

**Cwm Taf Morgannwg Independent Advocacy Service
RCT Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers
Report**

Quarter Three October 2023 – December 2023

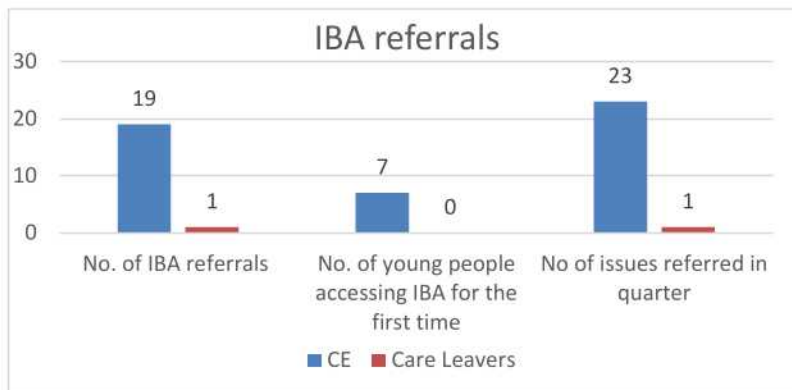


Activity Overview

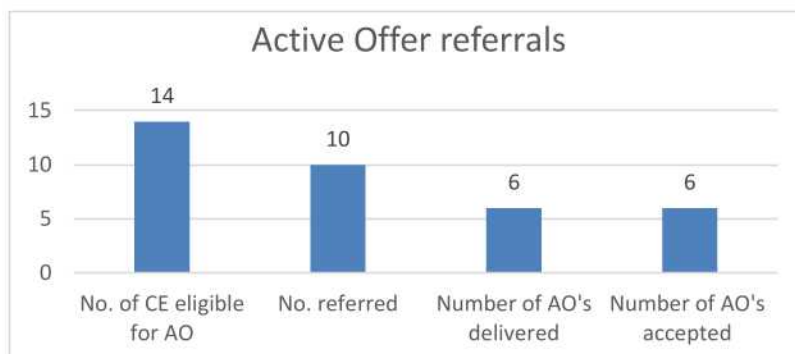
In quarter three, 54 young people accessed Issue Based Advocacy (IBA) and 39 young people were referred for the Active Offer (AO) across RCT.

This report provides information on the service delivered to care experienced (CE) young people and care leavers only.

In quarter three, 19 CE young people accessed IBA, the same number as in the previous quarter. Those 19 young people presented with 23 issues. One Care leaver also accessed IBA in quarter three, presenting with one issue. 10 care experienced young people were referred for the AO, one less than in quarter two. Two looked young people are recorded in AO figures, although they became eligible for the AO via the CP pathway.



In quarter three, seven of the 19 CE young people accessing IBA were doing so for the first time.



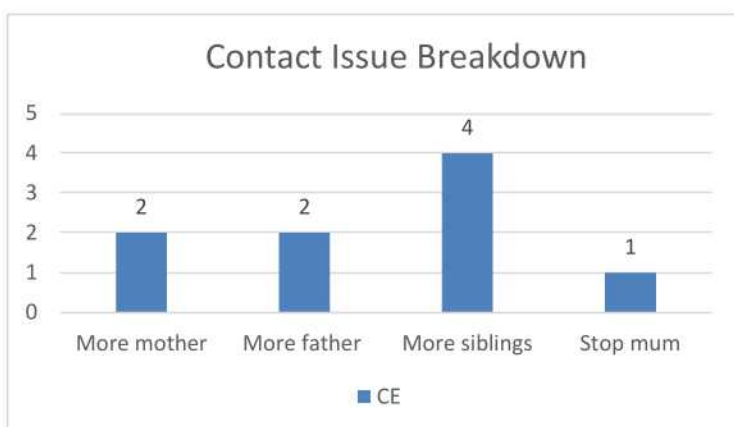
Nine of the CE young people referred for AO in quarter three became eligible for AO in the same quarter while one became eligible in quarter two.

Only one of the 14 young people who became eligible for AO via the CLA pathway were recorded as rejecting the opportunity to receive the AO in quarter three. There was no reason recorded.

Five young people are recorded as accepting the opportunity to meet with an advocate and all five were referred for AO. Two young people were recorded as not being offered the opportunity to receive the AO as they had received advocacy support previously. They were however referred for AO during quarter three. We do not know if the six remaining eligible CE young people have been offered the opportunity to receive the AO by their social worker as this is not recorded on the spreadsheet provided by RCT, although we note it is likely this information will be available in the coming months. This means 63% of eligible C.E. young people were referred in quarter three, compared to 38% in the previous quarter.



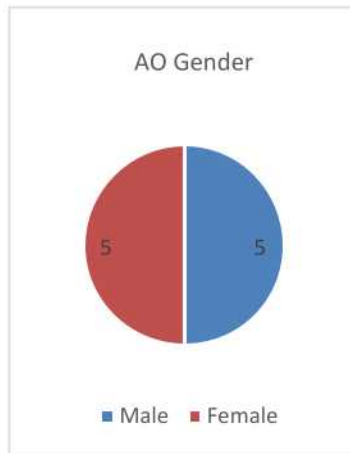
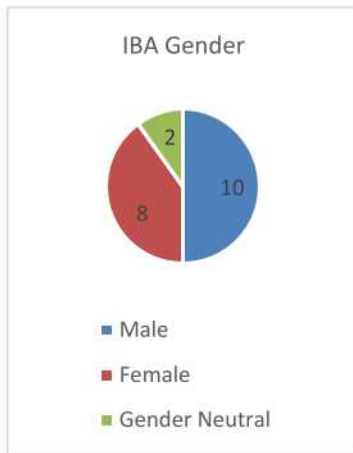
The most popular issues in need of advocacy support in quarter three, were placement followed by contact issues and school issues. We have plans to collect more detailed information in relation to placement issues in coming quarters.



Five young people presented with contact issues, and some of those five wanted to share feelings about more than one person. In quarter three, five young people shared their feelings about time spent with nine different individuals or group of individuals. The most popular issue was young people wanting to spend more time with their siblings.

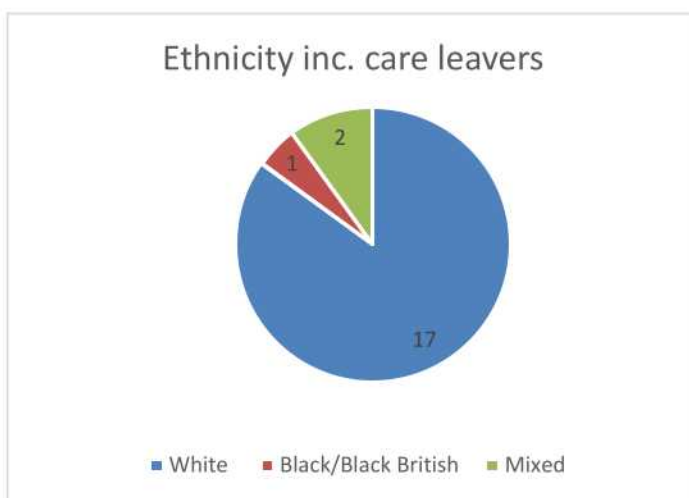


'Self-referral' and social services referrals continue to be the most popular route into the IBA service for care experienced young people. Self-referral is usually either the result of the young person accepting the AO and going on to received IBA, or the young person contacting their advocate directly with a new issue.

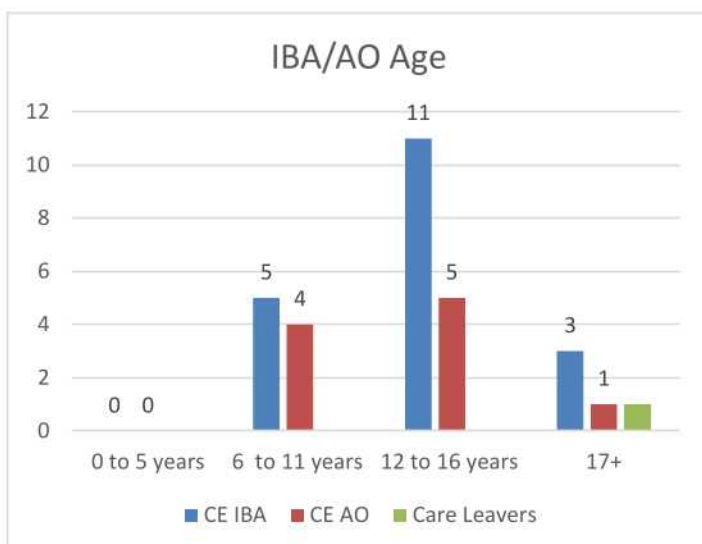


Males made up fifty percent of CE IBA referrals. Two gender neutral young people were also referred for IBA in quarter three.

AO referrals were again split evenly between males and females.



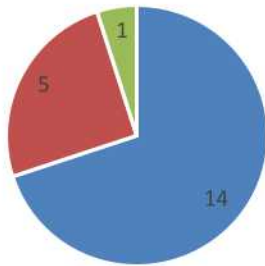
Most CE young people accessing advocacy services in quarter three described themselves as white.



Most young people accessing IBA in quarter three were aged between 12 and 16 years. We observed an increase in young people aged 17 and over accessing IBA in quarter three.

The majority of CE young people referred for AO were aged between 12 and 16 years, a change from the previous quarter when most young people were aged under 12.

IBA Legal Status



■ Care Order ■ S.76
■ Care Leaver

AO Legal Status

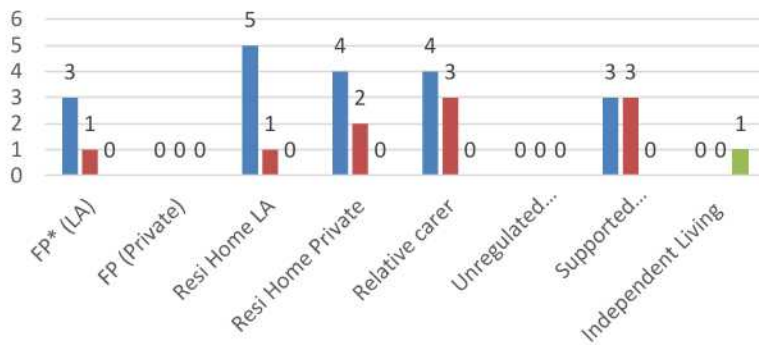


■ Care Order ■ S.76
■ UASC ■ SGO

Most CE young people accessing IBA in quarter three were again subject to full care orders. Three unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people accessed IBA In quarter three.

Two unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people were referred for AO in quarter three.

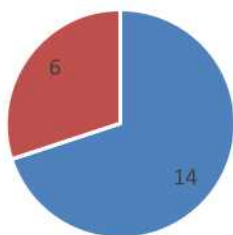
IBA/AO Type of Placement



■ IBA ■ AO ■ Care Leavers

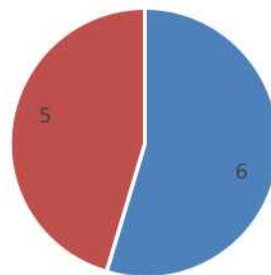
Most CE young people accessing advocacy services in quarter two were living with relatives or in residential care.

IBA Area inc. Care Leavers



■ RCTCBC ■ Out of county

AO Area



■ RCTCBC ■ Out of county

Advocates supported six CE young people living outside of RCT in quarter three. Other areas included Swansea, Bridgend, Carmarthenshire, and Gwynedd.

Three CE young person referred for AO lived outside of RCT, in Carmarthenshire and Swansea.

Other information

Four CE young people with additional needs were referred for IBA in quarter three. Two have diagnosis of ASD, one has a diagnosis ADHD along with Tourette's, while another young person was described as having severe mental health issues.

Visiting Advocacy

Residential Visiting Advocacy (RVA) continues in five Local Authority community homes across RCT. Face-to-face visits have continued monthly in Bryndar and Beddau. The remaining three homes, Carn Ingli, Nantygwyn and Ty Brynna have advised monthly visits are not appropriate and have requested the advocate visits every two months and stays connected via telephone contact instead. The RVA advocate is currently providing IBA to two young people living in RCT community homes.

A review of the RVA services was postponed previously to allow us to concentrate on recruitment and advocacy capacity. We had hoped to continue this piece of work during quarter three, but unfortunately, due to staff changes detailed in service information we have not been able to continue this work. We hope to restart this piece of work when the team is back at full capacity following recruitment in January and February 2024.

Service Information

The (C.E.) young people and Care Leavers advocacy quarterly progress report was shared at RCT Corporate Parenting Panel at the beginning of July.

The advocacy team manager was invited to the LAC Nurse team meeting in July but unfortunately the meeting was cancelled. Information about advocacy referral routes were shared with the team and we hope to be invited to attend a future meeting.

Following recruitment in quarter one, three new team members joined the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Advocacy Service in quarter two. These are, one full-time advocate, one senior advocate who will work 30 hours per week along with a new casual advocate. Unfortunately, we have experienced some sickness within the team in quarter two, with one full time advocate and the senior advocate having to take extended leave following medical procedures. Both team members are due to return within the next three to four weeks from which time, we are confident recent capacity issues will be addressed and allow us to respond effectively to the recent increase in advocacy referrals.

Conclusion and looking forward.

We are pleased to observe consistency in both IBA and AO referrals for CE young people in quarter three and note another increase in the percentage of eligible CE young people being referred for AO. We appreciate the detailed information regarding the AO take up we receive from the LA and will continue to keep in contact with RCT and share information with a view to understanding the take up of advocacy services in the area.

Case Example

Please find below an example of advocacy work undertaken during the quarter from within RCT. The names have been changed to protect the young person's identity.

Situation: Kadim is a 17-year-old asylum seeking young person who was referred by his social worker for the Active Offer. Kadim had recently arrived in the UK, after traveling from Sudan across several other countries in Africa and Europe. The referral stated there was a possibility Kadim would be the subject to an age assessment. Kadim lives in a specialist provision outside of RCT.

Action: The advocate contacted Kadim's placement to arrange a visit, and staff explained Kadim attends college but is home on Friday. They also advised an interpreter would not be needed for the initial meeting as Kadim had sufficient English language use and understanding. The advocate arranged to visit Kadim the following Friday to deliver the AO. Although Kadim understood and accepted the AO, the advocate felt an interpreter would be beneficial, and offered to arrange one for the next visit. Kadim agreed, and confirmed Friday at his placement was his preferred choice for future advocacy visits.

Kadim explained to the advocate that he was struggling to get his allowance and couldn't buy any clothes. The advocate contacted Kadim's social worker, and they were able to rectify this quite quickly. Kadim also wanted the advocate to support him with his upcoming CLA Review, mainly to find out why his monetary allowance from social services was less than some of the other young people living in his placement. Following the CLA Review, the advocate visited Kadim again and explained to him that different LA's allocate different amounts of money to people in his situation. Although Kadim was still unhappy about this, he was reassured that it was not his social worker who decided the amount of money allocated to him. Following advice from the CLA Review, the advocate also contacted Kadim's college to enquire about his course to see if he would be eligible for the equivalent of an EMA and shared the relevant information with his SW.

Outcome: Although Kadim was unhappy about receiving less money than some of his peers, he was reassured that his was not the decision of his social worker. Kadim is also feeling happier about his financial situation now that he knows he will be eligible for the equivalent of an EMA once attendance at college can be confirmed and knows that he can contact his advocate for support if any further issues arise.