

Disability Advocacy Policy

Introduction / Purpose

Disability advocacy is a safeguard mechanism that promotes, protects and defends the human rights of people with disability. Government funded independent advocates act solely in the interests of the person who they are supporting and help those who face complex challenges or are unable to advocate for themselves, and may not have family, friends or peers who can support them as informal advocates, to access advocacy support

In addition to independent advocates, Intelife also recognises the advocacy role of families, friends, and other providers in safeguarding and upholding the rights of people with disability. Informal advocates are encouraged to liaise with Intelife in the first instance and then, if unable to resolve matters, contact an independent advocate.

Scope

This policy has application to all Intelife's program areas where supports and services are provided to people with disability in collaboration with their support network and advocates.

Policy Statements

Each participant has a right to access an advocate (including an independent advocate) of their choosing and have the advocate present.

Intelife is committed to promoting and assisting individuals to access independent advocacy services and working with them to provide feedback, make a complaint or resolve an issue without fear of adverse consequences.

Intelife supports and acknowledges the important role of advocates including recognising that people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disability may need assistance to understand and participate in advocacy by using an advocate of their choice.

Intelife will work to ensure people with disability:

- Are supported to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise their independence together with their chosen support network and advocate
- Are included in any community life they choose to be involved with and have access to services and supports that meet their needs, goals and preferences
- Are treated in a manner that is free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination.

Intelife is committed to instigating and participating in systemic advocacy for people with disability in the following areas:

- Government legislation, policies, practices and services
- non-government and private sector policies, practices and services
- Promoting positive attitudes and understanding of disability by the general community.