



WOMEN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
NETWORK VICTORIA

WMHNV INFORMATION SHEET: ADVOCACY FOR INDIVIDUALS

Women's Mental Health Network Victoria advocates for systemic change to policy and service delivery to champion women's mental health and wellbeing. Our advocacy service is on this macro level, but there are other services that can support individuals experiencing mental illness and their families who require advocacy and support with navigating mental health treatment, legal issues and to assist in better understandings their rights.

Organisations that provide advocacy for individuals include:

Office of the Public Advocate, Community Visitors Program offers volunteers called 'Community Visitors' who may be able to visit residential care facilities including mental health facilities to observe and inspect that operations are in line with respectful and supportive practices and better understand any areas of concern. These volunteers may be able to produce a written report detailing their observations and relay findings to the facilities, Department of Health and Human Services, and in some circumstances may be required to notify any areas of serious concern direct to the Public Advocate. For more information, head to <https://www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au/our-services/community-visitors>, call **Monday to Friday 9am to 4:45pm 1300 309 337; TTY: 1300 305 612; National Relay Service: 133 677.**

Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAAC) is run by people with a Lived Experience of mental illness and provide an advocacy service via telephone which is operational **Mon-Fri 10am-4pm Ph: 9380 3900 or email reception@vmiac.org.au**

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) may be able to assist with advocacy for people receiving compulsory treatment under *Victoria's Mental Health Act 2014*. If you are currently on a compulsory treatment order, **you can call 1300 947 820 and speak directly with a mental health advocate**. Alternatively, you can call 1800 959 353 for a recording of your legal rights relating to the Mental Health Act 2014. Head to their website for more information: <https://www.imha.vic.gov.au>