

Organisation:

Reach Advocacy

Key Rights Applied:

Right to Life

Right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

Right to an adequate standard of living

Freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment (dignity)

Background & Context:

Reach Advocacy are a lived experience charity that provides education and training in Human Rights-Based awareness and advocacy. They have developed a variety of training programs and workshops, all of which use the Human Rights Act 1998, international legislation, and a variety of other domestic policies, standards, and guidelines. They also offer an SQA-accredited SCQF level 7 advocacy qualification for advocates, equivalent to SVQ 3 in Health and Social Care. Reach has over 100 accredited human rights-based advocates across Scotland.

The current education and training programs aim to achieve the following:

1. Increase the knowledge and skills of the workforce, to understand the role of human rights and responsibilities that emerge from Charter implementation and their role as service providers, and duty-bearers.
2. Build confidence of community groups, family members, and individuals with lived/living experience to use human rights tools and understand their entitlements as rights-holders.
3. Train accredited advocates to be human rights champions, and ensure that they are supported as rights defenders, with knowledge and understanding of human rights, frameworks, and legislation.

Use of the Charter Toolkit:

Reach works with senior managers, front-line staff, family members, carers, and people with lived/living experience to increase their knowledge and understanding of key human rights issues. The workshops include key elements of the Charter (Human rights, MAT Standards, and the Orange Book) and tools from the Charter Toolkit (AAAQ, PANEL, FAIR, and Advocacy).

Results to date:

In FY 24-25, 450 individuals representing over 80 distinct organisations in Scotland took part in workshops and accredited training. Reach has delivered in every locality in Scotland.

Participants engaged in training included statutory services, community groups and third-sector services, with 30% of participants identifying themselves as lived/living experience and/or family members of people affected by substance use. Participants' knowledge before and after attending training was recorded, with the following results:

Human Rights Act 1998 (includes 4 of the Charter's Key Rights)

Very Poor/Poor understanding decreased from 27% to 1%
Fair understanding decreased from 21% to 14%
Good/Very Good understanding increased from 5% to 85%

The Orange Book, 2017 (included in Charter as evidence of existing guidance related to Key Rights)

Very Poor/Poor understanding decreased from 79% to 4%.
Fair understanding increased from 12% to 31%.
Good/Very Good understanding increased from 7% to 65%.

The MAT Standards (included in Charter as evidence of existing standards related to Key Rights)

Participants reporting a Very Poor/Poor understanding decreased from 25% to 0%.
Participants reporting a Fair understanding decreased from 37% to 7%.
Participants reporting a Good/Very Good understanding increased from 38% to 93%.

The AAAQ Framework (included in Charter toolkit as a tool for creating indicators and checklists)

Very Poor/Poor understanding decreased from 86% to 1%.
Fair understanding increased from 8% to 22%.
Good/Very Good understanding increased from 3% to 77%.

The FAIR Model (included in Charter toolkit as a recommended best practice model for the application of a human rights-based approach)

Very Poor/Poor understanding decreased from 79% to 2%.
Fair understanding increased from 15% to 26%.
Good/Very Good understanding increased from 4% to 72%.

Lessons Learned:

- There is a significant unmet demand for training and education around a human rights-based approach, and tools of the Charter.
- Training is an effective way to increase awareness of the Charter and upskill the workforce to help implement it.
- Empowering people through education and training is an essential part of ensuring that any human rights-based approach is embedded across Scotland.
- Rights-holders need a better understanding of their entitlements to experience the full benefits of the Charter and existing standards, guidelines, and legislation.
- Accredited advocacy graduates report feeling more equipped to use human rights-based arguments, to support people across Scotland, and defend their rights.

Recommendations for Others:

- A unified approach is essential for ensuring that these rights are implemented effectively across all sectors.
- Knowledge and skills training related to a human rights-based approach are required for rights-holders, duty bearers, and rights defenders.