

What is Citizen Advocacy?

Citizen Advocacy promotes and protects the rights, needs and interests of people with intellectual disability by connecting them in one-to-one, freely given relationships with local citizens.

What does a citizen advocate do?

A citizen advocate is an unpaid person who commits to a long-term connection with a person with intellectual disability who has unmet needs and is at risk of social exclusion. Some of these connections may last for life.

What the citizen advocate does will vary depending on the needs of the person they are matched with.

It is common for the role of the citizen advocate to evolve over time as they develop a deeper understanding of the life experiences, needs and interests of the person with disability they are matched with.



"I see my role as being a friend who occasionally challenges bureaucracy. There are a few parts to that. I feel the need to challenge things when the person I'm matched with is expected to settle for less than I would accept for myself. I apply an ordinary perspective – not a bureaucratic perspective."



Why is Citizen Advocacy important?

Many people with intellectual disability have little control over where they live and what they do each day, have few people in their life who are not paid to be there and are at ongoing risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Citizen Advocacy is an opportunity for a local citizen to advocate for one person, address these negative forces, increase positive opportunities, and work together to achieve a good life for a person with intellectual disability.

What is Side By Side Advocacy's role?

We make matches between a local citizen and a person with intellectual disability with unmet needs. We provide orientation, ongoing support, and training opportunities for citizen advocates, but the relationship that the citizen advocate and the person with disability build is independent from Side By Side Advocacy.

How to get involved:

If you think you could be a supporter and ally to a person with intellectual disability, please contact Side By Side Advocacy.

We will explain what is involved in becoming a citizen advocate and you can ask questions and learn more about Citizen Advocacy.

If Citizen Advocacy is right for you, you will be offered training and ongoing support to assist you to make a real difference in the life of a person with intellectual disability.

You can also contact us if you would just like to learn more about Citizen Advocacy.

We are available on 02 9808 5500 or ca@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au

Call 131 450 to speak to us in your language.



If you want to learn more about us, visit www.sidebysideadvocacy.org.au