**Voices and Choices Project (V&C)**

**Access and Referral Criteria**

**Service Aims**

The Voice and Choices service will prioritise the needs of:

1. Older people with long-term health conditions.
2. Vulnerable adults wishing to remain/maintain living independently in their own homes with appropriate support where it is safe for them to do so.
3. Vulnerable adults and their families/carers/friends, who are considering long-term accommodation choices, such as extra-care, residential care, or nursing care.

**Referrals**

Voices and Choices referrals can be accepted from the following sources:

* Direct from the individual – self-referral.
* From an individual’s family member, friends or voluntary sector organisations (third party).
* From other services/agencies; social worker/prescriber, carer, support worker, legal representative, etc.

Referrals can be taken over the telephone and by email.

The Voices and Choices referral form will act as the primary referral document.

*Initial Assessments will be conducted within 7 working days of the referral being taken unless there is a specific reason why this isn’t possible.*

**Access Criteria**

The Voices and Choices project will focus on and prioritise the needs of older people living in Sandwell, with long-term health conditions.

To access Independent Advocacy support via the V&C Project individuals:

* Must live within the Sandwell district
* Must have a long-term health condition
* Must have a specific advocacy issue related to a person wishing to remain/maintain living independently in their homes
* Must have a specific advocacy issue related to an older adult who is considering options around a move into *care provider* accommodation

The Voice and Choices service will prioritise the needs of older people with long-term health conditions and ensure that all those we support are empowered to make informed decisions.

Where a referral is received from an **agency** or **third party**, Sandwell Advocacy needs to be satisfied that the individual being referred has consented to their details been shared with us. Consent **MUST** be obtained prior to making a referral.