



The Role of Advocacy Services: Supporting Open Disclosure

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Greater Dublin Region



Vision statement

Our vision for society is one where people with disabilities can exercise their rights – with dignity, autonomy, equality and independence at the core. We recognise the capacity of people with disabilities to make their own decisions equally with others, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

About the National Advocacy Service

- Established 2005 as pilot projects
- Funded and supported by the Citizens Information Board
- Independent, free and confidential
- 50 paid, professional staff across Ireland
- NAS staff work in line with NAS Advocacy policies

Our Family Tree....



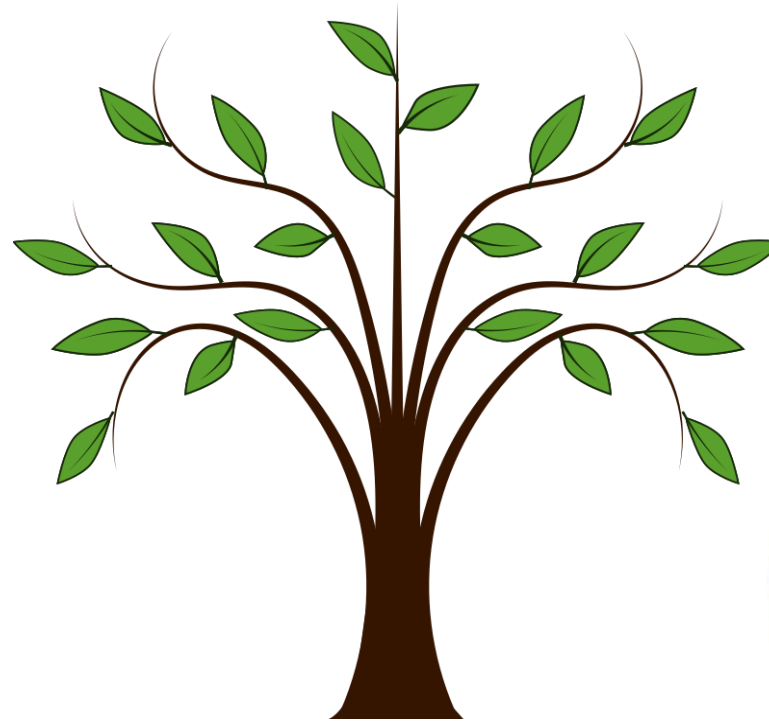
Patient
Advocacy
Service



MABS Helpline

0761 07 2000

Monday to Friday: 9am - 8pm



Citizens
Information



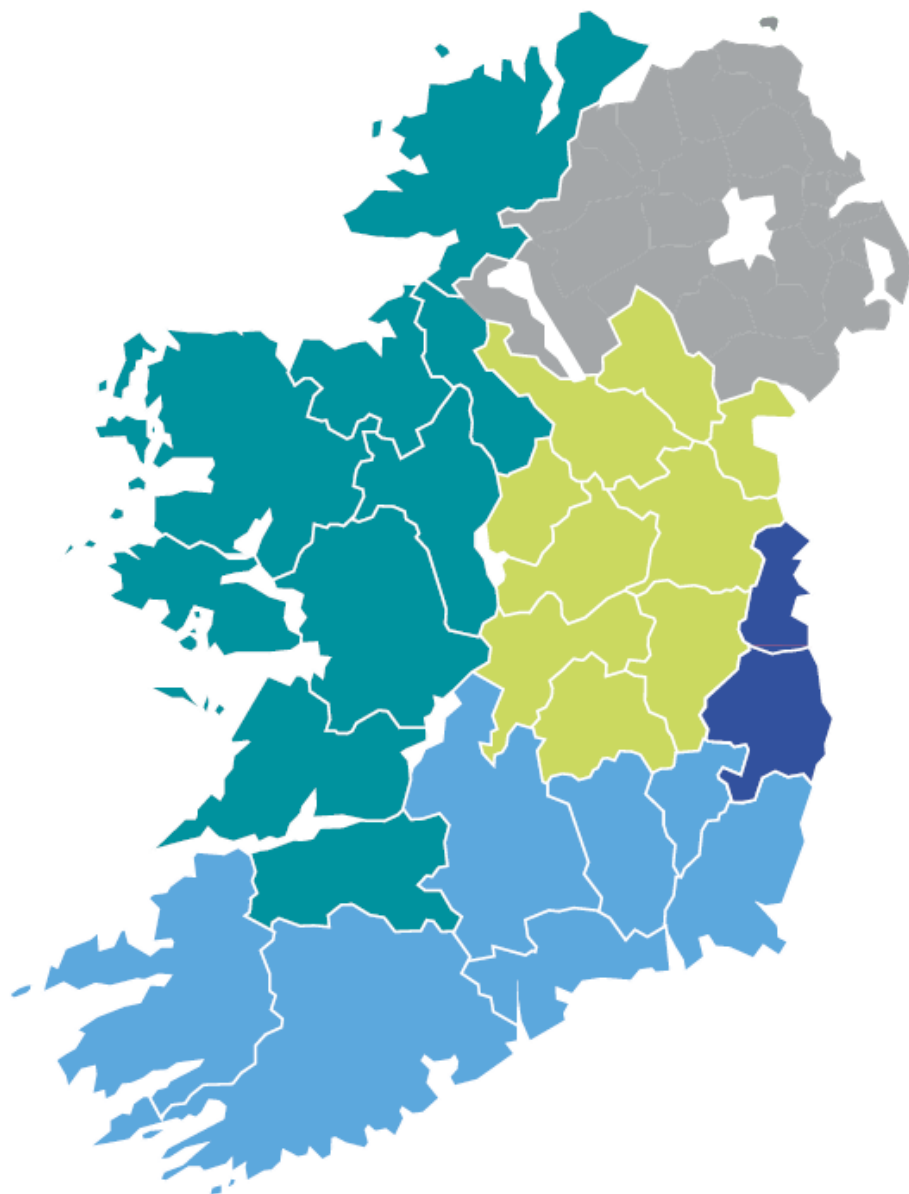
**NATIONAL ADVOCACY
SERVICE**

FOR PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES

SIGN LANGUAGE
INTERPRETING SERVICE

Citizens **Information** Board
information · advice · advocacy





-  **Greater Dublin**
Dublin, Fingal and Wicklow
-  **Midlands Northeast Region**
Cavan, Laois, Longford, Louth, Kildare, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly and Westmeath
-  **Western Region**
Clare, Donegal, Galway, Leitrim, Limerick, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo
-  **Southern Region**
Carlow, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford



The National Advocacy Service

NAS has a particular remit for adults (aged 18+) with disabilities who:

- Live in the community & are isolated from their community and services.
- Have communication differences.
- Are inappropriately accommodated.
- Live in residential services.
- Attend day services.
- Have limited informal or natural supports.

Enquiry Process



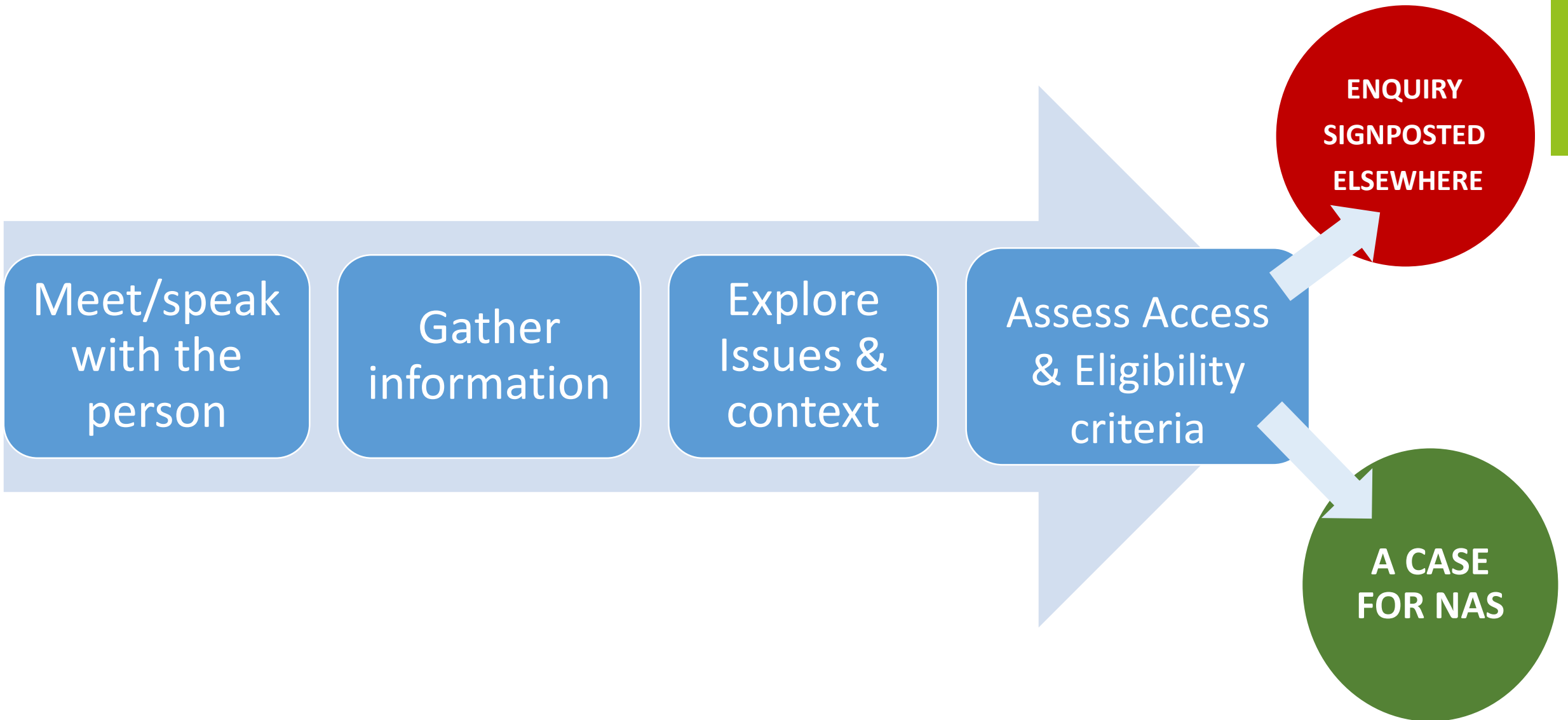
A person can apply for the service by calling national line 0818 07 3000 or online at www.advocacy.ie

Anyone can make an enquiry on behalf of a person via the national line or online enquiry form

We receive enquiries from;

- People with Disabilities
- Family and Friends
- Disability Services
- HSE Services
- HSE Safeguarding Teams
- Health and Social Care Professionals
- Advocacy groups
- Solicitors and legal professionals

Enquiry Process



Presumption of Capacity



- In the first instance, all practicable steps should be taken to support persons to make decisions and to ascertain will and preference
- Presume person has capacity to make their own decisions unless/until the contrary is shown.



Upholding Will and Preference

- Advocates adopt a Will and Preference approach.
- Advocates get to know the person and support them to have their will and preferences kept at the centre of decision making.
- Advocates support people to be directly involved in decision-making. Advocates work to support a person's right to take considered risks and experience failure.
- Advocates are not influenced by any other party.

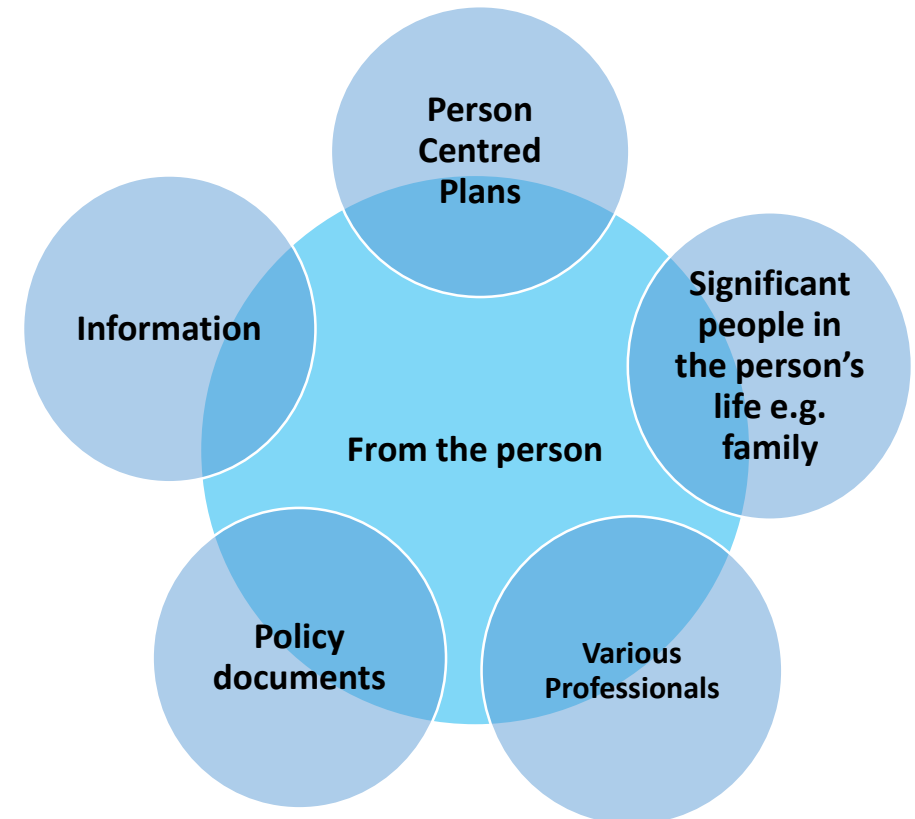
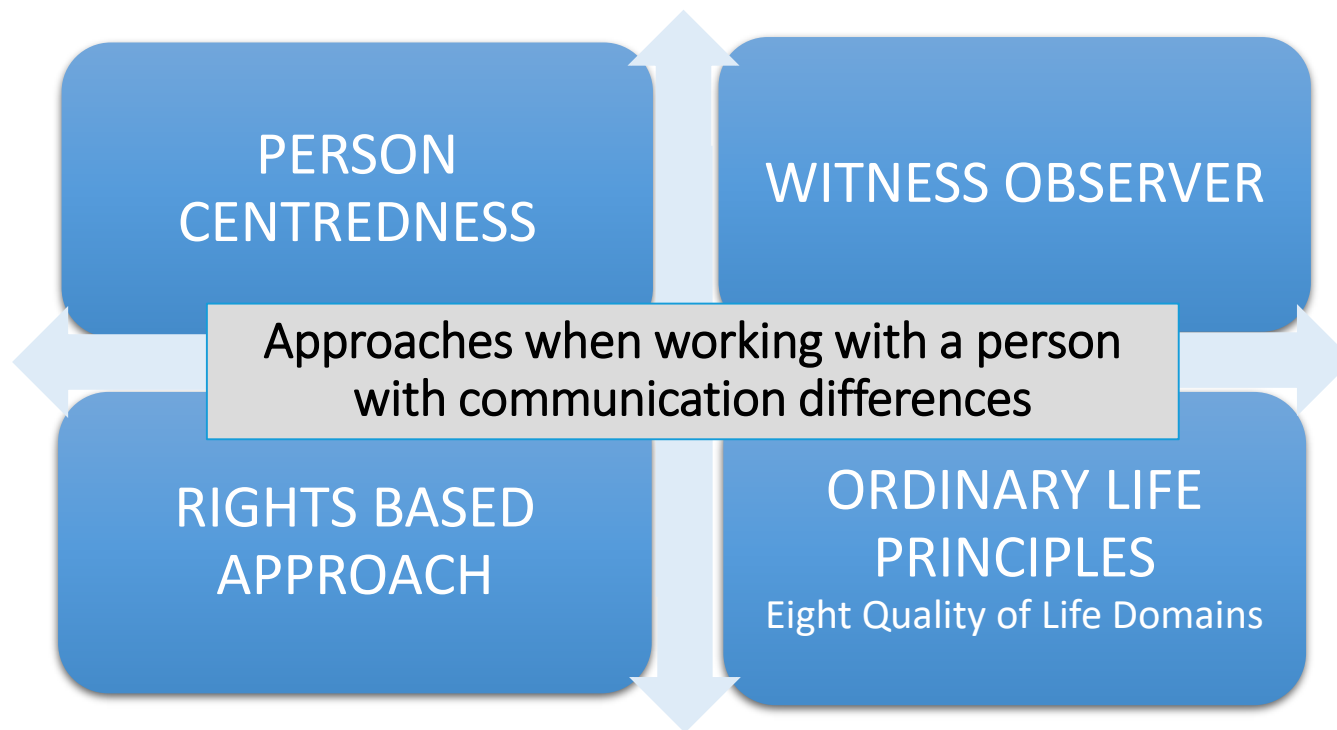
Upholding Will and Preference



- Advocates ensure that fair process has been followed for the person.
- Advocates explore the different avenues of recourse open to a person when a rights violation has occurred.
- Advocates consider if the person is empowered or disempowered in each situation.

Working with those with communication differences

In a case where the person is not in a position to articulate their will or preferences the advocate uses 4 internationally recognised approaches to ascertain the person's will and preference.



NAS provided full
representative
advocacy support
in **1,018**
cases in 2019

11%
increase
on 2018

NAS closed
431 cases,
having achieved
outcomes for
clients

NAS provided
information,
advice, one-off
interventions
and short-term
advocacy in
3,456 initial
enquiries in 2019



14%
increase
on 2018

This included writing a letter,
information provision by phone,
short-term support and referrals
to other services

Types of Issues in Casework



Health

Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment and Exploitation

Perceptions of Risk/upholding of rights

Community Services

Legal Issues

Inappropriate Placements

Individualised Funding

Access to money

Rights restrictions

Quality of Life Issues

Representative advocacy issues included:



housing and
accommodation
50%



health
23%



justice issues
12%



parenting with
a disability
8%

Issue Categories 2020



Housing: includes homelessness, inappropriate residential placements such as young people in nursing homes, lack of choice in terms of residential placements, de-congregation, rent and arrears and social housing list issues.

Health issues: include access to healthcare services, treatment choice and meaningful engagement in defining treatment plans.

Justice issues: include Ward of Court cases, wills and probate, personal injuries claims, rights of residence and criminal cases.

Parenting with a Disability: typically refers to cases where a parent with an intellectual disability is subject to an intervention by social services in relation to their child/children.

Types of Disabilities met in NAS

People with...	2018	2019
Intellectual Disability	45%	49%
Physical Disability	31%	32%
Mental Health	24%	24%
Learning Disability	17%	14%
Autistic Spectrum	12%	11%
Sensory Disability	8%	8%
Acquired Brain Injury	8%	12%

Policy Environment



NAS participates in the policy sphere in the following ways;

- Joint Oireachtas Committee on Disability Matters
- Joint Oireachtas Committee on Covid 19
- Nursing Home Expert Group
- Law Reform Commission on Consultation on Adult Safeguarding
- Disability Consultative Forum of Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- Expert Group on ADM at National Disability Authority
- HSE National Disability Consultative Forum
- Quality Assurance Oversight Committee for Decision Support Service
- Citizens Information Board pre-budget submissions and social policy

Áras Attracta- NAS Role

NAS has played an active role on the ground in Áras Attracta

- Two NAS advocates worked with residents in Áras Attracta as part of “A Day in the Life Exercise” for the Independent Review Group Report into Áras Attracta (McCoy Report)
- McCoy Report found an expansion of the NAS service to residents of Áras Attracta would be beneficial

What matters most

Report of the
Áras Attracta Swinford
Review Group

July 2016

Case Studies



www.advocacy.ie

National Line: 0818 07 3000



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