



# An Introduction to Disability Advocacy

## About this course

Disability advocacy is vital for empowering people with disability to exercise their human rights and avoid discrimination. Disability advocates work to ensure that the voice of the person with a disability is heard and is central to all decision-making that affect them.

This self-paced online course provides an overview of what types of disability advocacy are available, a foundation in the human rights framework and how disability advocates use legal instruments and oversight bodies to achieve rights based advocacy practice. This course is available to anyone, free of charge, through the DARU website.

### In this course you will learn:

- How disability advocacy fits into a human rights framework
- What skills and knowledge a disability advocate needs to provide effective disability advocacy practice
- The basics of discrimination law
- How people with little or no decision-making capacity are protected by law
- How advocates use the complaints bodies operating in Victoria to ensure the rights of people with disability are upheld
- How to identify and respond to incidents of abuse and neglect

## Who is this course for?

This course is designed with new disability advocates in mind; however, anyone who does advocacy in their everyday lives will find this course valuable, including:

- People with disability
- Parents and other family members
- Disability support workers
- Allied health professionals
- Government representatives



For more information on how to access this course visit:  
[www.daru.org.au/course/induction-for-advocates](http://www.daru.org.au/course/induction-for-advocates)  
or phone **03 9639 5807** or email [admin@daru.org.au](mailto:admin@daru.org.au)

# Modules

## 1. Types of Advocacy

Independent disability advocacy is funded by both the Victorian and Australian Governments to provide a range of advocacy support. This module explains what the different types of advocacy delivered by funded agencies are.

### Lessons

- Disability myth buster
- About the disability advocacy sector
- Self-advocacy
- Individual advocacy
- Family advocacy
- Citizen advocacy
- Legal advocacy
- Systemic advocacy
- Types of advocacy quiz

## 2. To Stand Beside: Disability advocates at work

Members from the Victorian Rural Advocacy Network (VicRAN) share their skills, knowledge and experience about what a disability advocate does. This module introduces effective advocacy practice.

### Lessons

- Introducing the role of disability advocates
- Disability advocacy 101
- Handy advocacy skills
- What do you know?
- Self care strategies for disability advocates
- Helping yourself helps others
- The role of a disability advocate quiz

## 3. The Human Rights Framework

Human rights promote dignity, equality and freedom. Human rights are protected because they are written into international, Australian and Victorian laws. This module outlines how the rights of people with disability fit into this framework.

### Lessons

- What are human rights?
- The international human rights framework
- Disability advocacy grassroots
- The roots of rights
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Articles under the UNCRPD
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
- How the Charter is used

## 4. Tools of the Trade: Introducing Legal Instruments

The legal framework is the basis of human rights protection. It is made up of many different legal instruments, including: Acts, Standards, Guidelines and Plans. This module does not have the scope to cover all applicable legal instruments in depth. It will, however, provide a solid foundation in discrimination and decision-making law.

### Lessons

- Understanding legal capacity
- Decision supporters
- The Public Advocate on decision-making
- Substitute decision-makers
- Advance care planning
- Decision-makers appointed by Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal
- Guardianship and administration
- Discrimination
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Case Study – A School in the Bush
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Choosing which law to use
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013

## 5. Safeguards and Oversight

The protection of human rights is supported by government mandated safeguarding measures and oversight bodies. This module introduces what reporting obligations advocates have, and outlines the scope for complaints under the more commonly used bodies.

### Lessons

- Revision of oversight bodies
- An overview of the Office of the Public Advocate
- Identifying violence, abuse and neglect
- IGUANA animation
- What the Disability Services Commissioner does
- More oversight and complaints bodies

## Case Study – Ba Hung

In this 'Gogglebox' episode, Ba Hung shares his real life story of navigating the disability support system with his advocate, Amanda Roe. Watch and learn about what it takes to assist people with disabilities through complex, unfair systems.

## Acknowledgements

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