

## The need for advocacy

People with disability are in particular need of advocacy because they often experience or are vulnerable to discrimination, neglect, exploitation and/or abuse. They are just as valuable as any other person regardless of what they do or don't do.

People with disability should not be separated, segregated or isolated. They should be able to make their own decisions, make mistakes, have courage, be fearful, be likeable, be unpleasant just as any other person.

## What advocacy can do for you

If you feel that you are in a situation where your rights and wishes are not being heard our advocates may be able to assist you by:

- listening to you and speaking for you;
- making sure you are treated fairly and your rights respected and upheld;
- providing you with a quality accredited service;
- advocating in ways that are creative, responsive and flexible;
- explain each step to be taken to enable you to make your own decision;
- maintaining your confidentiality; and by
- supporting you throughout the process.

We are here to guide you and give you the information you need to make decisions that are right for you.

## Services and service regions

Whether you have an issue with a service, business or government department, we can advocate and support you. Our Advocates will also support and be with you through formal and judicial hearings for example:

- legal/justice proceeding (including correctional facilities);
- Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) hearings;
- Mental Health Review and Court proceedings;
- NDIS Appeals and other Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) matters

Our service region stretches across the north and north-west regions of Queensland. These areas are:

- Burdekin Shire
- Charters Towers Region
- Flinders Shire
- Ingham Region (including Palm Island)
- Isaac Region \*\*
- Mackay Region \*\*
- Mckinlay Shire
- Richmond Shire
- Townsville
- Tully
- Whitsunday Region \*\*
- Wooroonooran

\*\* Only NDIS Appeals advocacy support services available in these regions.



**The King Protea** (flower) stands for change & transformation. It signifies daring & resourcefulness. A symbol of diversity & courage.

## Advocacy and the NDIS

Once you apply for the NDIS, you start the planning and assessment process which is focused on you as the participant. It aims to maximise your choice and control by working through your existing and future support needs.

You are able to have a support person such as an advocate. If you are not sure what to do or you need help at any stage of the planning process or if you have difficulties with service providers we are here to help.

### Reviewing Decisions

If you think a decision made by the NDIA about you is wrong, you can submit an application for Internal Review of a decision. Reviewable decisions include things like not being accepted as a participant, the rejection of reasonable and necessary supports, or the reduction of funding.

### NDIS Appeals

If you are still dissatisfied with a decision following an Internal Review, you can apply to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal by making a NDIS Appeal.

We are able to provide you with specialist advocacy assistance during this process and you may also be eligible for legal assistance if your matter is deemed complex and/or novel.



## Who we are

Independent Advocacy in the Tropics Inc., is an accredited independent disability advocacy organisation providing advocacy support for people with disability.

We also undertake systemic advocacy projects to promote positive changes within communities, and throughout all levels of government. We do this by analysing and responding to community attitudes of service models and practices that create dependency and segregation and impact negatively on people with disability.

## Accessing our services

We are able to offer **FREE** advocacy services for those with a disability through various government funding streams.

There are no barriers to age, ethnic background or type of disability including those living with mental illness.

A person can self-refer or if you are a family member, carer or support person to someone with a disability or even a service provider, you can make a referral for advocacy. It is important to note however that if you are referring someone to us we are only able to act for that person if they wish us to do so.

Referrals are reviewed and prioritized according to levels of vulnerability and urgency.

## Funded By

Department of Social Services;  
Department of Communities, Child Safety  
and Disability Services;  
Queensland Health



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## Independent Advocacy in the Tropics Inc.

trading as

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**Independent  
Advocacy NQ**

**Accredited Disability  
Advocacy Service**

*"To stand with  
vulnerable people with  
disability through  
vigorous independent  
advocacy."*