



The Social and Health Education Project

2024

Introduction to Advocacy

Are you interested in learning about what advocacy involves? Are you thinking about how you might be able to better support others to access their rights and entitlements? Do you have a strong commitment to social justice and promoting equality for those who are marginalised? This part-time SHEP course which will commence in September 2024 may be of interest to you.

About the Introduction to Advocacy

This open-access Social and Health Education Project (SHEP) course is an **introduction** to advocacy and is a SHEP certified course. It will be of interest to a wide variety of people including those already involved in advocacy as well as those interested in supporting other people through advocacy. What will make this programme unique is that it will take place in the context of the SHEP's Advocacy Programme, that provides advocacy supports to individuals and groups of adults with disabilities. This means that the programme will have the benefit of being informed by the day-to-day realities of advocacy practice when supporting people with disabilities. The training will be facilitated by experienced advocacy practitioners and trainers. The course will run over 11 weeks; on Wednesday evenings, involving 11 weekly x 2.5 hour sessions and 3 Saturdays, full day sessions.

Course Aim

The aim of the course is to provide participants with a sound basis in the practice of advocacy so that they can apply their learning in any setting in their own lives or in their work settings. Participants who successfully complete this course will acquire knowledge, skills and understanding which will help them to understand the practice of principled advocacy, in a voluntary or paid capacity, in a range of areas. However, there will be an emphasis on advocacy in relation to disability. Completion of this course is a prerequisite for those who may wish to apply to join the SHEP Advocacy Project.

Philosophy

This course is underpinned by SHEP's philosophy that self-awareness and self-knowledge when combined with a commitment to community action is the basis for personal and social transformation. The course is inspired by SHEP's commitment to equality, social justice, social transformation and the contribution that group spaces can create for experiential learning. The course reflects SHEP's philosophy that adults continue to learn throughout their life and that life and practice experience is an invaluable source for that learning.

Course Content

The course will cover a number of key areas including social justice and human rights, models of advocacy including group/collective advocacy, effective communication skills in advocacy, sourcing information and rights based practice.

Learning Outcomes

Learners who complete this module will be able to:

1. Define the different types of advocacy, to include self-advocacy, group/collective advocacy one to one and peer advocacy.
2. Explore the principles and ethical considerations underpinning advocacy to include respect, autonomy, equality, empowerment, confidentiality and acting with diligence and competence
3. Describe the different processes relating to one to one and group advocacy
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the key components of effective group facilitation
5. Use a high level of personal and interpersonal skills in dealing with advocacy issues
6. Demonstrate self-awareness including the identification of own strengths, values, attitudes and personal challenges in the context of information giving and advocacy practice
7. Demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills to include active listening skills, assertiveness skills and the use of inclusive, sensitive and culturally appropriate language and feedback in a range of situations
8. Demonstrate how to source appropriate information including national and international policies and legislation.
9. Represent the rights of people in a dignified, respectful and non-judgmental way

Approach

This course will use a variety of approaches including experiential learning in a supportive group setting.

Assessment

Participants must attend over 80% of the course and pass four assignments to successfully complete the course.

The assignments are:

1. A paired presentation on an allocated issue
2. A group facilitation task
3. Writing a letter as an advocate on an allocated issue
4. A personal learning statement

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All assignments will be allocated a pass/fail mark only with peer and facilitator feedback on assignments 1 and 2.

Certification

Upon successful completion of the course participants will receive a Social and Health Education Project certificate.

Entry requirements

Candidates must:

- be involved in advocacy or have a clear interest in and commitment to advocacy
- normally be at least 21 years of age
- have a basic 'internet use' skill level
- be willing to undergo Garda Vetting if they wish to apply later to become a member of the SHEP Advocacy Project.

Those who have completed SHEP's Foundation courses (the Certificate in Personal Development and/or SHEP's Certificate in Social Awareness and Community Empowerment) will be at an advantage. Candidates will be invited to attend for an interview. Being called for interview does not guarantee an offer of a place on the course.

Costs

The cost will be €400 per person. Applicants who are in receipt of a social welfare allowance may apply for the concessionary rate of €200.

Interest-free payment plans will be available to those who wish to pay in instalments.

Those who wish to be considered for a concession need to complete the reduced fee application form also available at www.socialandhealth.com training section or phone (021) 4666180. The 'Important Information on SHEP Fees, Reduced Fees, Funded Places & Payment Methods' document is also available here.

Booking

Interested applicants should submit a completed application form to info@socialandhealth.com, or post it to the address below, marking it for the attention of the advocacy team.

The closing date for applications is July 26th, 2024.

Application forms are available at www.socialandhealth.com. If you require a hard copy of the application form, please contact SHEP reception on (021) 4666180.

Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed from the 5th -17th of August 2024.

The course will run subject to having 16-18 participants.

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Further Information

For further information please contact course co-ordinator Marge Lysaght, on (021) 4666180, email margelysaght@socialandhealth.com
