

Factsheet Who should be eligible for lifelong, independent advocacy?

All Care Experienced people no matter their age should have access to independent advocacy if and when they need it. This ensures that they are informed of their options, rights and have their voices heard in decisions about their lives.

But what do we mean by all Care Experienced people?

When it comes to care, there are many different phrases and terms used with different definitions. These often do not recognise the lifelong impact that care can have and creates further inequality.

Who Cares? Scotland uses the term 'Care Experienced people'. **This applies to anyone who has ever been in the care system, regardless of how long or at what age.** This can be in a range of settings including:



Foster Care

Whether short-term or long-term.



Looked After at Home

Under social work supervision while living with birth families.



Adopted

Having been removed from their birth family.



Secure Care

For their own welfare or safety.



Kinship Care

Cared for by extended family or close family friends.



Residential Care

In group care settings.

This also extends to those who enter the country as unaccompanied minors seeking asylum and those who discover they do not have British citizenship after their supervision order is removed.

There are many reasons why children and young people are taken into care. Through no fault of their own, their families may be struggling due to factors such as poverty, and the state intervenes. The state then has a responsibility to ensure Care Experienced people have all they need to thrive.

Now is the time to take Action on Advocacy

Support our call to enshrine independent, relationship-based, lifelong advocacy in the upcoming Promise Bill.

Independent advocacy can help ensure Care Experienced people have the tools to thrive. It is a service that ensures every experience is valued and recognised, no matter the type or duration of care. It is relationship-based, built with the person to ensure their voice is heard and their rights are upheld.