

12.12

What added value will your organisation bring to this service? (550 words, not including additional evidence requested)

- *Links with other local advocacy services:* The service benefits from links with VoiceAbility's Cambridgeshire Community Advocacy service through access to a wide range of professionals and other services who are potential sources of referral to IMCA. It also benefits from links to VoiceAbility's IMCA services in neighbouring counties through sharing of good practice and access to qualified staff at times of high demand on the service.
- *An established IMCA Referral Service:* VoiceAbility has a dedicated national IMCA referral line (with fax and email access) which anyone can ring to speak to a trained referral specialist about the IMCA service or to make a referral. The dedicated IMCA referral line adds real value as the experienced referrals team establishes eligibility and offers signposting to those ineligible. This reduces administration for advocates, allowing more time for direct advocacy and ensuring they only engage those eligible. The referrals team can also save advocates time by clarifying issues at the point of referral getting all recording all referral data up front.
- *Local knowledge and infrastructure:* Delivering the community advocacy service in Cambridgeshire as well as the IMCA service means that our understanding of the local area and context is excellent. The team is supported by a strong, local management structure; including a Regional Director who is the VoiceAbility specialist for IMCA, DoLS and Paid Representatives.
- *MAAVIS:* Our new information system has revolutionised the way that advocates work, leading to efficiencies which allow more time for face-to-face advocacy. We can now extract a much higher quality and quantity of data, looking in detail at case durations and inputs, as well as outcomes, so that we can better understand what delivers the best outcomes for individuals and so that we can seek further efficiency.
- *Organisational Efficiency:* Our on-going efficiency drive continues to reduce overheads and means that we can now offer this service at a reduced cost to commissioners
- *Quality:* VoiceAbility holds QPM and QPM IMCA+. As a dedicated advocacy specialist, we are at the forefront of best practice. We add specific expertise in IMCA quality, having drafted the SCIE guidance of the role of IMCA in safeguarding cases and contributed extensively to the SCIE best practice in IMCA commissioning guidance. We have a dedicated Quality Team supporting our Managers to develop and improve practice across the organisation
- *Benefits of scale:* The Cambridgeshire service can draw on expertise, knowledge and support from teams and managers working in 19 other IMCA services, helping ensure more accurate and consistent practice
- *Policy and Research:* Our Head of Policy and Development, Phillippa Ashcroft, is responsible for disseminating the latest developments in policy and practice to support IMCA practice, but also to support Service Managers in sharing key updates with other stakeholders. For example VoiceAbility has recently led a drive to ensure that individuals who lack capacity and might become subject to Do Not Attempt to Resuscitate (DNAR) order have access to an IMCA before that decision is made. This has involved raising awareness amongst hospital staff in particular.