

## Advocacy Policy 2013

- Subject :** Aged and Disability Services - Advocacy
- Applies to:** Tablelands Community Support Options, Kamilaroi Ageing and Disability Services, Tablelands Community Transport, and Bundarra Neighbour Aid.
- Description:** This document describes the Uralla Shire Council's policy on the use of advocates. It ensures that each consumer (and/or their representative) is given the choice of an advocate and, if required, assisted to access an advocate.
- Objectives:**
- To maintain information on available advocacy agencies.
  - To advise all consumers of their right to an advocate, provide information on available advocacy agencies, and assist in accessing an advocate.
  - To reinforce information at assessment and reviews and as part of the complaints process.
  - To ensure staff understand the role of advocates and how to access an advocate on behalf of consumers as required.
  - To regularly audit advocate processes, and identify and implement improvements.

### Policy:

#### Overview:

Consumers have a right to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be a family member, friend or advocacy service.

The Uralla Shire Council is committed to the acceptance and provision of advocates to represent the interests of the consumer.

#### Policy Statement:

An advocate is a person who, with the authority of the consumer, represents the consumer's interests. Advocates may be used during assessments, reviews, and complaints or for any other communication between the consumer and the provider.

All community service consumers are entitled to engage an advocate to represent their interests.

Information on the use of an advocate is included in the *Privacy and Advocacy Handbook* and is explained by staff at entry to the service, assessments and reviews.

Staff are responsible for:

- ensuring consumers are aware of their right to use an advocate.
- maintaining a list of available local advocates.
- providing access to available local advocacy services.
- following advocacy procedures.
- respecting the consumer's choice of advocate.

The Uralla Shire Council recognises that consumers may choose a family member, friend or other person to advocate on their behalf.

The Uralla Shire Council is responsible for regularly monitoring and updating the advocacy process and ensuring staff and volunteers are provided education and training relating to advocacy.

**Exemptions:** Nil

**Other Matters:** Nil

**Responsibility:** **Councillors** are responsible for adopting the policy.  
**Directors and Managers** are responsible for reviewing the policy and procedures.  
**Staff** are responsible for liaising with the consumer to ensure their advocacy rights and requests are met.

**Related Documents:**

- *Privacy and Advocacy Handbook*

**Review:** This Policy will be reviewed every four years from date of adoption, or as necessary.

Date created: August 2013

Last review:

Reviewer:

**Resolution #** 248/13: 27 August 2013