

What do we mean by Support Advocates?

When we talk about Support Advocates we mean someone who can help you plan an approach, explain a need, present a request, and carefully and fairly make sure that request is addressed.

This is not about lawyers using the law, but it is about lawyers using the other skills they have developed as lawyers. It is being ready to write the letter, make the phone calls or attend the meeting that will help get the grant, the adjustment at school, the discount, the repayment, the allowance, the attention from the authority, the place, the short break, the reply - whatever it is that should be happening but is not.

The project is about lawyers speaking for others, maintaining objectivity and helping to find solutions.

All the lawyers involved in the project are providing their time and expertise on a voluntary basis.

For more information please visit:

www.lawworks.org.uk/voicesforfamilies

“Advocacy is about speaking up for children and young people. [It] is about empowering children and young people...representing [their] views, wishes and needs...and helping them to navigate the system”

Department of Health ‘National Standards for the Provision of Children’s Advocacy Services’ (2002)

Voices for Families began following a feasibility study commissioned by Together for Short Lives and carried out by LawWorks. The feasibility study identified that families need additional support and advocacy when accessing the palliative care system. Voices for Families aims to alleviate some of the bureaucratic burden that families face so that they can focus on being a family.



To speak with someone about how to access support form Voices for Families, contact Together for Short Lives Helpline at:

0808 8088 100

together
for
short
lives



supported by
The Law Society



Voices for Families

**Assisting. Supporting.
Advocating.**

A collaboration of
LawWorks and
Together for Short Lives

Voices for Families: An advocacy project

As families of children and young people with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions, the scale of the challenges you face in daily life - from getting the right medical care, housing or adaptations, to making sure you access the benefits you need - can sometimes feel immense.

Sometimes you may feel you're not getting anywhere by talking to the relevant professionals and agencies. This can be very frustrating – especially with a busy and often emotional home life.

This is where the Voices for Families project can help.

Legal professionals will act as volunteer Support Advocates, assisting your family through some of the problems you're facing, and acting on your behalf to help you get the support you need.



How it works:

- You call the Together for Short Lives Helpline and a member of the team will talk to you and carry out an initial screening to decide if the issue being faced by your family is one that could be supported by Voices for Families. Together for Short Lives will forward your information (with your consent) to LawWorks. To contact the helpline please call 0808 8088 100.
- The LawWorks project staff will contact you to ask you about the issues facing your child and family and make a final decision about whether they are able to provide support.
- They will then match your family with an individual or pair of volunteer Support Advocates
- The Support Advocates will work with you until the matter is resolved or until such time that you feel you no longer require support.
- They will engage with you primarily through written, telephone and electronic contact.
- They will assist with a variety of issues, enabling you and your family to spend more time being just that – a family.

About us

Together for Short Lives

Together for Short Lives is the only charity working across the UK representing all children with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions and their families as well as the organisations and people that support them. We want to help ensure that all of these children and their families get the best possible care and support whenever and wherever they need it.

LawWorks

LawWorks is the operating name of the Solicitors Pro Bono Group.

It is a membership organisation that co-ordinates and brokers pro bono opportunities. LawWorks provides free legal help to individuals and community groups who cannot afford to pay for it or cannot access legal aid. In the last year LawWorks helped over 40,000 people and around 350 voluntary sector organisations.

It provides help through a mixture of individuals and community casework, free legal advice clinics and a variety of other projects.

“Words can’t describe the impact the Voices for Families support project has had on my family. All that has been achieved has been through the hard work and tireless dedication the support advocates provided. They have been a blessing to my family. We sincerely thank you for all your support....”

Mother involved in Voices for Families pilot