

## What is advocacy?

All people have the right to be heard and feel safe in expressing their opinions. Sometimes people require support from others to empower them to voice their needs and concerns with confidence.

Advocacy means getting support from another person, group, or organisation to help you uphold your rights and express your views and wishes.

## How can an advocate help you?

An advocate will:

- Listen to your views and concerns.
- Help you explore your options.
- Provide information to help you make informed decisions.
- Help you contact relevant people or contact them on your behalf.
- Accompany you and support you in meetings or appointments.

## What will an advocate not do?

- Be judgemental.
- Influence your decisions.
- Make decisions for you.

## Does VAHS offer advocacy services?

Aboriginal Health Workers (AHW) at VAHS are available to support you on request in a culturally safe manner. Each service unit has staff who can support you when you need it.

If you require specialised advocacy support, VAHS is able to refer you to the relevant services eg: Disability Advocacy Victoria and Aged Care Advocacy Victoria.