

family

A D V O C A C Y

PO Box 502
Epping NSW 1710

305/16-18 Cambridge St
Epping NSW 2121

Phone: (02) 9869 0866
Facsimile: (02) 9869 0722

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Author: Unknown

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Abstract

An information paper providing the definition of corporate advocacy and explains how a corporate advocacy group acts as a watchdog of the quantity and quality of services. **Keyword: Advocacy**

CORPORATE ADVOCACY

CORPORATE ADVOCACY describes a group of people who come together in a formal way to speak up for a whole group, or class, of people. A corporate advocacy group acts for CONSUMERS, either individuals or groups, NOT for those agencies or systems which provide services.

CORPORATE ADVOCACY groups, in the area of disability, can be defined as:

BEING DEEPLY INVOLVED AND INTERESTED IN A WHOLE SPECTRUM OF NEEDS AND RIGHTS I.E.CHILDREN, ADULTS, AND FAMILIES, EITHER IN A SPECIFIC DIAGNOSTIC GROUP, OR COVERING THE VARIOUS TYPES OF DISABILITY. MEMBERSHIP COULD INCLUDE PARENTS OF CHILDREN OR ADULTS WHO HAVE DIFFERING DEGREES AND/OR TYPES OF DISABILITY. THE GROUPS' MEMBERSHIPS COULD ALSO INCLUDE PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY, FRIENDS, PROFESSIONALS.

A corporate advocacy is QUITE DIFFERENT TO, and DISTINCT FROM, voluntary service-delivery groups which are made up of parents and others who administer services - usually for a specific age group and/or a particular disability. It is entirely possible that a corporate advocacy group may, at times, tangle with agencies on behalf of an individual, or a whole group of people.

A corporate advocacy group acts as a watchdog on the quality and quantity of services from specialist non-Government or Government agencies, and/or community services. A corporate advocacy group is free of the conflict of interests brought about by having services depend on it. It can therefore speak out at all levels about the rights and needs of the group it is concerned with. The membership of corporate advocacy groups usually agree on their philosophy and the sorts of goals they are endeavouring to achieve.

To be most effective-, the Committees of Corporate Advocacy groups should have the financial resources available to employ required staff. The group should be aware that its effectiveness can be influenced by the source of its funding.

Such a group has a variety of roles, including:

- * pressing for better services at Government and non-Government level, on a local, regional, State or National basis, depending on its geographical borders
- * offering mutual support and self-help to the group it is speaking up for
- * changing community attitudes
- * taking up individual, or group, cases with Government, non-Government and local Government sectors
- * influencing legislation
- * ensuring that the whole group of people it is concerned with is supplied with relevant, regular information
- * supporting its membership by newsletter, information, meetings, sessional workshops, practical assistance

REMEMBER:

*A CORPORATE ADVOCACY GROUP ACTS FOR
CONSUMERS NOT AGENCIES*

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