



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PACKAGES

MODULE 5

# Advocacy and Activism

*Getting Started*



Participant Guide

A Half Day Workshop

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# Advocacy and Activism

## Aim

To be clear about the purpose and processes of advocacy in the mental health system.

## Learning Outcomes

1. To be able to develop clear advocacy aims;
2. Be familiar with at least one tool to analyse the effectiveness of advocacy aims;
3. To identify appropriate courses of action in relation to advocacy aims;
4. Common meeting procedures are described;
5. Problem solving techniques are discussed; and
6. The role of leadership in a committee is discussed.

## Module Content

- Knowing your aims
- Using a SWOT analysis
- Planning, reflecting and acting strategically





**Additional copies\* of this module are available from**

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## Introducing Myself

### Name Game

1. On a piece of paper given to you by the trainer/facilitator, write your name in the middle.
2. On the top left corner write ONE word that embodies what motivates you to be active
3. On the top right corner, write ONE issue that motivates you to be active
4. On the bottom left corner write ONE SHORT sentence that describes your understanding of advocacy or activism
5. On the bottom right corner write anything you want to share with others on this workshop – favourite fruit, TV show, book, anything, preferably something funny!

ONE WORD THAT EMBODIES WHAT MOTIVATES YOU	ONE ISSUE THAT LEADS YOU TO BE AN ACTIVIST/ADVOCATE
<b>YOUR NAME</b>	
WHAT THE WORDS ADVOCACY OR ACTIVISM MEAN TO YOU	ANYTHING YOU ARE HAPPY TO SHARE WITH OTHER PEOPLE HERE TODAY

Once completed, follow the directions given by the trainer/facilitator.



# 1. Knowing Your Aims

SO, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT TO DO?



Divide into small groups

You will need some butchers paper and pens

You will need a volunteer scribe to take the notes for the group

Break into small groups, and from the list generated in the Name Game exercise, each group is to pick an issue to work through today

Each group is now to complete the following tasks:

1. Discuss the issue you have chosen, getting as much (non-identifying) information as available and necessary
2. List information you do not have (on the left-hand side of the paper) that you may need to take effective action
3. On another sheet of paper (on the left-hand side) state the AIMS of your advocacy / action. List these carefully, being sure these are ACTION/OUTCOME oriented

Refer to "The Kit" Developing Your Group p 189-192



## Defining Terms

### Advocacy

“Supporting another person’s cause”

Advocacy in mental health differs – “not so much about people representing other people, but about people representing themselves.”

### Aim of advocacy

“ to bring about beneficial outcomes in a way that enables each consumer and carer or group to retain as much control as possible over how it is carried out.”

### Systems advocacy

Is advocating to change some aspect of a system that may effect a wide range of people, most of whom are personally unknown to the person(s) doing the advocacy.

Is also about seeking to influence the social and political structures that promote and sustain injustice and inequality.

### Activism

“a planned series of actions that are intended to lead towards systemic change in relation to some particular aspect of the world in which we live – generally, political action to force policy change.”

Refer to The Kit “Knowledge and Attitudes” Booklet p 24 – 29



## Having Clear Aims

A useful checklist

- ✓ Written in simple and plain language
- ✓ Easily understood by anyone reading them
- ✓ Short – one idea per aim
- ✓ Carefully thought through so as to clear away all the extra ideas and words
- ✓ States the end point you are trying to achieve – goals may need to be set in stages where one aim can lead on to the next
- ✓ If the aim is the end, then the strategies (how you get there) are the means
- ✓ Ethics determine whether the 'ends' justify the 'means'
- ✓ Strategies need to work towards achieving the aims – avoid the temptation to get side-tracked into arguments about side issues or personal politics
- ✓ Aims and goals are the lights at the end of the tunnel on the activist journey

**Advocacy is often one way of achieving distant aims or more immediate goals.**



## 2. SWOT Analysis

(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

AIM: .....

STRENGTHS:	WEAKNESSES:
OPPORTUNITIES:	THREATS:

**How can you build on Strengths, overcome Weaknesses, make the most of Opportunities and minimise Threats?**

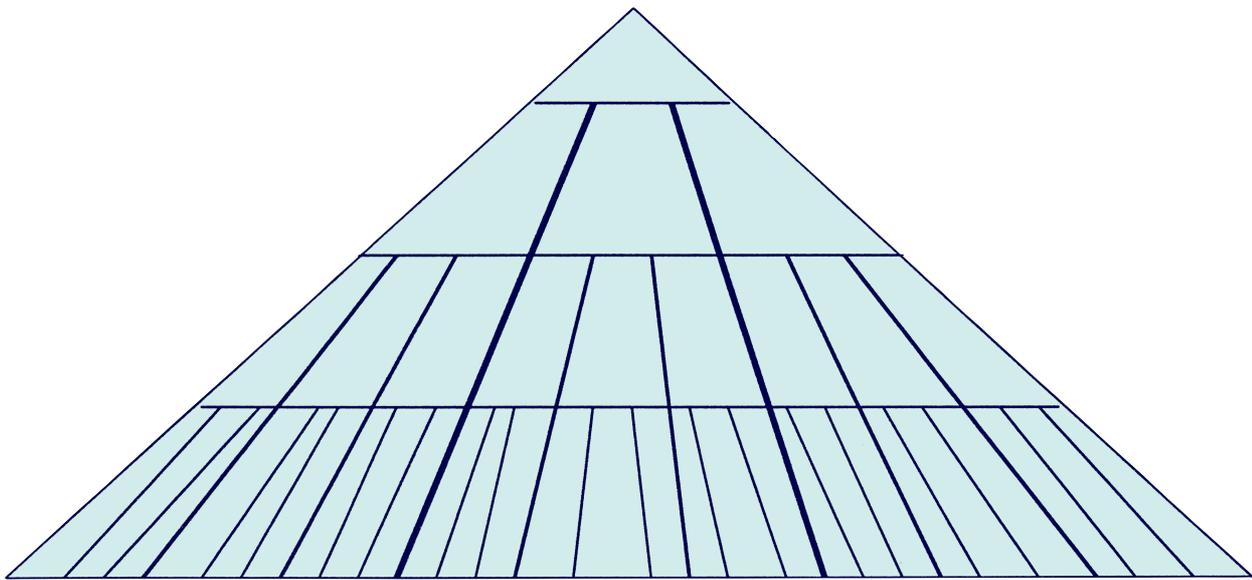


Homework: Worth reading "The Kit"  
Identifying and overcoming barriers p 81-83



### 3. Moving From Aims Through Goals To Strategies

1. Using butchers paper start by drawing a large triangle: List the Aim you wrote in the previous session in the top triangle.
2. At the next level list the 3 things that must be done to achieve the aim.
3. Continue this process for as often as you need to down the triangle. For example on the third level you will have three things that need to be done for each of the three things on the second level and so on down the triangle.



**Don't be daunted by this – Every journey begins with the first step. This is just a tool to help you get things into perspective and have clear goals.**

#### Questions To Keep in the Back of Your Mind:

- What is your level of understanding of the decision-making processes in the mental health system?
- What is your understanding of alternate points of view?
- How can you use your understanding to assist in the advocacy of people with mental health issues?



## Some Timely Reminders:

- It is not personal. The **task** is about achieving justice. That is, about the **issues** and about you getting what you believe to be right – those with alternate points of view may equally believe their view and/or be confined by their organisational regulations or personal values, etc.
- **You need alternate points of view** – your relationship will colour the outcome. So fight hard, but fight fair; stick to the issues and to your argument; and always deal with open integrity that you may have to modify your goals (and even your aims) if/when circumstances change.



## 4. Training Program Feedback and Evaluation



In small groups:

Discuss the day's program and decide on how you would like to give feedback.

The presenters need to know the following:

- ❖ What you found useful in this program
- ❖ What could have been improved
- ❖ What are the recommendations for future programs

You have 10 minutes for this exercise

