



# Systemic Advocacy 101

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# ● Types of Advocacy

1. Self Advocacy
- 2. Systems or Systemic Advocacy
3. Individual Advocacy



# Self Advocacy

- Right of a person to speak up on their own behalf and in their own interests
- Self advocacy arose as a direct challenge to the practice of **individual advocacy**, which gives the power of advocacy to someone other than the person who the advocacy is for.



# Systemic Advocacy

- Advocating to change the system
- Benefits the advocate and/or others
- Change Law, Policy, Services



# Consumer Advocacy

- A consumer advocate should support a person to speak up for themselves (self advocacy)
- However, we have a duty of care to speak up for people who can't or do not wish to speak up for themselves (individual advocacy)
- We also should have a role in changing unfair systems for ourselves and others (systemic advocacy)



# Systemic Advocacy Focus

The work we will do today will have a focus on systemic advocacy.

We will be looking for opportunities for advocacy and change addressing identified issues in relation to our theme House to Home.

Today is all about identifying opportunities and potential solutions to known issues.



# Advocacy and Social Justice

**Advocacy** is an important way of achieving justice for people who have experience of disadvantage.



# Social Justice

Consumer advocacy is underpinned, informed and influenced by Social Justice Principles:

These include:

- Rights
- Access
- Equity
- Participation



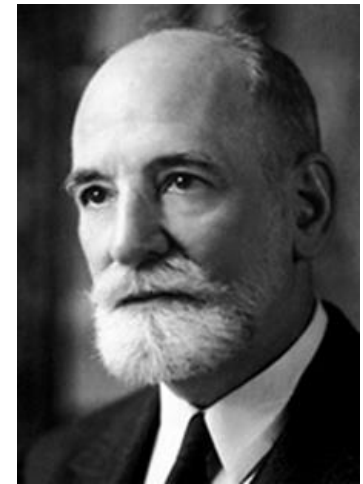


# Rights

- **Rights** are an important principle of advocacy.
- There are many types of rights, and a range of different documents where rights are recorded, such as laws, conventions, statements, charters, and a wide variety of policy documents.
- Consumer advocates should have a sound and up-to-date knowledge of consumer rights, across a range of areas: mental health, disability, social security, tenancy, health privacy etc.

# Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- First international document addressing human rights for every person born.
- Most translated document in the world
- As a Declaration it was not legally binding in international law, but has become more binding over time as international law has developed.



Rene Cassin wrote the final draft. He lost over 40 members of his family to the Holocaust.

# Other Declarations of Rights

- International Bill of Rights
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- UN Convention against Torture (1984)
- National Standards for Mental Health Services (pg 40)

## Rights

Something that can be claimed as justly, fairly, legally or morally one's own. A formal description of the services that consumers can expect and demand from an organisation.

# Equity



- Equity is not the same concept as *equality*
- To treat two people equitably means that you may reduce the disadvantage for one of those people so that they have an equal opportunity
- Public, Community and other social housing programs are a type of Equity program



# Access

Access can be defined as:

- The right to enter
- The right to obtain or make use of or take advantage of something (as services or membership)



# Access and Discrimination

- The **Disability Discrimination Act** (Commonwealth 1992) provides many protections against discrimination, which apply to people with a psychiatric disability (or a mental illness).
  - It covers important areas such as education, employment, accommodation, goods and services, access, insurance, etc.



# Participation

Participation is a fundamental human right as enshrined in *Article 25* of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**

Participation of mental health consumers results in more effective public policy and facilitates individual recovery



# Citizenship

- Citizenship is about bringing people together in a just society
- People determine who governs them
- Governments provide services such as schools, social security, legal systems, etc. for citizens





# Your rights as a Citizen

The Australian Commonwealth Government makes the following commitment to its citizens:

- The right to equity and freedom from barriers based on race, ethnicity, culture, gender and other differences
- The right to participate fully in the community, and to achieve your full potential, regardless of your background



# Citizenship and Advocacy

Advocacy is the active 'struggle' for citizenship, in its fullest sense.

It represents the struggle to ensure that people are enabled to achieve their full potential, both in exercising their rights and their responsibilities as participating members of the community.



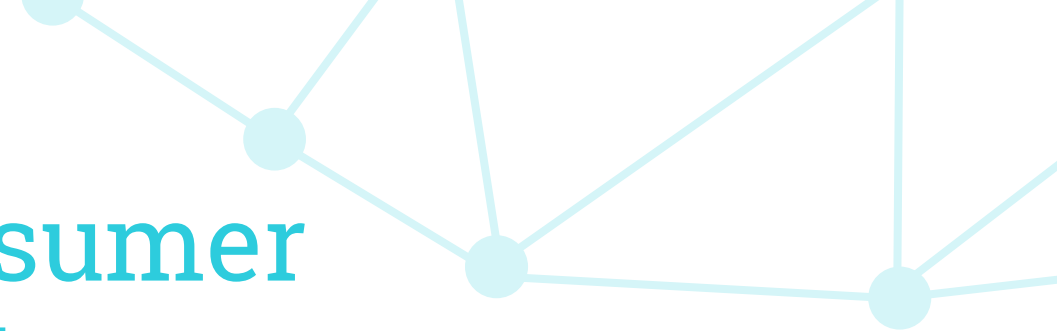
# Citizenship and Advocacy

Advocates can use citizenship principles to argue for:

- Better services that are tailored to meet people's needs
- The minimization of discrimination against people with mental illness, and for the promotion and protection of human rights

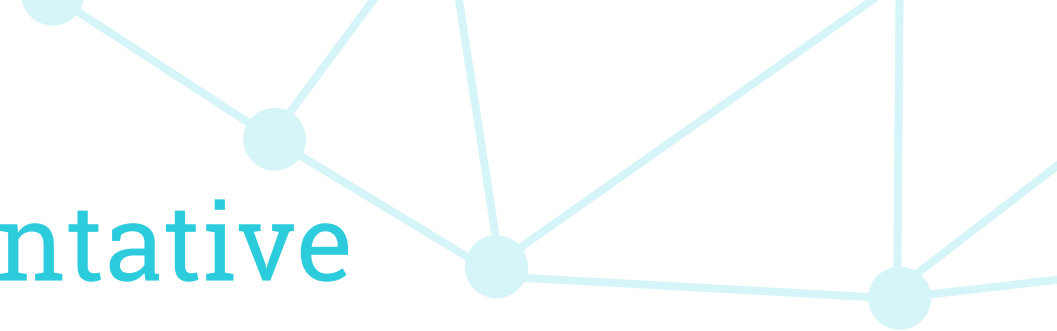


# Consumer Representation



# Aims of Consumer Representation

- To improve the quality of peoples lives
- To improve service delivery
- To increase the satisfaction of consumers using mental health and other services
- To create more equity in the relationships between mental health services and consumers
- To improve public policy, guidelines, laws and community attitudes



# The Representative Challenge

*That consumer representatives remain accountable to the consumers whom they represent.*

Unrealistic expectation that a consumer representative will be 'representative' of all consumers

Consumers are a diverse group of people

No one consumer can speak for all consumers



# Representation Principles

- If consumers hold a broad range of views, it is important that these are accurately reflected by representatives who are acting on consumer's behalf
- It is not necessary to put forward “a consumer view”; there may be several perspectives and it is fair to present the diversity
- Consumer representatives have the core responsibility to act ethically in all of their representative undertakings



## When you are on the spot...

It is legitimate to give an informed view, on the basis that you are a consumer, if the situation arises where you are not able to find out what consumers' perspectives are.





Peter Schaecken

Committee Skills



# The Mental Health Consumer Movement

- Is a social justice movement,
- Founded upon principles of social justice
- Made up of people with a lived experience of mental illness.
- Is known in different countries as:
  - the Survivor Movement (USA),
  - the User Movement (UK), or
  - the Consumer Movement (Australia)
- Exists around the world,
- The people within the movement reflect the diversity of the peoples around the world



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# THANK YOU!

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