





York Advocacy Hub

Resident Feedback Report

August 2024

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Background

City of York Council (**CYC**) has a statutory duty to provide advocacy services for its residents under the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Mental Health Act 2007.

Advocacy means getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes, and help you stand up for your rights. Someone who helps you in this way is called your 'advocate'.

CYC and Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (**HNYICB**) currently funds York Mind to provide advocacy support services for young adults and adults, under the name York Advocacy Hub.

The current contract for the service ends on 31st March 2025 and we are in the process of reviewing the support that is provided before the new contract is agreed.

To help shape the new contract, we conducted a survey. We wanted to hear from people who have used advocacy services or might need to in the future. We also wanted to hear from their families, friends and carers, and professionals who come into contact with advocacy services. We hoped this would give us a better understanding of:

- people's experience of using the service
- what works well and what needs to improve

The survey was open for 5 weeks from 15 July 2024 to 18 August 2024.

We also met with two groups of people with learning disabilities; one of which is a group of self-advocates. We are also arranging to meet with another group to hear from more people with learning disabilities. We hope to continue this engagement to get ongoing feedback on the service.

This report summarises the outcome of the survey and discussions.

What we did

- We produced two questionnaires: a standard version (Appendix 2) and a shorter, Easy Read version. We also produced an Easy Read version of the standard questionnaire.
- We offered different ways to complete the survey, including online, by email (with help to access a computer if needed), by hand or with help to complete it over the phone.
- We promoted the survey through the council's website and newsletters. We also invited a wide range of stakeholders and

partner organisations to give their views and share the survey with the people they support and wider networks.

- Paper copies of both versions of the questionnaire were distributed to all libraries in York, along with posters.

Survey responses

We received 43 responses to the standard survey. We did not receive any responses to the shorter Easy Read survey.

Question 1: Are you aware of York Advocacy Hub?

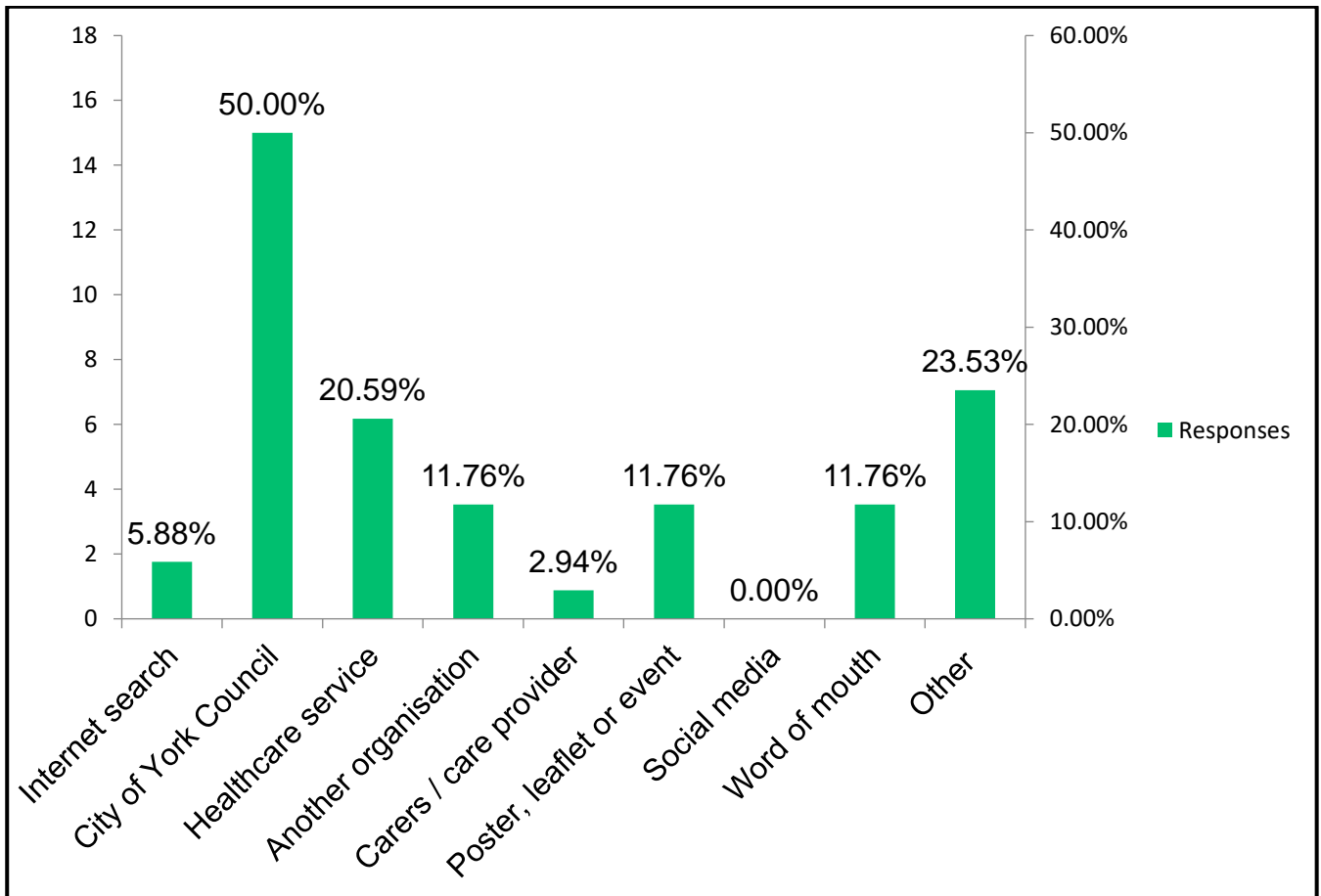
Most people that responded (81%) were aware of York Advocacy Hub.

Question 2: How did you find out about York Advocacy Hub?

Half of the respondents found out about the advocacy hub through City of York Council. This was by far the most common response, followed by 'other' and through healthcare services.

Those that had responded 'other' were aware of the hub because of their work, and supporting people that may need to use advocacy services.

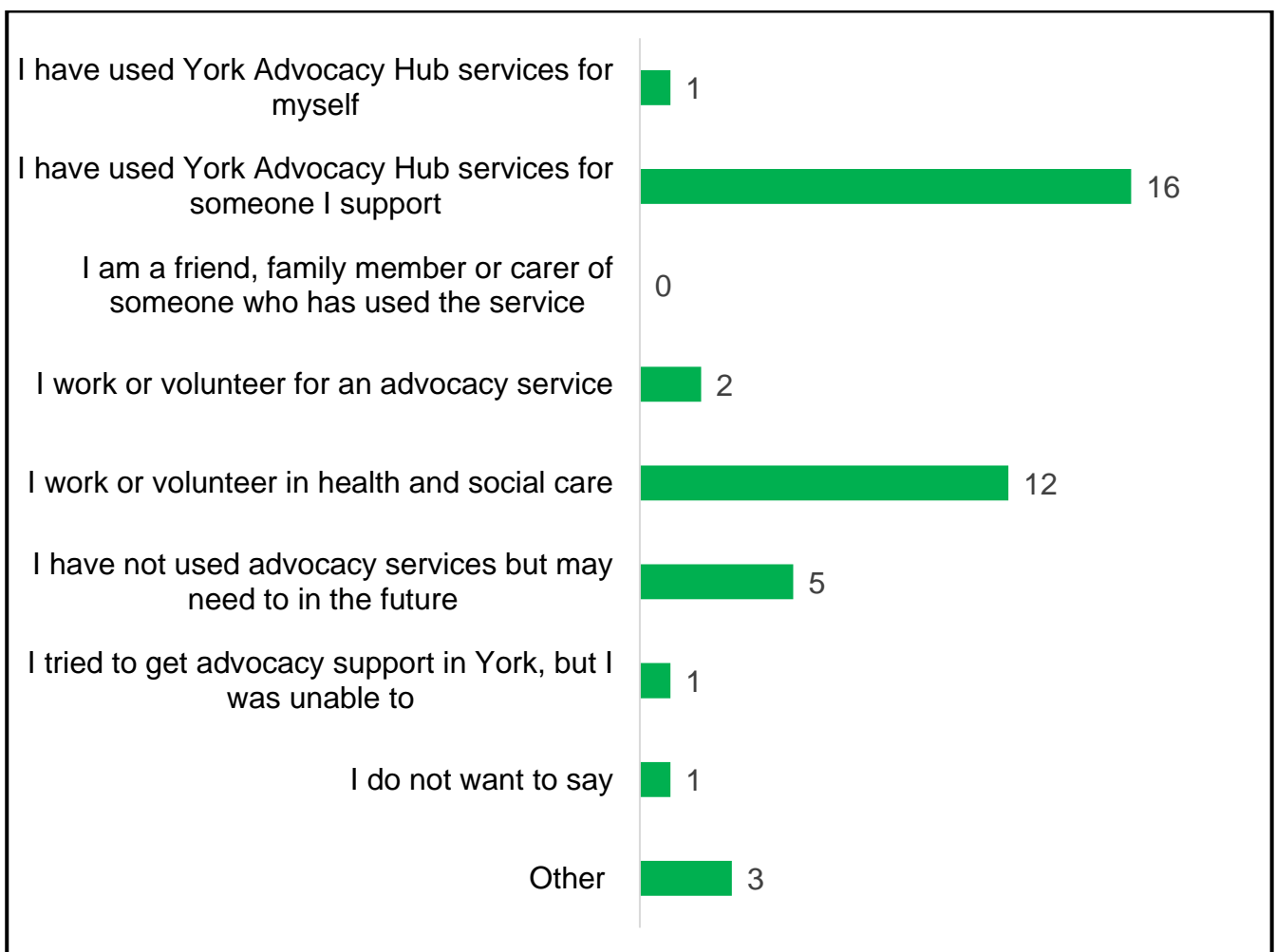
Figure 2: How people found out about York Advocacy Hub



Question 3: Which of the following statements best describes you?

- 39% of respondents (16 people) had used York Advocacy Hub services for someone they support.
- 29% of respondents (12 people) work or volunteer in health and social care.
- Only one person had used the service for themselves and five people answered as people that may need to use advocacy services in the future.
- One person confirmed they had tried to get advocacy support but were unable to.

Figure 3: How people described themselves



Question 4: What support did you (or the person you know) get from York Advocacy Hub?

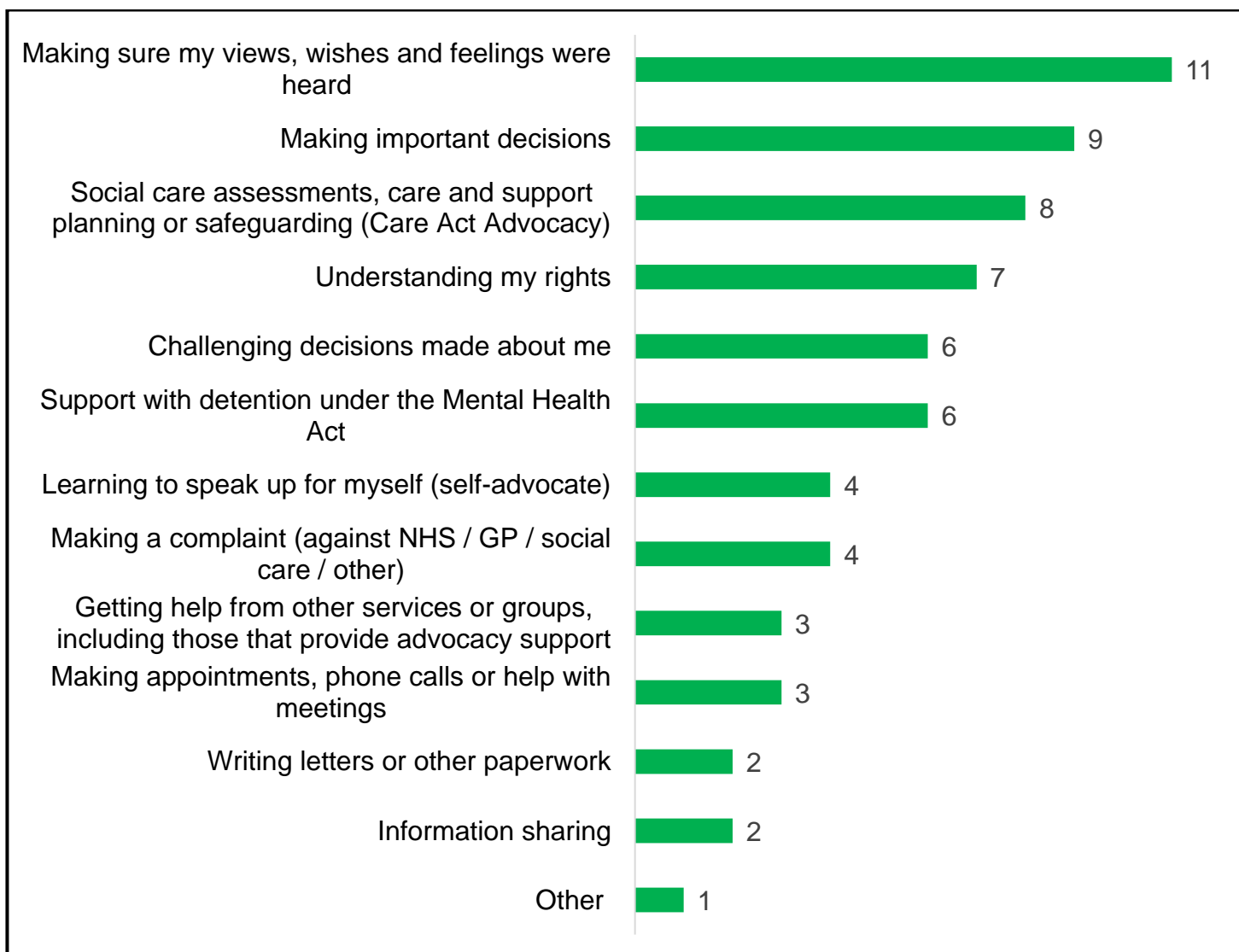
19 people answered this question.

The types of advocacy support people had received the most were:

1. Making sure my views wishes and feelings were heard
2. Making important decisions
3. Social care assessments, care and support planning or safeguarding (care act advocacy)
4. Understanding my rights

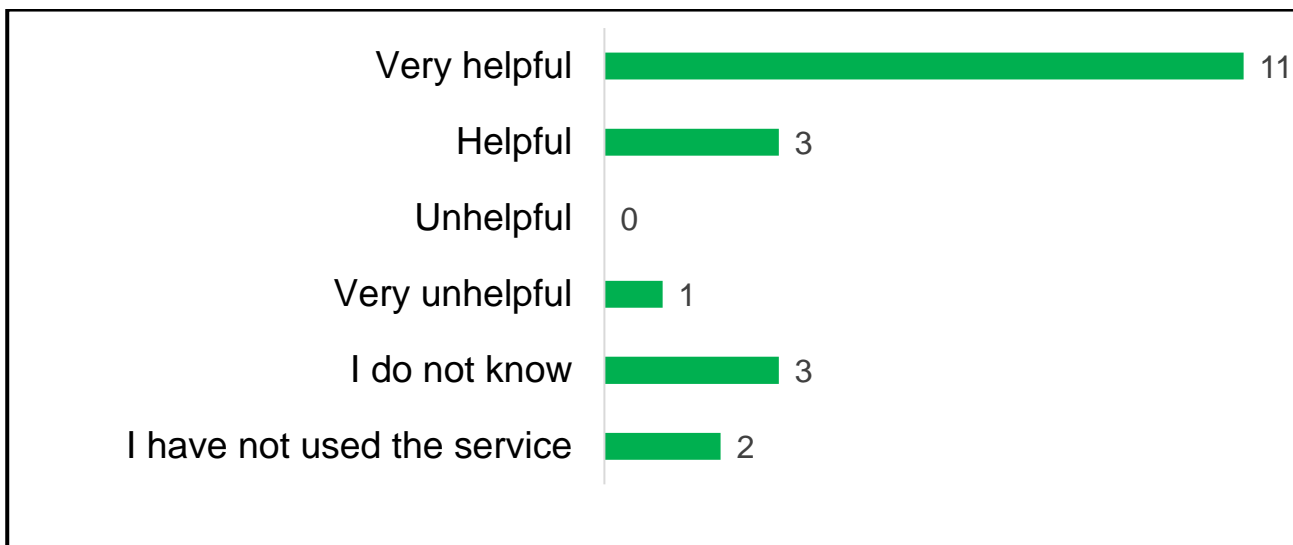
One person confirmed that York Advocacy Hub provided practical support in the community to help an individual view accommodation and to ensure they were not rushed to make a decision.

Figure 4: The types of advocacy support people received



Question 5: How helpful was York Advocacy Hub?

Figure 5: How helpful people found York Advocacy Hub



This question included a free text option for people to tell us the reason for their answer. 20 people responded to this question. Of those:

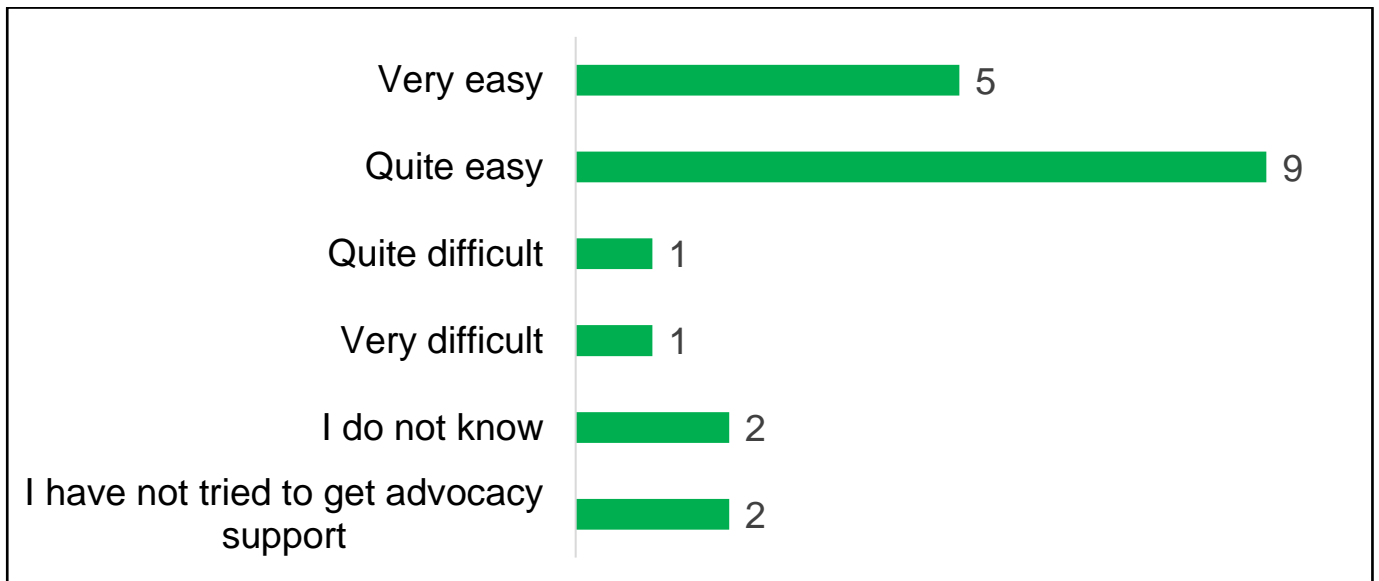
- Over half (11 people) confirmed the support from York Advocacy Hub was very helpful and a further 3 people confirmed the support was helpful.
- People praised the service for its support for people to have a voice in their lives, care, and professional meetings. Comments included:
“Extremely helpful in supporting patients whilst sectioned under the Mental Health Act in a medium secure setting.”
“very knowledgeable”
“The advocate offered a great and flexible service, allowing the voice of the customer to be heard and represented in professional meetings.”
- One respondent described the advocates as being “vital” and reported how an advocate had recently done an “amazing job” which began with building the person’s trust and confidence, enabling the individual to speak up about things they were not happy about and make a positive change to their life.
- One person felt the service was very unhelpful. The person described being told that they were “too articulate to need advocacy” the first time they tried to get advocacy support. The second time they tried to get support, they were told they would be prioritised as in urgent need but did not hear back from the service following that conversation.

- One person that answered, 'I do not know' reported that the advocate did not provide a report.

Question 6: How easy or difficult is it to get advocacy support in York?

This question included a free text option to give people the opportunity to let us know what made it difficult for them (if applicable). 20 people answered this question.

Figure 6: How easy or difficult is it to get advocacy support in York?

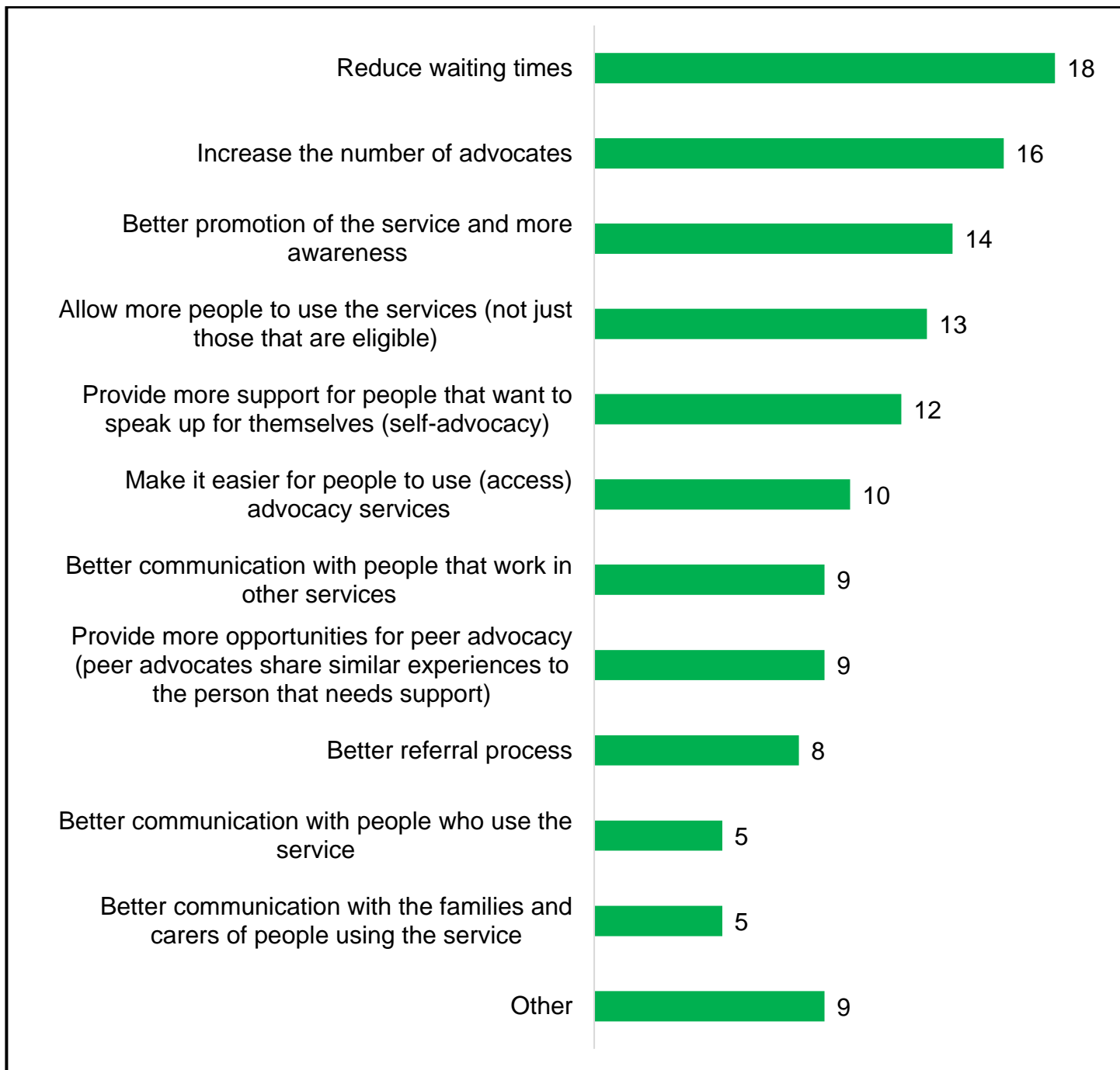


- 70% of respondents (14 out of 20) found it very easy or easy to get advocacy support in York.
- Despite finding it quite easy to get advocacy support, two respondents reported difficulties in getting support:
 - “Sometimes a wait for an advocate which is not helpful in a safeguarding situation.”
 - “Easy to access if a statutory need is there for advocacy, but 'general' advocacy is harder to access due to workload and not enough staff.”
- One person had found it very difficult to get advocacy support for the same reasons they found the service to be very unhelpful (see previous question). The individual also reported that, “there seems to be a significant lack of autism knowledge. And the waiting lists are beyond ridiculous.”
- One person that responded, ‘quite difficult’ had not tried to get advocacy support but based their answer on the assumption it would be difficult due to “the behaviour and attitudes of civil servants, NHS employees and City of York Council employees”.

Question 7: What could we do to make advocacy in York better in the future?

This question included a free text option to give people the opportunity to suggest ways to improve advocacy support. 36 people answered this question.

Figure 7: What could improve advocacy in York



The most common responses to how we could improve advocacy support were:

1. Reduce waiting times
2. Increase the number of advocates
3. Better promotion of the service and more awareness
4. Allow more people to use the services (not just those who are eligible)
5. Provide more support for people that want to speak up for themselves (self-advocacy)

People gave other suggestions, which included:

- Better training regarding safeguarding including appropriate referrals to safeguarding, “some referrals appear to have advocates view and not the person themselves.”
- Exploring opportunities for how other teams and services that provide advocacy support (local area coordinators, Older Citizens Advocacy York, social prescribers etc) can work together with the hub. This may help to manage waiting lists.
- Link into other areas such as University to inform students of the service.
- Reducing non-statutory (general) advocacy to make sure statutory advocacy support is prioritised and have less wait time.
- Fund specialist advocacy projects, for example for those with sight or hearing loss.

Other comments included:

“How can we develop appropriate services for people with learning disabilities and autism if we are not offering adequate support (including administrative) to support people in a regular and meaningful way to express their views on what matters to them/what works well/what doesn't work well?”

“I haven't found any issues referring or being assigned an advocate both as a carer/family member and as an employee of CYC and can't think of a way to make the service better...I found the service to be very good.”

Equality Monitoring Information

We did not receive enough responses from people that use advocacy services to meaningfully report on responses to equality questions.

Feedback from groups with learning disabilities

Meetings with York People First

A series of meetings have been held with York People First (**YPF**) self-advocates to discuss plans for the Learning Disability Partnership Board (**LDPB**) as well as other issues that self-advocates consider important to them. As a result of this engagement, it was agreed to increase the number of hours for the advocates supporting self-advocates from 1 hour to 7 hours in the new service contract.

Visit to Brunswick Organic Nursery

We set up an informal meeting to discuss advocacy support with individuals that work at Brunswick Organic Nursery (**BON**), a charity that provides people with learning disabilities / difficulties with opportunities to work and train. 14 people from BON attended the meeting, which included 10 people that are supported by the charity.

Before the meeting, we shared the Easy Read survey which included an explanation of advocacy support. One of the key workers from BON spoke with around 25 individuals (including some key workers) and only one person confirmed they knew about and had used York Advocacy Hub.

The key worker fed back that advocacy support was difficult for some people to understand so when we met with the group, we spent time talking through what advocacy means and the type of support York Advocacy Hub provides. It was clear that more could be done to promote services and help people understand what support is available if they need it. BON will check whether individuals would like a visit from York Advocacy Hub to continue the conversation.

People spoke about times when they had spoken up for themselves, and some people confirmed that when they needed help to speak up, they would get help from a parent, or someone that supports them.

In a separate conversation with the service manager and another staff member, the following issues were raised:

- Difficulty getting an advocate for people due to the long delays in getting care and support assessments and reviews through adult social care.
- Barriers for people with lived experience and support workers to attend meetings and have a say, such as LDPB meetings. These included not being paid for time or reimbursed for travel, preparation time, and meetings not being accessible.

Key findings

1. Most people that responded to the survey were aware of York Advocacy Hub; however, nearly everyone at Brunswick Organic Nursery (those with learning disabilities and those that support them) confirmed they had not heard of it.
2. The main way people found out about the hub was through the council, followed by other organisations and healthcare services.
3. The responses to the survey were mainly from people who have used the Hub on behalf of someone they support, followed by those who work or volunteer in health and social care.
4. The majority of respondents confirmed that the support received was making sure views, wishes and feelings were heard. Other common support types were making important decisions, Care Act advocacy and understanding rights.
5. Most people felt positively about York Advocacy Hub; finding the service to be very helpful and finding it quite easy to get support. Feedback suggests that most of the time, the service successfully supports people to have a voice.
6. Overall, the responses suggest there needs to be a reduction in waiting times for advocacy. We are aware that the waiting list for general advocacy is currently up to 75 weekdays. The other most suggested improvements were an increase in the number of advocates; better promotion of the service; allowing more people to be able to get advocacy support, and more support for self-advocacy.
7. From the group discussions, people told us that more support for self-advocacy was important, and it was clear that there is a need to improve people's awareness of what advocacy is, and what York Advocacy Hub offers.

Next Steps

We will use this valuable information and feedback to help us shape the future of young adult and adult advocacy services in York.

We acknowledge that we need to hear from a wider range of people who need or may need advocacy support, to get a better understanding of how we can improve the service. We need to consider different ways to reach and engage with people, and this work needs to be ongoing.

We will provide feedback to City of York Council colleagues and York Advocacy Hub management, so they are aware of people's experiences of the service, and to highlight the areas where improvements need to be made.

The results will be shared on York Open Data.

Thank you to everyone that helped us produce and promote the survey and thank you to those that took the time to share their views and experiences.

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Appendix 1: Types of advocacy support

York Advocacy Hub provides the types of advocacy listed in the table below. These types of advocacy are statutory, apart from general advocacy. It is called statutory because this support must be offered locally.

Type of advocacy	Description
Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA)	IMHA advocates are trained to support people with decisions about mental health care and treatment. Hospital and medical staff must make sure that people know about their right to an advocate and make a referral if someone wants or needs an Independent Mental Health Advocate.
Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)	The council and NHS must provide an advocate if someone does not have the capacity to make specific decisions and there is no-one who can be consulted on their behalf. This could be about medical treatment, a review of their care or where they live.
Care Act Advocacy	The council has to involve people in decisions about what care and support they need. If someone has substantial difficulty being involved in their care and does not have someone to help them, the Council must provide an advocate.
NHS Complaints Advocacy	This is for eligible adults who wish to complain about NHS-funded services they have received.
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Relevant Person's Representative (RPR)	If someone's care is authorised following a Deprivation of Liberty assessment, a representative must be appointed to make sure that the rights of the person being deprived of their liberty are protected. This can be a friend or family member and is known as a Relevant Person's Representative (RPR). Anyone who is deprived of their liberty must have an RPR, so if the person's friends and family cannot do this, an RPR from the provider is appointed.
Non-statutory advocacy including General Advocacy	This kind of advocacy is available when people at risk fall outside the eligibility criteria for statutory provision with complex needs.

Appendix 2: York Advocacy Hub City of York Council Survey

What is advocacy?

Advocacy means getting support from another person to help you express your feelings and wishes and stand up for your rights. Someone who helps you in this way is called your 'advocate'.

What this survey is for

We want to know what people think about the services York Advocacy Hub provides to young adults and adults, and what is important to people when being supported by an advocate. This will help us understand what people who use advocacy services need, and how we can improve support in the future.

We welcome your feedback if you:

- are a young adult or adult who has used York Advocacy Hub services, or you know someone who has
- may need to use advocacy services in the future
- work or volunteer in health and social care / with advocacy services
- have an interest in advocacy services in York

Please help us by answering the questions below. You can choose to skip any questions you do not want to answer.

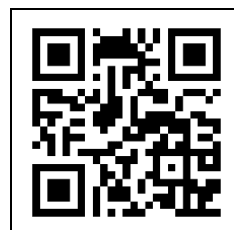
What happens to my information?

Our survey asks for some personal information which you may choose not to give. We do not publish or share any information which can identify you. Please read the enclosed privacy notice to find out more about how we protect your personal information. We will ask for your consent to this at the start of the survey. You can withdraw your consent at any time by contacting allageconsultation@york.gov.uk

This survey will close on 18 August 2024.

Publishing the results:

We will publish the results of this survey online at: <https://www.yorkopendata.org>








Privacy Notice

Please confirm that you have read and understood the privacy notice at the end of this document. You must select 'Yes' to take the survey.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Different ways to complete and return this survey:

Complete this form online	You can complete this survey at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/YorkAdvocacy	
Or use this QR code:	You can use the camera on your smart device to scan the QR code which will take you to the online survey.	
Scan and email	Complete, scan and email the survey to: allageconsultation@york.gov.uk	
Access to a computer	Visit any Explore library or West Offices where staff can assist.	
Help to complete over the phone	Call Customer Services on 01904 551550 and leave your number and we will call you back.	
Drop off	Pick up a freepost envelope and use the postbox at West Offices	
Return by freepost	All Age Commissioning Team FREEPOST RTEG-TYYU-KL TZ City of York Council West Offices, Station Rise York YO1 6GA	
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	Call us on: 01904 551550 and customer services will pass your request onto the Access Team	
	Use our BSL Video Relay Service: www.york.gov.uk/BSLInterpretingService Select ' Switchboard ' from the menu	

Question 3

Which of the following statements best describes you?	Tick all that apply
I have used York Advocacy Hub services for myself	
I have used York Advocacy Hub services for someone I support	
I am a friend, family member or carer of someone who has used the service	
I work or volunteer for an advocacy service	
I work or volunteer in health and social care	
I have not used advocacy services but may need to in the future	
I tried to get advocacy support in York, but I was unable to	
I do not want to say	
Other – please tell us in the box below	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; width: 100%;"></div>	

- If you have used York Advocacy Hub services, or you are answering on behalf of someone that has, go to **question 4**.
- If you tried but were not able to get support from York Advocacy Hub, go to **question 5**.
- If you have not used York Advocacy Hub services, go to **question 7**.

Question 4

What support did you (or the person you know) get from York Advocacy Hub?	Tick all that apply
Making sure my views, wishes and feelings were heard	
Learning to speak up for myself (self-advocate)	
Making important decisions	
Challenging decisions made about me	
Understanding my rights	
Getting help from other services or groups, including those that provide advocacy support	
Writing letters or other paperwork	
Make appointments, phone calls or help with meetings	
Information sharing	
Make a complaint (against NHS / GP / social care / other)	
Support with detention under the Mental Health Act	
Social care assessments, care and support planning or safeguarding (Care Act Advocacy)	
Other - please tell us what support in the box below	

Question 5

How helpful was York Advocacy Hub? Tick one box

Very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unhelpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very unhelpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have not used the service	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tell us the reason for your answer in the box below

Question 6

How easy or difficult is it to get advocacy support in York? Tick one box

Very easy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quite difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not know	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quite easy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have not tried to get advocacy support	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you did not find it easy, please tell us why in the box below

Question 7

What could we do to make advocacy in York better in the future?	Tick all that apply
Better promotion of the service and more awareness	
Make it easier for people to use (access) advocacy services	
Allow more people to use the services (not just those that are eligible)	
Reduce waiting times	
Better referral process	
Increase the number of advocates	
Better communication with people who use the service	
Better communication with people that work in other services	
Better communication with the families and carers of people using the service	
Provide more support for people that want to speak up for themselves (self-advocacy)	
Provide more opportunities for peer advocacy (peer advocates share similar experiences to the person that needs support)	
Other - please tell us in the box below	
Please tell us what else we could do to make advocacy services in York better:	

Equality monitoring information

About You

Any information you share may help us identify themes in specific groups to aid any future support and will not be used to identify you. You may choose not to answer or select 'I do not want to say' to any question. If you do not want to complete this section, please select 'no' to the question below.

Would you like to complete the 'About You' section?

If you answer 'no', please skip the questions below and return to form to us using any of the methods shown above.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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1) Your age:

Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 to 24	<input type="checkbox"/>	25 to 39	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 to 55	<input type="checkbox"/>	56 to 59	<input type="checkbox"/>	60 to 64	<input type="checkbox"/>
65+	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not want to say			<input type="checkbox"/>

2) Your gender:

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-binary / Minority gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

3) What is your ethnic group?

I do not want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian - Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White – English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian - Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
White – Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian – Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian – Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
White – Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any other White background	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black – Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed – White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Black / Black British / African / Caribbean background	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed – White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other – Arab	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic background	<input type="checkbox"/>

4) Do you consider you are disabled?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5) What is your religion or belief?

I don't want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>	No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'other', please tell us your religion or belief or leave blank if you do not want to say					<input type="checkbox"/>

6) Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

I do not want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heterosexual / straight	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay or Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>		

7) Do you look after, or give any help or support to, anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age (excluding anything which is part of paid employment)?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not want to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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