



Position Description

Advocate

POSITION	LEVEL	LOCATION	REPORTING RELATIONSHIP
Advocate	SCHADS L5	Mt Lawley and occasionally from home	Reports to Advocacy Manager

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The Health Consumers' Council of WA (HCC) is an independent community-based organisation, which has operated since 1994, representing the consumer voice in health policy, planning, research and service delivery. We exist to ensure that consumers' rights are upheld in the system at every level of decision making.

HCC provides an individual advocacy service to health consumers experiencing difficulties in the health system. We also facilitate respectful partnerships and inclusive, meaningful engagement at all stages and all levels so that people are able to access support to ensure diverse lived experience voices drive positive change.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Advocate provides individual and independent advocacy to health consumers who have contacted our service for help in resolving an issue they are experiencing within the WA health system. We know that many consumers have faced considerable difficulties and resistance in having their concerns addressed, or in their dealings with health service providers. We aim to offer a safe, trauma-informed service to all people. Our approach to working in relationship with health consumers is to be non-judgemental and helpful while adopting a strengths-based and consumer-led approach.

The Advocate is responsible for developing an advocacy plan with their consumers to achieve the consumer's goals, as agreed by both parties. Advocacy efforts may include letter writing, contacting health service providers with or on behalf of the consumer, or on some occasions attending consumer appointments. Advocacy cases may be brief or of considerable complexity. Most of our advocacy is done on the phone, or via e-mail, however, options to meet with consumers in-person are available, and are guided by individual consumer needs. The Advocate will use their knowledge of the health system to support consumers in navigating the system, while maintaining a high level of professionalism with health service providers.

As an Advocate, you would need to be able to accept and carry an individual case load, consult with fellow advocates as needed, and operate in a professional and highly organised manner.



VISION, PURPOSE AND VALUES

Vision: Equitable, person-centred, quality health care, and improved health outcomes and experiences for everyone in WA

Purpose: To amplify and champion the voices of WA health consumers to drive positive outcomes in health and healthcare

Values

- **Equity and inclusivity:** We are proactive at seeking out and elevating the perspectives of people who are disadvantaged by existing structures
- **Compassion:** We bring kindness to the work we do and the way we treat each other. We care for our people supporting them so that they can care for others
- **Collaboration:** We prioritise relationships as the key to making change happen. We seek to bring all voices and experiences into discussions
- **Courage:** We are not afraid to stand up for consumer rights in the face of conflicting views
- **Care:** We take care of the community's perspectives and stories that are shared with us and are careful with the funds that we receive. We understand the privilege of doing this work and carry consumer stories into every encounter
- **Integrity:** As we hold health services to account, we also hold ourselves to account for upholding the highest standards of integrity and ethics in our work

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Individual Advocacy

- Engage with individuals seeking advocacy support, assess needs and barriers, and develop an advocacy plan in collaboration with the consumer and in line with HCC's scope
- Advocate with or alongside the health consumer in-person, on the telephone or in letter writing
- Maintain a high professional standard of work in all dealings with consumers, co-workers, and external stakeholders
- Uphold consumer confidentiality
- Promote self-advocacy tools
- Facilitate referrals to other community services should an issue arise outside of HCC's scope

Administration and reporting

- Enter all statistical information correctly into the client database system
- Maintain all records and documentation to a high and professional standard, ensuring case notes are brief, factual and objective
- Seek consumer feedback of service experience
- Provide case studies, and assist with report writing relating to systemic advocacy as required
- Read and comment on policy and draft papers as requested

Meetings

- Attending staff, advocacy team and other internal meetings as required
- Attend external meetings as requested by the Advocacy manager



Individual Commitment

- Actively embrace and integrate HCC's purpose, vision and values into the role, and models appropriate behaviours
- Conform to HCC's conditions of employment; code of conduct; policies and procedures; and relevant legislation and standards
- Demonstrate a commitment to ongoing personal and professional development
- Displays initiative and a confident ability to work autonomously as well as part of a small team, asking for help and guidance where appropriate

KEY OUTCOMES

- Consumers are supported to advocate for and assert their rights in healthcare
- Accurate records are maintained in line with organisational requirements

CULTURAL COMPETENCIES

- Willing to be guided by cultural advice from Aboriginal staff and Aboriginal community members
- Demonstrated awareness of the social determinants of health and the potential barriers to inclusion in employment and services experienced by people who are marginalised

EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

1. Previous experiencing providing individual advocacy and an understanding of the value of advocacy for consumers experiencing issues within the health system and the levers available to achieve advocacy outcomes
2. Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills to be able to confidently advocate, negotiate, influence, mediate, de-escalate, and develop effective workplace relationships with consumers and other stakeholders
3. An understanding of the social determinants of health, systemic barriers and complex trauma when working with people experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage, and the ability to operate with a trauma informed lens
4. Ability to work autonomously with strong organisational skills to manage competing priorities simultaneously, in order to meet deadlines
5. Highly developed analysis and report writing and proficient computer skills including email, the internet and Microsoft Office products
6. Good working knowledge of the WA health system, community service organisations and referral pathways

Desirable

7. Tertiary qualification in social or behavioural science (e.g., social work, psychology, sociology), or previous advocacy experience or lived experience in navigating the health system
8. Understanding of the Mental Health Act 2014



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OTHER EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

- Must have the right to work in Australia
- National Police Clearance (obtained within the last six months), or the ability to obtain one if successfully appointed to the role
- Current Working With Children Check (obtained within the last six months), or the ability to obtain one if successfully appointed to the role

Creation Date: June 2024

Date to be reviewed: June 2026



Exec Director Approval:

Date: 19/06/24