

**A  
Stronger  
Voice**

# **Local performance measures for advocacy**

ASV efficiency strand

**GAIN**



Gateshead Advocacy  
Information Network

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## Introduction

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**A Stronger Voice (ASV) aims to demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of independent advocacy. ASV explored a range of performance measures for advocacy, including developing full cost recovery and unit cost measures. A final set of measures was piloted, based on Department of Health's Putting People First toolkit (Measuring the cost effectiveness of support planning and brokerage<sup>1</sup>) extending these measures to demonstrate the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of independent advocacy. This report presents our learning and further comparator areas, which advocacy projects might want to consider in developing their own performance measures. Proformas for projects to develop their own measures can be found in Appendix 1.**

## Local performance measures

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Department of Health's 'Measuring the cost effectiveness of support planning and brokerage' (2008) was designed to help councils "measure the costs and outcomes of support planning and brokerage" (p. 3). This report also highlighted the importance of not viewing efficiency in isolation, but also taking a view of the effectiveness of services. The toolkit highlighted client satisfaction forms as providing one measure of effectiveness. As work had been developed around outcomes-focused monitoring and evaluation of advocacy to represent effectiveness, Gateshead Advocacy Information Network (GAIN) felt that this toolkit, which draws on good practice in understanding and measuring council spend, could have a wider application to the cost effectiveness of independent advocacy.

GAIN extended some of the measures and developed others for application to independent advocacy services. These local performance measures were developed to measure the efficiency of independent advocacy provision across the borough as a whole. Individual advocacy projects may wish to explore their own efficiency measures; some of the performance measures presented here can be explored by individual advocacy projects for their individual service user groups.

### **Local Performance Measure 1 (LPM 1): service expenditure on independent advocacy per head population**

A calculation of the cost of the service per head of the population of the local authority area. It provides a way of comparing the cost of a service between local authorities, or of changes in a local authority's spending over time.

## **LPM 2: service expenditure on independent advocacy per person supported**

A calculation of the average cost of advocacy services per person supported. It does not take account of service user differences, or differences in the amount of service received by service user groups.

## **LPM 3: service expenditure on independent advocacy by service user group**

A calculation of the average cost of the service per service user group. It provides a measure of effectiveness across services. NB: GAIN found that analysis of this measure should take into account the specific needs of each service user group, for example, we might expect that a dementia advocate is likely to work with fewer advocacy partners than an older person's advocate. Analysis should also take into account whether projects are well established, for example, a project reaching hidden populations may spend more time on outreach and work with fewer advocacy partners than a more established service.

## **LPM 4: cost per hour of independent advocacy provision**

A calculation of the average cost of an hour of advocacy. It provides a measure of a service's efficiency in delivering hours and represents a basic unit cost. This has been calculated at full cost recovery for Gateshead projects.

## **LPM 5: cost of independent advocacy per hour by service user group**

A calculation of the average cost of an hour of support, by service user group. As Gateshead projects recently started to record their time spent on various activities in a consistent manner, this measure will sit alongside this time spent data to help us to better understand differences in service provision across service user groups

## **LPM 6: number of independent advocacy hours per case, by service user group**

A calculation of the average number of hours spent on each case, by service user group. This measure highlights differences across service user groups, and could be used to provide supporting evidence of the differing needs of service user groups, to add to the picture built up in LPM 3.

## **LPM 7: proportion of all people accessing personalised assessments each year (local authority data) with the support of an independent advocate, by service user group**

A calculation of the total number of people supported by an independent advocate when accessing personalised assessments in the local authority area. In Gateshead the numbers of people being supported to access independent advocacy in personalisation were very low; this helped us to

calculate a baseline from which to try to develop targets with the local authority.

### **LPM 8: cost per hour of personalisation related independent advocacy provision**

A measure for comparison with LPM 4, to establish the average length of time taken to complete a personalisation cases and a cost comparator for each.

#### **Top tips for projects exploring local performance measures**

1. GAIN found it useful to cross-reference local authority and primary care trust data on spend on independent advocacy with independent advocacy project's income from these statutory bodies. This helped to account for some differences between the two, for example, projects that received money from the same funding stream for user involvement work, where these measures were particularly aimed at case advocacy, rather than other involvement activities advocacy projects might undertake.
2. The Department of Health toolkit highlighted that data collection for cost effectiveness measures should be proportionate (p.6). GAIN found that these measures could be developed for all advocacy service user groups in a single working day, provided all projects were up to date with their monitoring for the previous financial year

## **Local performance calculations**

<b>Performance measure</b>	<b>Calculation</b>
LPM 1: service expenditure on independent advocacy per head population	Total overall spend on independent advocacy p.a.* ÷ population of local authority area  You may also wish to calculate advocacy provision funded from external sources, i.e. charitable trusts using the same calculation
LPM 2: service expenditure on independent advocacy per person supported	Total overall spend on independent advocacy* ÷ total number of people supported by independent advocacy  Again, you may also wish to calculate advocacy provision funded from external sources, i.e. charitable trusts using the same calculation

LPM 3: service expenditure on independent advocacy by service user group	Total overall spend on independent advocacy p.a.* ÷ number of people supported by independent advocacy, by service user group
LPM 4: cost per hour of independent advocacy provision	Total overall spend on independent advocacy p.a.* ÷ number of hours of provision  GAIN also worked with projects to calculate a comparator unit cost measure, at full cost recovery
LPM 5: cost of independent advocacy per hour by service user group	Total overall spend on independent advocacy p.a.* ÷ number of hours of provision for each service user group
LPM 6: number of Independent advocacy hours per case, by service user group	Total number of advocacy hours ÷ number of people supported, for each service user group
LPM 7: proportion of all people accessing personalised assessments each year (local authority data) with the support of an independent advocate, by service user group	Total number of people with a completed personalised assessment ÷ total number of people supported by an independent advocate at some stage in the personalised assessment process, for each service user group
LPM 8: cost per hour of personalisation related independent advocacy provision	(Total number of personalisation-related advocacy hours ÷ number of people supported with personalisation cases) x unit cost per hour of advocacy provision (LPM 4)

\* Local authority and Primary Care Trust

NB: GAIN's calculations were for the financial year 2009/10; numbers of people supported were also calculated for the financial year

## Further local comparators to evidence efficiency and value for money

GAIN used these local performance measures, alongside other local intelligence to develop further local performance measures.

Comparator issue	What is calculated?
Proportion split between advocacy provision funded through statutory sources and provision funded through other sources	GAIN worked out the proportion split between advocacy funded by local statutory bodies and advocacy funded by other bodies, including charitable trusts and foundations to demonstrate that 30% of advocacy provision delivered in Gateshead is funded by external sources. This demonstrates both the value for money being provided by projects in the local authority area, and where this funding is often short-term and one-off also highlights sustainability issues.
Amount of advocacy provision taking place that is not funded	There are Gateshead projects that are entirely funded by external sources and others that are solely volunteered; this evidence allowed us to further demonstrate the value for money being provided.
Number of people who would not be able to access an advocacy service if funding is cut by x%	GAIN split out cases proportionately to identify the real effect different levels of proposed funding cuts would have on advocacy services across the borough. This was developed to demonstrate the real loss of service to service users given all projects are already working with waiting lists, for example, a 12.5% funding cut to independent advocacy services would represent over 65 vulnerable adults losing access to advocacy.
Current and future unmet need, as highlighted in local demographic data	GAIN reviewed Gateshead's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and came up with a proxy for the total number of vulnerable adults in the borough. We used this data to calculate the proportion of vulnerable adults currently being supported by independent advocacy, using population projections to identify future need and funding that would be required to meet that need.
Number of people accessing (or not accessing) advocacy support in safeguarding	GAIN reviewed Gateshead data relating to safeguarding alerts and cases progressed to safeguarding referrals. Data from the outcome tool relating to the number of safeguarding cases worked on across all services was used to calculate that Gateshead projects currently support roughly 20% of adults in safeguarding cases. This data is being explored with the local authority and could be used to develop key performance indicators, and subsequently targets.

## Concluding comments

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The ASV project group set out to develop and trial a set of local performance measures designed to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of independent advocacy. This has been achieved, and the Gateshead measures have been extended further to include other local intelligence to build a wider picture of the efficiency and effectiveness of independent advocacy. These measures have been invaluable in supporting discussions around formalising collaboration between GAIN and the advocacy projects and statutory organisation members of A Stronger Voice.

At the outset of the project we intended to use these performance measures to benchmark local authority spend on independent advocacy. The developing economic climate, coupled with GAIN's experiences of developing these measures, have indicated that the wider benchmarking exercise intended would be virtually impossible to complete in the manner that was originally envisaged. This is because:

a) advocacy projects would need to be heavily involved in data gathering, where this was initially intended to be developed with local authorities alone

and

b) a wider spread of competitive tendering arrangements for advocacy mean that sharing of any unit cost measures would be seen to undermine the competitive tendering process, and local authorities would not be at liberty to provide this information

The ASV board is exploring ways to take forward this benchmarking exercise and aims to report on some benchmark data in early spring 2012.

# Appendix 1: proformas

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## Proforma for independent advocacy projects

Name of advocacy project	
Contact (person filling out form)	
Amount (£) of funding received from statutory bodies 2010/11 for advocacy provision	
Amount (£) of funding received from other sources (other funders, charitable trusts, etc.) 2010/11 for advocacy provision	
Number of people supported by independent advocacy in 2010/11 (split by funding source where possible to identify people supported by statutory funding, and people supported from other sources)	
Number of hours of advocacy provision in 2010/11	

## Proforma for PCT

Contact:			
	Service user group	£	Funding stream
Amount (£) spent on independent advocacy for 2010/11*	Carers	£	
	Learning disability	£	
	Physical disability	£	
	Mental health	£	
	Visual impairment	£	
	Hearing impairment	£	
	Older people	£	
	Dementia	£	
	Other (please specify)	£	
Overall amount (£) spent on independent advocacy for 2010/11	Total	£	

## Proforma for local authority

Contact:			
	Service user group	£	Funding stream
Amount (£) spent on independent advocacy for 2010/11**	Carers	£	
	Learning disability	£	
	Physical disability	£	
	Mental health	£	
	Visual impairment	£	
	Hearing impairment	£	
	Older people	£	
	Dementia	£	
	Other (please specify)	£	
Overall amount (£) spent on independent advocacy for 2010/11	Total	£	
Number of support plans completed 2010/11 by service user group	Carers		
	Learning disability		
	Physical disability		
	Mental health		
	Visual impairment		
	Hearing impairment		
	Older people		
	Dementia		
	Other (please specify)		
	Total		

\*(excluding statutory) by service user group and funding stream (where relevant the funding stream to be noted, if funding is awarded from more than one stream please document this where possible)

\*\* (excluding statutory) by service user group and funding stream (where relevant the funding stream to be noted, i.e. Learning Disability Development Fund, Supporting People, if funding is awarded from more than one stream please document this)

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<sup>i</sup> Department of Health, Harris J. and Cattermole, M (2008) 'Putting People First Personalisation Toolkit: Measuring the cost effectiveness of support planning and brokerage: a tool for councils' Gateway Ref 9878