

WHO CAN ACT AS AN IMHA?

An IMHA is someone who is employed directly by a PCT (or other body) responsible for commissioning IMHA services, or an organisation commissioned by such a body to provide IMHA services.

WHEN CAN AN IMHA HELP YOU?

If you qualify you may request the support of an IMHA service at any time after you become a qualifying patient, for many reasons. One example of this may be when you know your care and treatment is going to be discussed i.e. at a ward round and you would like assistance in preparing for the meeting, or would like support or representation in the meeting itself.

Another example may be if you are applying for a tribunal.

HOW TO FIND AN IMHA

Section 130D states that it is the duty of a responsible person to provide information about the IMHA service in a clear and comprehensive manner to both you and your nearest relative (unless you specifically requests otherwise). Responsible persons include the following:

Responsible Clinician
Approved Clinician
Hospital Manager
Approved Medical Practitioner
AMHP
Patients Doctor
Local Social Services Authority



Southern Advocacy Services
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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ROLE OF AN INDEPENDENT MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE



TO HELP YOU

- To help you to access and understand information that applies to you under the MHA '83
- To support you to exercise your rights, which may include representing or speaking on your behalf
- To ensure you understand the medical treatment you are, or might receive, and the reasons for this treatment
- To explain and ensure you understand the rights of others in relation to them under the MHA '83 (i.e. clinicians)

WOULD YOU QUALIFY?

You will qualify for an IMHA if:

- You are detained under the MHA (other than patients under sections 4.5(2), 5(4), 135, 136)
- You have been conditionally discharged
- You are under guardianship
- You are on a supervised community treatment
- You are being considered for section 57 treatment
- You are under the age of 18 years of age, being considered for section 58A treatment (This section applies to ECT and any medication administered as part of ECT).

RIGHT TO REFUSE

If you qualify you have a statutory right to access an IMHA service, you also have the right to refuse this help, and seek alternative services if you wish. The alternatives may be from another independent advocate, legal professional, friend or relative, although these people do not have the same statutory powers as an IMHA. You also have the right to end support you are receiving from an IMHA at any time.

STATUTORY FOUNDATIONS TO THE IMHA ROLE

Patients subject to compulsion under the MHA 1983 often require support to help them to understand what is happening to them, to find out what choices are available, to express their views, and to enable them to gain knowledge of their rights under the MHA 1983.