members, other professionals who come into contact with advocates, advocacy service users, and the general public, we have also been busy establishing our profile as a national organisation.

Below are only some of the activities that we have been involved in:

- Working hard to establish an effective and efficient organisation.
- Held the official launch of the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance.
- Held a Focus Day for the SIAA staff and Board to consolidate ideas and make plans for the future.
- Established links with advocacy organisations throughout Scotland.
- Established a quarterly newsletter.
- Provided support, advice and guidance to advocacy organisations.
- Provided information on independent advocacy to service providers on the telephone, through email, at conferences and through workshops.
- Provided information on independent advocacy to members of the public.
- Held training on "Advocacy Awareness" for a number of service providers.
- With the Advocacy Safeguards Agency, we consulted the advocacy movement on the Code of Practice for the Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Held the first joint SIAA/ASA national advocacy conference.

Mission Statement

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance promotes, supports and defends the principles and practice of independent advocacy across Scotland.

It does this by:

- Providing a strong national voice for independent advocacy organisations.**
- Supporting the growth of existing independent advocacy organisations.**
- Promoting the development of new independent advocacy organisations.**
- Encouraging existing advocacy organisations towards independence.**

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance would like to thank :

Scottish Executive Health Department – for our core funding.

Lloyds TSB – for an additional grant.

SHS – for their support as grant holders.

**Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance,
138-140 Slateford Road,
Edinburgh,
EH14 1LR
Tel: 0131 455 8183 Fax: 0131 455 8184**

Year Ahead

In addition to our commitment to supporting, promoting and defending independent advocacy, the SIAA has identified the following top five priorities for the year ahead;

1. To organise and deliver training on the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 for all advocates. Also to produce corresponding reference materials for the advocacy movement.
2. To recruit members of the advocacy movement to join the SIAA pool of approved trainers.
3. To establish the SIAA Listening Network.
4. To establish/renew local and/or interest support networks.
5. To support more of our members to become independent.

Who's who at S.I.A.A

Director: Shaben Begum

Development Worker: Mandy Reid

Administrator: John Ferguson

Special thanks to Naseem Akhtar – for all her hard work
as temporary administrator

Board Members 2003/2004

Louise Adam – Patients Advocacy Service

Linda Bailey – Angus Independent Advocacy

David Brown – East Ayrshire Advocacy Services (Ltd)

Billy Forbes – Scottish Advocacy

Monica Hunter – People First Scotland

Karen Irvine – Hartwoodhill Patients' Council

Alison Kennell – Stepping Stones

Sylvia Lawrie – Powerful Partnerships

Chris Mackie – The Advocacy Project

Will Mallinson – EARS

Keith Maloney – CAPS

Andrew Miller – Equal Say

Ruth Owen – Forth Valley Advocacy Service

Scott Rorison – Lomond & Argyll Advocacy Service

Anne Suckling – Borders Independent Advocacy Service

Thanks extended to all retiring Board members for their work this year.