



# Patient Advocacy Service

INFORMATION | SUPPORT | EMPOWERMENT

Open Disclosure Office  
3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

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Provided by the National  
Advocacy Service for People  
with Disabilities (NAS)



Commissioned by The  
National Patient Safety Office  
in the Department of Health



Funded by The Department of  
Health



**An Roinn Sláinte**  
Department of Health

# PAS Origins



**Health  
Information  
and Quality  
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis  
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte



**NATIONAL ADVOCACY  
SERVICE**

**FOR PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES**

# Vision Statement

We recognise the right of all people to support, guidance and information when issues arise in relation to their care and treatment which may lead to their wish to complain about their treatment or care or seek answers in the aftermath of a patient safety incident.

We identify the core human rights as being dignity, autonomy, equality and independence.

# Free, Independent and Confidential Patient Advocacy



# **Patient Advocacy Service Remit:**

**To provide information and support to patients in public acute hospitals wishing to make a formal complaint about the care they have experienced and in the aftermath of a patient safety incident**





## National Hub:

8 Advocacy Officers

2 Team Leads

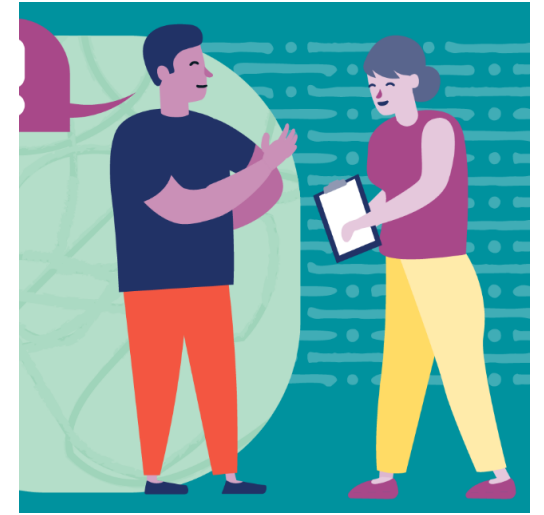
1 Service Manager

1 Policy Communications  
Officer

1 Corporate Services Officer

# PAS Staff Governance & Support

- Professional Advocates
- Certificate in Patient Safety and Complaint Advocacy
- Code of Practice and Policies
- Case review and Performance Management
- Practice development and peer learning
- HSE MoU



CODE OF  
PRACTICE





# Your Service Your Say

## Guide to Making a Complaint



**Make an  
Informal  
Complaint  
(Stage 1)**



**Making a  
Formal  
Complaint  
(Stage 2)**



**Internal HSE  
Review of  
Complaint  
(Stage 3)**



**External  
Review of  
Complaint  
(Stage 4)**

The Patient Advocacy  
Service can assist  
you to make a formal  
complaint from this  
Stage

# Role of Patient Advocacy Officers

- Accessing information
- Providing information
- Exploring options and outcomes
- Support person to write letters
- Support to make a YSYS complaint
- Support in the aftermath of a patient safety incident
- Attend meetings
- Support to make a complaint to a professional body, regulatory body or the ombudsman
- Referring to other services
- Empowering the person to represent themselves



# Nature of Patient Advocacy Service Work

- To ensure a fair and balanced process
- That the person's views, concerns, questions and decisions are addressed
- To be independent of hospitals
- To inform the person of their rights
- To highlight social policy and systemic issues





# The Patient Advocacy Service won't...

- Act on the person's behalf
- Provide mediation
- Initiate redress
- Overturn a complaint
- Provide a counselling service
- Provide legal or medical advice
- Replace the ombudsman
- Engage in campaigning or activism work

# Why an Independent Patient Advocate

- Person requested an independent person
- Avoid Conflict of Interest whether perceived or real
- Bring balance to the process
- Impartiality
- Limited natural supports
- Professional experienced advocates





# Benefits of Advocacy for Patients

- Adequate response following complaint
- Efficient process
- Enhance understanding for all
- Reduce confusion and delay
- Reduce further stress and trauma from the complaints process
- Ensure complaints process is managed compassionately and humanely
- Support for people in vulnerable situations



# Benefits of Advocacy for Services

- Early complaint resolution
- Avoids costly escalation
- Reduces delays in resolving complaint
- Improve efficiency
- Improve quality of complaint information received
- Referral pathway for Independent Patient Advocates for those who want and need it
- Systemic failures recognised
- Avoid repeat of system failures, mistakes or behaviours

Advocacy  
works!



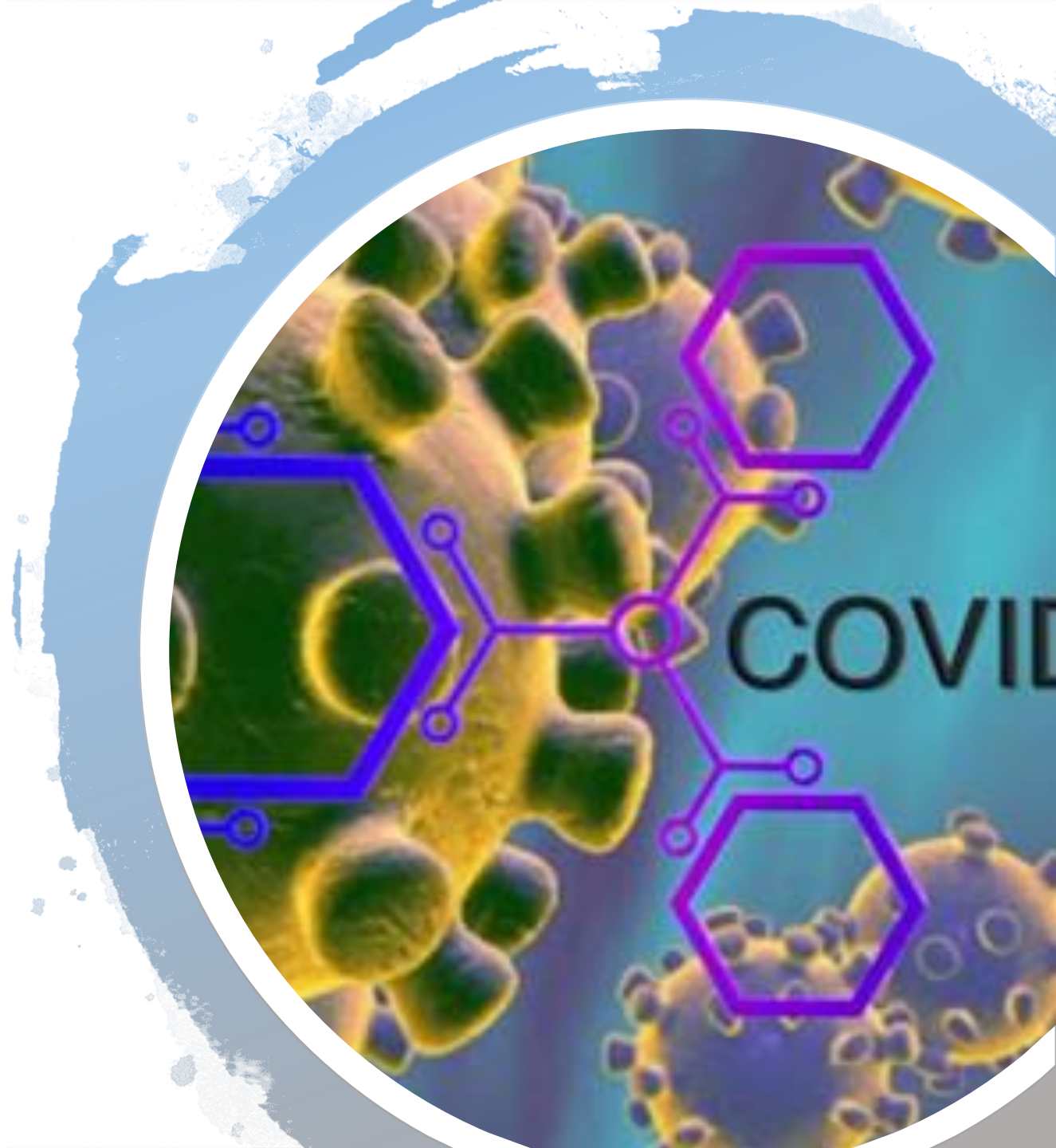
# Case Example





# PAS during the Covid-19 Pandemic

- All PAS staff are working from home
- VoIP - Voice Over Internet Protocol
- Empowerment Advocacy
- Social Media Presence
- Increased awareness within the public forum
- Key Contacts within acute settings
- knowledge of Quality & Risk Management contacts and procedures



# PAS Highlights

- 535 New Contacts, 151 have covid related complaints
- 1314 Separate Complaint Issues Identified since April 2020
- 7024 New Users to Website with 19,899 page views
- 896 pieces of promotional work completed by PAS
- 2273 Facebook followers since March 2020
- 273 Twitter followers
- 71 Open Cases
- Consultation on the development of a National Policy Framework for Open Disclosure in Ireland
- Covid 19 Nursing Home Expert Panel Consultation Survey
- Submission to Special Oireachtas Committee on Covid 19
- HSE National Care Experience Maternity Survey – Message of Support



# Going Forward

- PAS does not replace existing advocacy services in hospitals
- Collaboration needed for referrals
- PAS leaflet available to offer people using your service
- Posters available for your service
- Presentations





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