

How to Write a Self-Advocacy Email:

The Benefits:

- Writing an email gives you time to consider what you want to say and how you want to say it;
- Communicating via email takes away any risk that you may be overcome by emotion or nerves and not be able to communicate your needs clearly and respectfully;
- An email creates a paper trail which records the relevant details of the communication: date, time, what was said etc.;
- An email will be very promptly delivered and provides you with the option of a read receipt to ensure it has been received by the recipient.

The Process:

- Make sure the email address you have is correct and will definitely go to the right person;
- The subject line is very important, it needs to give information on what the email is about but also ensure the recipient won't delete or ignore the email. An example might be "Concerns about service delivery";
- Begin your email by addressing the person who is receiving it, for example: "Dear Mr Helper";
- The next step is to write the body of your email. Try to keep it short, factual and to the point:
 - The first paragraph should introduce who you are and why you are writing;
 - The following few paragraphs should detail the issue, how it is impacting you, and what you have already done to try and resolve it;
 - The last paragraph should include a very brief recap of the problem, and what you hope to get out of writing your email. Here you could also include any alternate contact options, such as your phone number.
- Finally end your email simply by stating: "Sincerely" or "Regards", before including your name.

Things to Remember:

- Try to keep your email as short as possible, without missing any important information;
- Have someone you trust to read over the email to check for any mistakes, make sure you have said everything that's important, and that your email is respectful;
- Always keep a copy of any emails that you send for your own records;
- Remember that emails can be forwarded to anyone without your knowledge or consent.

Example Only

From: Hevi Rekani <hevi.rekani@hearne.com.au>

Sent: Thursday, 12 May 2022 1:08 PM

To: Will Helper <w.helper@allabilities.org.au>

Subject: Service Delivery Concern

Dear Mr. Helper,

My name is Hevi and I have been a client of your service for the past 18 months. In that time I have made use of support workers from your service to help me attend my therapy appointments in the community. I am writing to you as I have become unhappy with the service that I have been receiving recently.

At first I was very happy with the service. I was getting consistent support workers that were always on time and very helpful. In the past few months, I have had a different support worker nearly every week and they are often late.

I have rung three times in the past month and spoken with Bronwyn on reception. Each time she told me she wasn't sure who was rostered on for me that day so couldn't help with providing contact details for that person, so I would just have to wait until they arrived. On the third occasion, I said I wasn't happy with this response and asked to speak to someone else but was told there was no-one else to speak with. I am starting to feel very stressed each day that I have an appointment, not knowing whether or not I will be able to get to it on time.

The inconsistency and lateness of your staff is impacting me negatively and I am hoping for things to improve so that I don't have to find a new support service. Could I please ask that you contact me by phone (0404 XXX XXX) to discuss how things can be improved so that I am receiving a better service from your organisation.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Hevi Rekani