

NYAS Rhondda-Cynon-Taff

Children Services Quarterly Narrative Report

1st March-31st May 2016

1. Progress of service this period.

- 26 new referrals were received in this period.
- From the 26 referrals, 36 issues were supported by the advocacy service.
- 32 cases were managed in this quarter.
- 17 of these cases have now closed.
- The majority of young people referred to the service this quarter were aged 11-16.
- Also during the same period we have worked with ten young people aged 17-21.
- We have attended, supported and represented children and young people at 6 LAC review meetings this quarter.
- Advocacy support in meetings and education were the highest referral issues this period.
- 10 referrals have been directly received from Social Workers.
- 9 referrals have been received from the Independent Reviewing Officers team.
- 1 referral received from the complaints unit.
- The following table will provide information on the number of referrals received from each team.

Team	Number of referrals.
Independent Reviewing Officers Team	9
Ty Trevethick/East 2	3
After Care Team	2
Disabilities Team	2
Rhondda West/ P Office	2
Taff North	1
Complaints Unit	1

- Please note included in figures above the young people referred to the service include:-
- 3 young people with learning disability/difficulties.
- 9 young people with physical disabilities 3 of which had additional disabilities including autism, ADHD. Mental health issues including personality disorder, anorexia and significant emotional difficulties.

Service Promotion, development and training.

- All information points within the local authority hold NYAS information leaflets. Over 1200 Leaflets were distributed during this period.
- The Project Leader attended the NYAS annual conference in Liverpool. The main focus for this year was NYAS service development.
- Newly recruited advocates have completed their induction and have continued to shadow Senior Advocates in their work.

- Advocacy awareness raising sessions were delivered to young people and staff in Brynda and Beddau community homes.
- A highlight of this quarter was the NYAS information stand at the RCT LAC Awards in April. Also in launching the new RCT web site –how to navigate the site was demonstrated using the NYAS advocacy page which generated much interest.
- We received over 70 enquiries during the evening and positive feedback from young people, Foster Carers and Professionals.
- NYAS 'Have your say' feedback cards continue to provide valuable feedback within the Rhondda Cynon Taff advocacy project. The results of which are used to make positive improvements to the service.

2. Themes and Issues this period

1. This quarter the highest number of advocacy referrals received, were for requests for advocacy representation and support at meetings. This remains a key area where referrals need to increase. NYAS continues to work with local commissioners to improve how the offer of advocacy is made to any relevant child or young person.
2. An equal number of requests for advocacy support were received regarding the suitability of current or proposed Education placements and if the placements met a variety of needs of the children and young people concerned. NYAS includes Education as a key area of discussion with all children and young people. Allowing them to achieve their individual best with regard to levels of educational attainment and promote positive experiences through education.
3. Contact with family members has remained an important issue for children and young people this quarter. All referrals were for requests for family contact to be stopped, started or changed. Children and young people are telling NYAS family contact is very important to them. NYAS will continue to advocate and recommend to Children's Services that this is an area that needs prioritising when care planning for children.
4. There were three Complaints made to the advocacy service this quarter. All were resolved at stage one.

2. Is anyone better off?

NYAS aim to achieve 100% feedback from children and young people at the point of case closure. From the 17 cases closed this quarter NYAS received 15 completed feedback forms in addition to the positive verbal feedback from the young people.

From all feedback received, no areas of concerns were highlighted. All commented that they felt 'listened to' and advocacy had made their situation 'better.' All children and young people said they would recommend the service to others.

Please refer to the RBA report for feedback breakdown.

The following feedback has been received directly from children and young people and from nine professionals who wished to provide professional third party feedback on the advocacy service. Collated from 'Have your say' feedback cards.

CYP 1-7 – young people who commented on the value of their views, wishes and feelings report and advocacy support at meetings.

"I was really pleased that my views, wishes and feelings were read out at my LAC review and addressed. The outcomes were good ones." (2 young people).

"I'm glad we attended the meeting together, there was no way I was going into that meeting."

"I'm pleased that it felt like they listened to me/it was good to really have my voice heard at the meeting." (3 young people).

"I've had advocacy before, now I always am confident to speak in my meetings and say what I think."

CYP 8-10- commented on advocacy helping them achieve their outcomes.

"After we'd read everything I wanted to say they suggested a course that I'm going to attend. I am really happy with this."

"I think advocacy helped me move to my new placement and feel good about the move."

"I think advocacy has been a massive help and they (NYAS) have also worked very quickly and made certain things possible."

CYP 11-15- Five young people commented on feeling positive about the advocacy service.

"I just wanted to say that NYAS and my advocate made everything better."

"Advocacy made things better" a drawing was added of a huge smiley face.

"I was glad to see my advocate again."

"My advocate gave good support, was good at listening and was good at helping." (2 young people).

Third Party professional feedback:- 9 professionals provided positive feedback regarding the advocacy service this quarter these included:-

5 Social workers thanked NYAS advocates for their input/engagement with the child/young person concerned.

Foster Carer- to the advocate "Thank you for all your help and support. B. is now dancing and singing around the house. You've made a big difference and we very much appreciate your time."

Parent- to advocate "Thank you for all your help and support for our son and time spent in writing his letter. It has made such a difference to him."

2 Independent Reviewing Officers:-

"Fabulous thank you for contacting the young person so promptly."

"Thank you for explaining the role of the Independent Visitor to us all. Also for meeting with Y who is now really enthusiastic about having an Independent Visitor."

The following case studies have been chosen to illustrate the range of diverse issues and varying levels of advocacy support needed by the children/young people referred to the service.

Case Study 1 –D Education, Pathway Planning, LAC Review.

D is 16 years old and subject to a section 31 full care order. D was referred to the advocacy service following a discussion with the Independent Reviewing Officer during which D requested "my advocate to help me again in my next LAC review."

D has global development delay and special educational needs.

Prior to the LAC review D's initial application to attend college had been rejected.

D wanted to discuss "My education and other things about my future."

What did the Advocate do?

- Contacted D and arranged an initial advocacy visit.
- Allowed D to take control of visit dates and times.
- Reviewed the advocacy role including confidentiality and consent to share information.
- Allowed D to utilise the service to meet their needs by prioritising their issues.
- Enabled D to discuss and explore concerns, views, wishes and feelings.
- Supported D to put their views, wishes and feelings in writing and forward to the social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer as requested by D.
- Supported D to develop an advocacy action plan for the LAC review meeting-which included D attending part of the meeting. "As I get too anxious if I try to stay for the whole meeting and too confused."

- Met with D and the Independent Reviewing Officer prior to the LAC review.
- As requested by D the advocate attended the LAC review to present D's views, wishes and feelings report with D attending the latter part of the review meeting.
- As requested the advocate met with D a week after the LAC review to discuss the positive outcomes for D.

Outcomes for D.

- Increased confidence.
- Improved positive communication skills through the advocacy process.
- Increased awareness of rights and entitlements.
- Enhanced skills in making informed choices.
- D supported by the advocate explained their views, wishes and feelings to the IRO and was supported to discuss their key requests at the LAC review.
- The Education plan was revised to meet D's needs and allow D a six month integration into the local College.
- D was able to contribute to the pathway planning process.
- D provided the following feedback to the advocate "I think it's brilliant that I'll be allowed to go to the gym and canteen and get used to the college. I'm really pleased that I can stay longer in my placement to help me learn more skills that will help me to live on my own maybe in the future and make good use of my free time."
"Advocacy helps me to have a voice at my meetings if I want to and I can choose. I am glad you are there to help me."
The Independent Reviewing Officer fed back "NYAS advocacy service has enabled D to participate in the LAC review and to identify and give their opinion on a variety of important issues."

Case study 2 – LAC Review

P aged 16 and subject to a section 31 full care order was referred to the service after requesting that the community home contact NYAS advocacy service to request "My advocate to meet me before my LAC review."

P is diagnosed with ADHD and learning needs and on occasion has exhibited aggressive/threatening/sexualised behaviour towards social services staff. P identifies and has shared with professionals as "I have got a problem with cannabis."

What did the Advocate do?

- Contacted P to arrange an initial visit.
- Allowed P to take control of visits dates and times.
- Reviewed the advocacy role including confidentiality and consent to share information.
- Allowed P to utilise the service to meet their needs by prioritising their own issues.
- Allowed P to discuss and explore concerns, views, wishes and feelings.
- Supported P to put their concerns, views, wishes and feelings in writing.
- Enabled P to form an advocacy action plan for their LAC review. "As there is no way I'm going to that meeting."
- Attended the LAC review and followed up by meeting with P to review outcomes as requested.

Outcomes for P

- Increased confidence
- Awareness of rights and entitlements
- Enhanced skills in making informed choices.
- Enabled P to explore concerns and express their views, wishes and feelings.
- Improved communication skills through the advocacy process.
- Positive engagement with professionals through the advocacy process.

- Some of P's desired outcomes were achieved. For those not possible at this time a clear explanation of the reasons why was provided to the advocate at the LAC review in order to inform P.

P provided the following feedback to the advocate. "You/my advocate gave me good support and information. You were good at helping. Advocacy did make a difference for me-it made things better."

Cases now closed.

3. Independent Visitor Service.

During the period one referral was made to the NYAS Volunteer Independent Visiting service under the RCT contract. The Project Leader has remained in contact with the young person and is now looking for a Volunteer match. The young person has given a specific request "A female Independent Visitor and someone young that I can do sporting activities with."

- NYAS will continue to promote the Independent Visitor service to social care practitioners.
- The Project Leader has re-established links with the 'Interlink' Volunteering Officer in Pontypridd and Student Volunteering Officer in Uni-Glam. The Independent Visitor Role is now registered with both as a volunteering opportunity.
- NYAS has registered the IV Role on the Volunteering Wales web site.

4. Key recommendations

(NYAS recommendations to LA's for service improvement)

- NYAS has continued to ask children and young people of their understanding and involvement in their care planning. This quarter NYAS closed seventeen advocacy cases and received feedback from all young people. Sixteen of the young people were subject to a care order. 11 reported they knew about their care plan. All were aware that they could request a copy and four of the young people had done so. Seven young people said that they had been consulted with regarding their care plan. The feedback provides a positive indication that children and young people referred to the service are aware of their care plans and slowly those reporting being involved in the making of their plan is increasing. NYAS will continue to highlight to children services departments the importance of children and young people's involvement in the care planning process. NYAS would welcome the opportunity in working with the local authority to develop a child friendly version of care plans.
- As a priority NYAS would like to work with the local authority in ensuring that all children and young people are aware of the advocacy service and how to access it. NYAS suggests that a pilot be implemented within named child care teams by way of a service information letter to children and young people at key stages of their time in care. This will allow us to monitor the workability of the potential implementation of the active offer of advocacy and its impact on referrals to the service. This was discussed at our recent meeting with commissioners. NYAS would welcome working with the local authority to implement utilising the information letters prepared for children's services.
- NYAS recommends children and young people are consulted with early on in the planning process. When changes are being considered with regard to education. children and young people have fed back to NYAS, information about any new school/college is very important to them and they would like to be involved/ consulted on the decisions regarding their educational placement. NYAS recommends that when

such changes are being considered that young people have as much information as possible. NYAS would be happy to share with the local authority good practice processes to support children and young people to have a say in these matters.

ADVOCACY Report Card: Performance Accountability
Reporting period: Quarter 3 - 1st March 2016 – 31st May 2016 Rhondda Cynon Taff

	How much did we do?	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Result (Quarterly, unless otherwise stipulated)	Accumulative
	Male /female annual breakdown statistics inclusive of disability referrals Note * included in LAC referrals were 9 young people with disabilities. (See narrative report).	21	33	16	26	Male – 11 Female – 15	75
	Statistics by age						
	0 – 10yr olds		6	2	2	Male - 2 Female - 0	10
	11- 16yr olds		22	11	17	Male - 5 Female - 12	50
	17+		5	3	7	Male - 4 Female - 3	15
	Total		33	16	26		75
1.	Number of referrals received, broken down by referral source		9	1	0	Advocate/Coordinator	10
			16	7	11	Social Worker	34
			1	1	9	Social Services-IRO	11
			1	2	0	Residential Unit	3
			2	1	1	Parent/Family	4
			3	1	4	Self-referral	8
			1	0	0	Support Worker	1
			0	3	1	Foster Carer	4
						Total	75
2.	Number of advocacy cases worked with by advocates up to 31st May 2016 (Rhondda Cynon Taff)	No target	4	2	3	Kaye Watkins	9
			21	9	14	Gail Humphreys	44
			3	0	0	James Roles	3
			4	4	3	Colin White	11
			1	0	0	Annette O'Rourke	1
			0	1	1	Annabel Oxford	2
			0	0	1	Fran Thrower	1
			0	0	2	Michael Pearson	2

	<p>NYAS Rhondda Cynon Taff has supported 32 IBA advocacy cases this quarter. There were 17 case closures.</p> <p>NYAS will be carrying 15 open cases forward into to the next quarter.</p>	Declined service (Issue resolved)	0	0	2	<p>1</p> <p>Mariam Raza</p> <p>Issues were resolved prior to advocacy service contacting the young person.No advocacy support required</p>	2
3.	Number of cases closed	Cases to be monitored and closed within 3 months of initial referral				17 cases were closed this quarter.	
4.	<p>Status of referrals (as at submission date)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted Declined (reason why declined) Undergoing assessment 	<p>100%</p> <p>No target</p> <p>No target</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>6%</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>0%</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>4%</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>26 cases referred were accepted and allocated to an advocate for action.</p> <p>Issues were resolved prior to advocacy service contacting the young person.No advocacy support required</p> <p>No cases are currently under assessment.</p>	
5	Issues presented for advocacy support						
	<p>Issues a child/young person needs advocacy representation on:-</p> <p>The information below highlights key issues brought to NYAS this quarter. The table will provide an indication of how many children/young people received advocacy support with this particular issue. A number of young people may seek support for further issues once advocacy support is in place.</p>						
	Contact		9	3	5	Advocacy requests to support children and young	17

						people with family contact. All referrals were requests for family contact to be stopped, started or changed.	
	Placement Issues (breakdown, change etc)		6	8	3	Referrals received for advocacy support around placement issues. The issues consisted of requests to move placement/remain in placement and requests for support to improve relationships within placement.	17
	Relationship with social worker		2	1	2	Referrals received for advocacy support around issues with social worker this quarter. These issues were resolved during agreed meetings.	5
	Safeguarding		1	0	0	Safeguarding procedures were followed regarding a young person in emotional distress when contacting the advocacy service.	1
	Resources		1	0	1	Referral regarding eligible spend of Disability Living Allowance monies. Foster carers wanted to purchase a hot tub for the young person.	2
	Complaints Against Local Authority		3	4	3	Complaints resolved at stage 1 all regarding decisions made by social services. See narrative	10

						report.	
	Carer		3	1	1	Referrals regarding young people being happy with placement moves and quality of care being received.	5
	Other Appropriate Services		0	1	1		2
	View Personal/Medical Files		0	1	0		1
	Pathway Planning		0	1	1		2
	NYAS Legal Services		0	1	0		1
	Education		0	1	6		7
	Appropriate Support		0	0	2		2
	Other Immigration Issues		0	0	2		2
	Child Protection		0	0	2		2
	State Benefits		0	0	1		1
	Representation at Meetings Includes support, preparation and attendance for LAC reviews, CIN meetings, core groups & CP conference. (For further information see narrative report).	LAC Reviews	10	6	6	Referrals were received for representation or support at Looked After Child Reviews to promote the general views, wishes and feelings around review topics. See narrative report	22
		CP Process	4	0	0	Conferences/Meetings	4

						Additional support provided to understand Child Protection procedures. Where the child/young person was unable to attend advocacy representation was provided and feedback given to ensure a fully inclusive process. See narrative report.	
		CIN Mtgs	1	0	0	Child-In-Need Meeting. Referral for a young person for advocacy support to promote views, wishes and feelings at the meeting.	1
	Total issues supported by advocacy this quarter		40	28	36	Total issues support year to date	104
	Legal status of referrals:						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Order <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In County - Out of County 	In county Out of county	27 6	11 5	17 9	NYAS received 26 advocacy referrals for those children and young people known as looked after, five of which were placed out of county. See narrative report.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full care order –Section 31 		13	8	13		34
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim care order – Section 30 		0	0	0		0
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodated – Section 20 		7	6	8	2 YP are UASC	21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 17 CIN/CP and CWD 		11	1	4		16
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving Care 		2	1	1		4
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable Adult (See narrative report) 		0	0	0		0

	Total	33	16	26		75
6. How well did we do it?						
19. % cases where case was allocated to Advocate within 1 working day		97%	91%	93%	Two young people required an Interpreter.	94%
20. % cases where (when decided child needs to see an Advocate) child-Advocate meeting within 3 working days of allocation		85%	86%	100%	Target met.	90%
21. % referrals acknowledged within 3 working days		100%	100%	100%	All referrals received were allocated and acknowledged with the child/young person within 3 working days.	100%
22. % children matched to Advocate within 5 working days		100%	100%	100%	All referrals were matched to an advocate within 5 working days as outlined within NYAS allocation standards.	100%
23. Number of referrals – at 21 per quarter or more?		33	16	26	26 referrals were received this quarter. There are 5 more referrals than the target figure of 21.	75
24. Is anyone better off? Did we make a difference? Based on Advocacy Standards.						
Feedback on cases closed offered by young people.					.	

						<p>NYAS closed 17 cases this quarter and received feedback from all young people. Further information on feedback including quotes can be found on the quarter 3 narrative report.</p>	
1.	How happy were YP in the support that they received from NYAS?		Yes	Yes	Yes	All said they were happy with the support they received.	
2.	Did young people get enough information on what was happening from NYAS?		Yes	Yes	Yes	All commented- kept informed	
3.	How well did YP understand what was happening?		Yes	Yes	Yes	All young people feedback that they understood what was happening to them.	
4.	How well did YP feel listened to?		Yes	Yes	Yes	All children and young people said they felt listened too.	
5.	Were YP treated fairly by NYAS?		Yes	Yes	Yes	All felt they were included and treated fairly.	
6.	Would the YP recommend NYAS		Yes	Yes	Yes	All young people stated they would recommend NYAS others.	
7.	Did NYAS make the situation better/worse?		Better	Better	Better	All reported that advocacy made their situation better.	
8.	Children with Disability reporting they were happy with services received?		N/A	N/A	N/A	No young people fed back to the service using the disability feedback forms.	