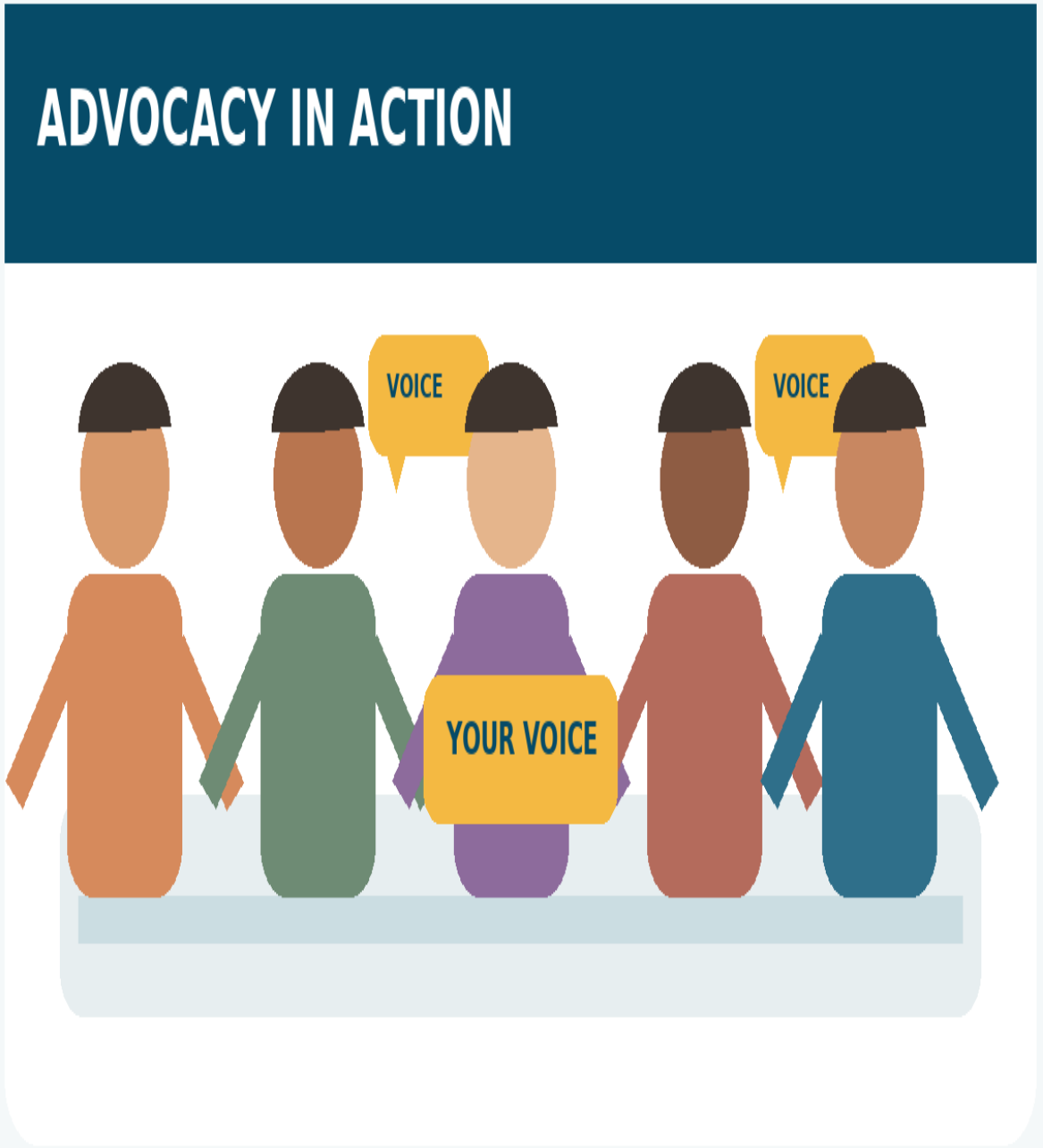
THE ROLE OF ADVOCACY

within Rehab Group

Amplifying voices • supporting choice • challenging exclusion

A visual introduction to how advocacy work from individual voice to national action

September 2026



What is advocacy?

Advocacy aims to challenge exclusion and promote inclusion.

SELF-ADVOCACY

Speaking up for yourself, your rights, wishes and choices.

GROUP / PEER

People working together around shared experiences or concerns.

REPRESENTATIVE

A person or group communicates the views of others.



Source: Rehab Group, Advocacy webpage

Why advocacy matters



RIGHTS

People understand and express their rights.

CHOICE

People influence decisions about their lives.

VOICE

Lived experience informs services and policy.

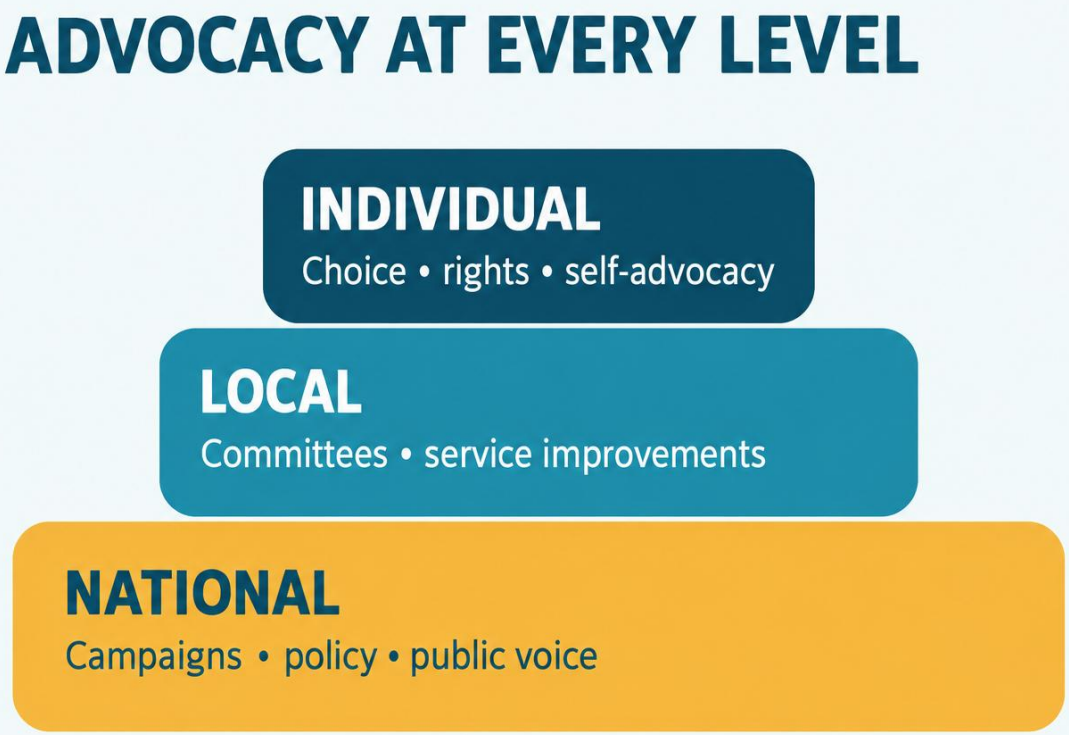
INCLUSION

Barriers can be identified and challenged.

Source: Rehab Group, Mission and Advocacy webpages

Advocacy happens at every level

The aim is to make sure people's voices are heard throughout the organisation.



Individual

Self-advocacy, individual issues, rights and choices.

Local

Local Advocacy Committees identify and address service-level issues.

National

National representation, campaigns, consultations and engagement.

Source: Rehab Group, Advocacy webpage

Local Advocacy Committees

Local voice • practical change • feedback

- People using local services elect representatives.
- Members listen to peers and bring issues forward.
- Committees work with staff and managers on improvements.
- Examples include access, quiet spaces, activities and local events.



The key question: “What matters to people here?”

Source: Rehab Group, Advocacy webpage

Annual National Advocacy Conference





NATIONAL ADVOCACY

From lived experience to national conversations

- National Advocacy Conference brings people together to discuss issues that affect their lives.
- National representatives engage with senior leadership and the Board.
- Advocacy can feed into consultations, submissions and public campaigns.
- In 2026, more than 200 people attended the National Advocacy Conference.

Source: Rehab Group, National Advocacy Conference webpage (2025)

The role of the Advocacy Officer

Supporting people to advocate for themselves and each other



LISTEN

Hear concerns, views and ideas.

SUPPORT

Help people develop advocacy skills.

CONNECT

Link people with managers, services and relevant organisations.

FACILITATE

Support local and regional meetings and work plans.

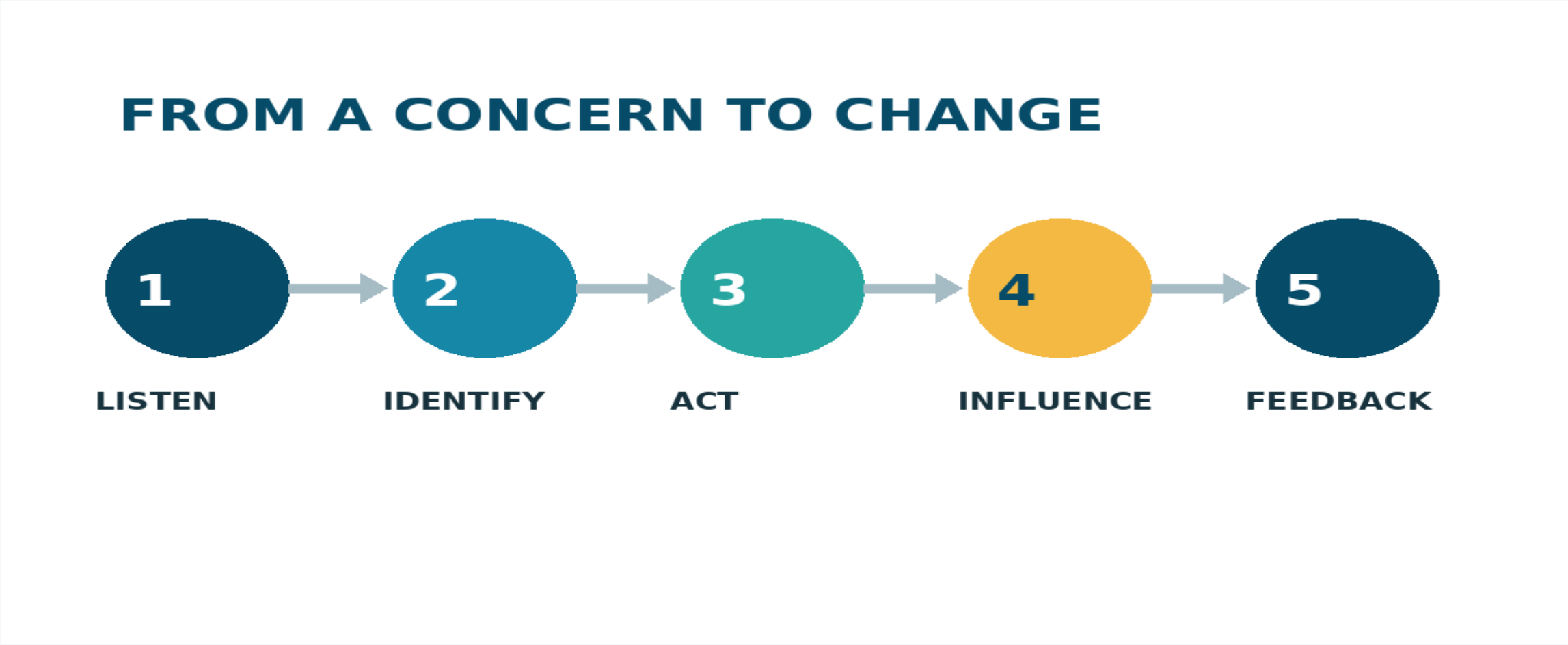
INDIVIDUAL

Support advocacy cases and referrals.

CONSULT

Gather and reflect people's views in consultations.

Source: Rehab Group, The role of an Advocacy Officer



GOOD ADVOCACY IS A PROCESS

Listen → understand → act → communicate back what happened.

What can advocacy change?

HOUSING

Access to suitable, safe and appropriate homes.

TRANSPORT

Accessible ways to reach work, education and community life.

EMPLOYMENT

Equal opportunity, reasonable supports and inclusive workplaces.

HEALTH

Accessible communication and fair access to healthcare.

COST OF LIVING

Issues such as hidden disability-related costs.

ACCESSIBILITY

Information, buildings, services and community participation.

Examples reflect issues raised through Rehab Group advocacy activity and campaigns.

Advocacy and organisational culture

Inclusion means being heard







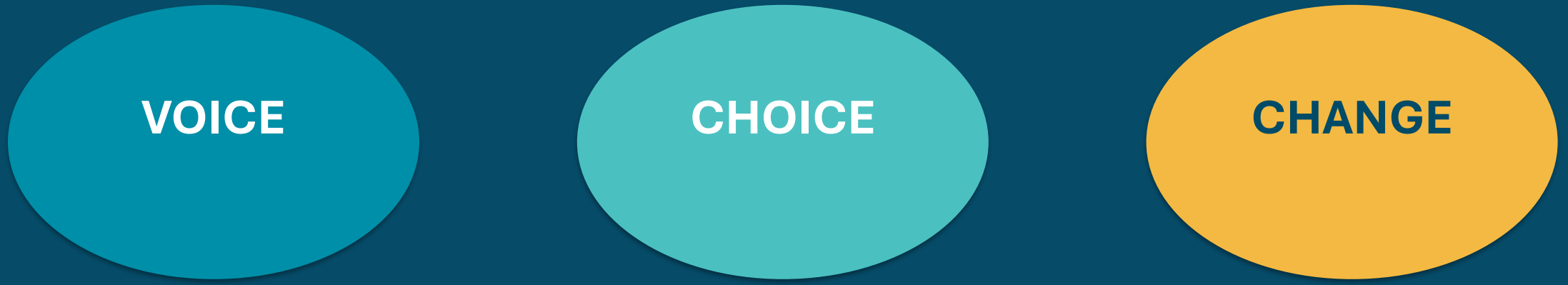
- Rights-based practice becomes part of everyday service delivery.
- People are supported to participate in decisions that affect them.
- Feedback can strengthen services and improve accountability.
- Lived experience is treated as valuable knowledge.

Advocacy is not an add-on — it is a way of working.

Source: Rehab Group, Mission and Advocacy webpages

THE ROLE OF ADVOCACY

is to help people have a voice, exercise choice and influence change.



When people are heard, services and systems can respond to what matters in real life.

Based on current Rehab Group advocacy information • September 2026

Sources & further reading

Rehab Group — Advocacy
https://rehab.ie/what-we-do/advocacy/

Rehab Group — The role of an Advocacy Officer
https://rehab.ie/what-we-do/advocacy/the-role-of-an-advocacy-officer/

Rehab Group — National Advocacy Conference
https://rehab.ie/what-we-do/advocacy/national-advocacy-conference/

Rehab Group — Mission & Values
https://rehab.ie/what-we-do/our-mission/

Rehab Group — Advocacy and self-advocacy submission
https://rehab.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Submission-to-the-Oireachtas-Disability-Matters-Committee-MARCH-24.pdf

All organisational facts in this presentation are drawn from Rehab Group sources. Examples are presented for discussion rather than as a complete list.