

What is an Advocate?



An **advocate** represents and works with someone who may need support & encouragement to exercise his/her rights.

- ✓ Assists the older adult in expressing his or her **wishes**
- ✓ Responsible for the **best interests** of the older adult
- ✓ Ensures previously expressed & present wishes are **upheld**
- ✓ Refers to a more formal means to ensure the older adult's **rights** are safeguarded in the event of a conflict

What Makes a Good Advocate?

Qualities of a General Advocate	Best interests of the older adult is a top priority	Thoughtful & empathetic
	A good communicator	A good problem-solver
	Available & willing	Self-educator

Formal vs. Informal Advocacy

A formal advocate:

- Usually involves long-term, personal relationships
- Is appointed under various pieces of legislation and include guardians, financial managers and attorneys and
- May be appointed indefinitely in the case of persons considered to be incapable of giving consent to decisions, as in the case of dementia

An informal advocate:

- Has no legal power to act on the older persons behalf
- Provides support necessary to seek redress in any dispute
- Acts on the client's behalf with final decisions made by the client
- Will act on the wishes of the guardian or other formal advocate if older adult is incapable of expressing wishes