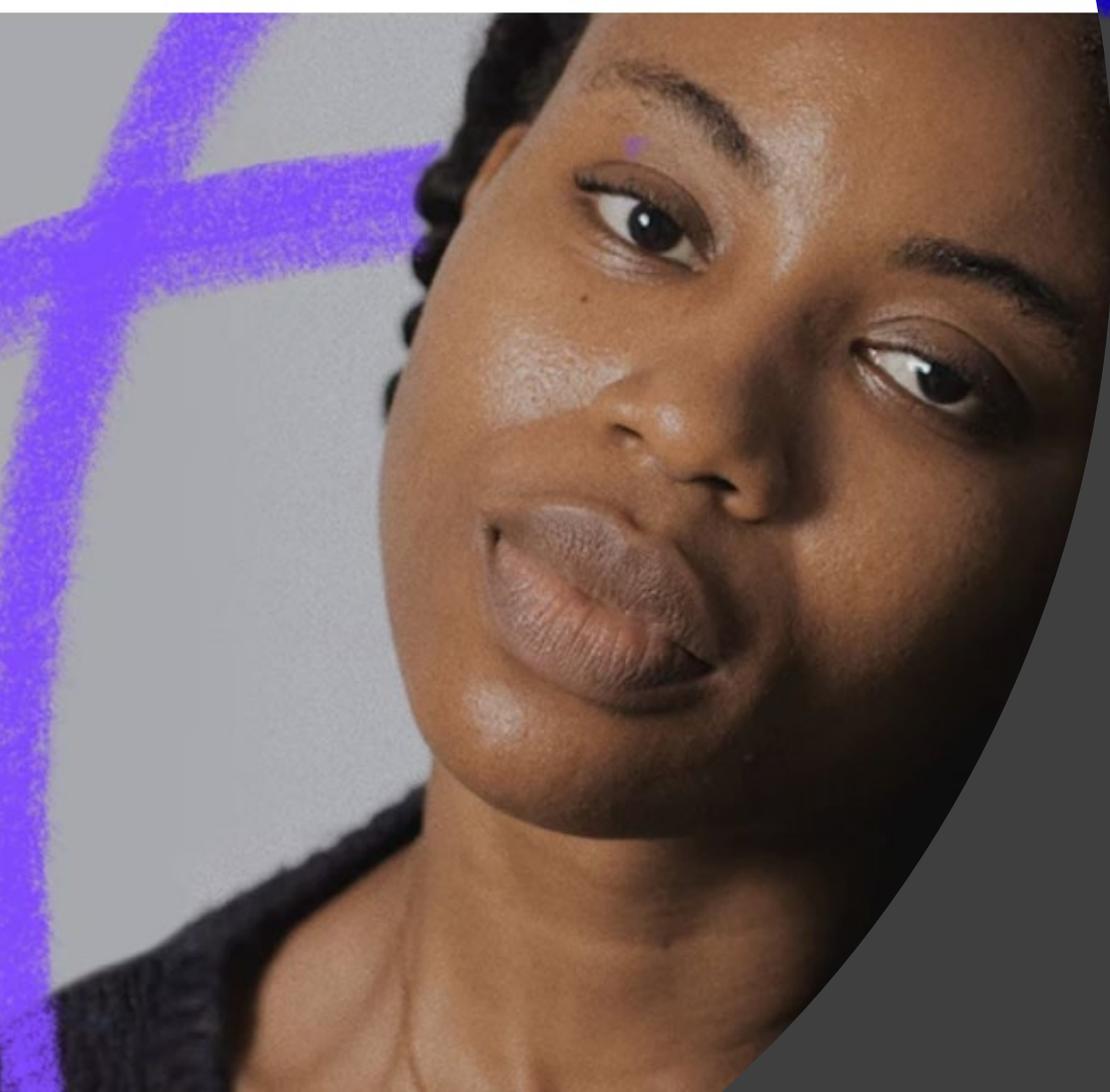


Advocacy in Mental Health

**Rheian Davies
Head of Legal**



What we do

Largest MH charity in the UK

- We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.
- We campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.
- We **won't give up** until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets **support and respect**.

We are Mind



What I do

Bring strategic litigation
in areas that affect our
beneficiaries.

Oversee a MH legal
helpline

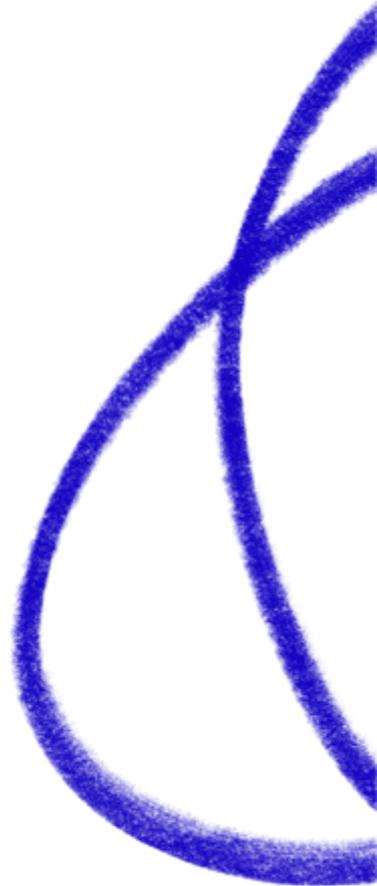
Information products
and legal writing

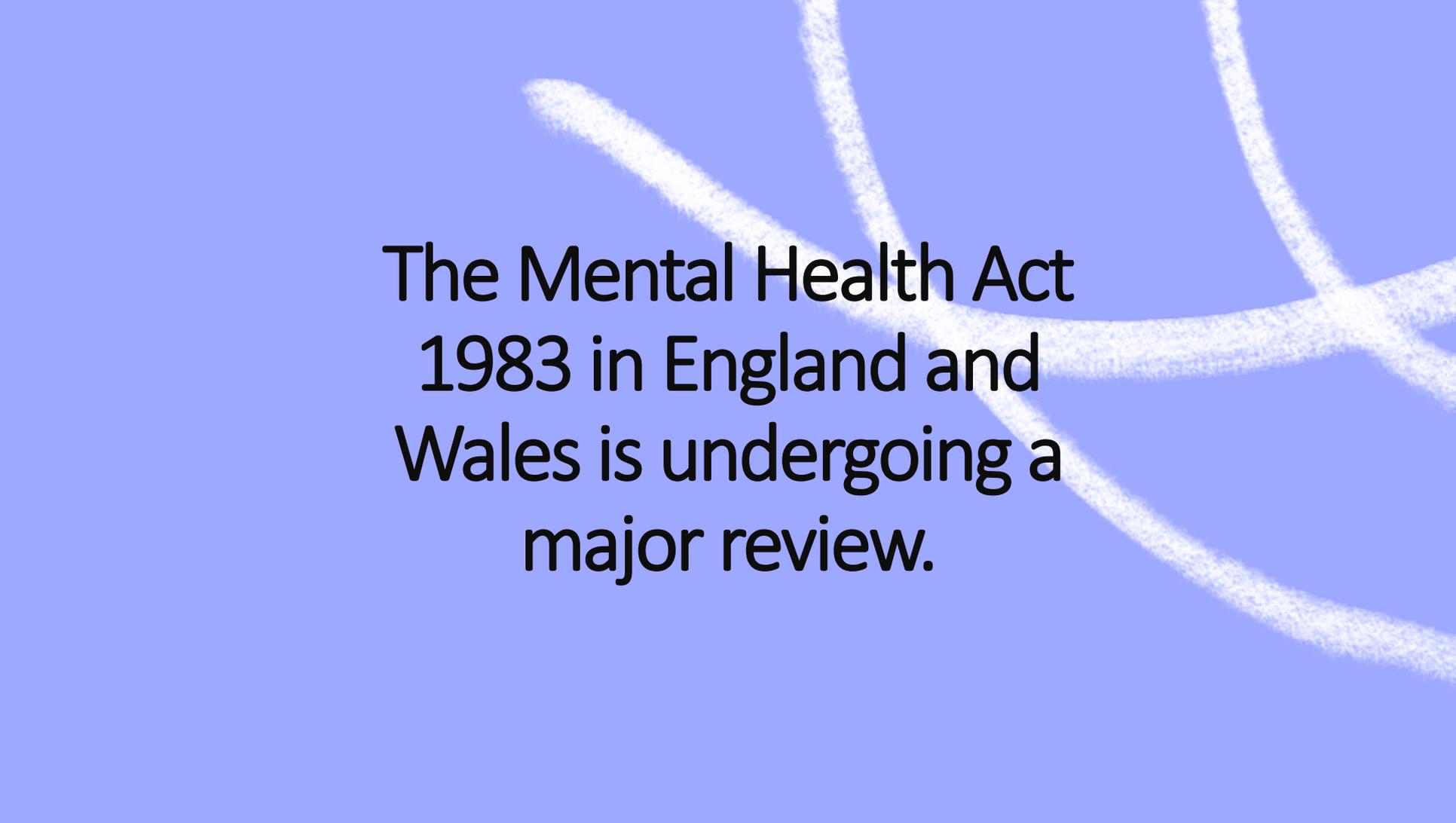
Internal advice

Had a previous
professional life as a
psychiatric nurse for 15
years.

Mental Health Advocacy in England and Wales

- If you are hospitalised for a mental health problem there will often be a number of decisions to be made.
 - What medication do you need? What steps can you take to try to leave hospital? What care and treatment will you have when you are discharged back into the community?
 - You may not feel at your best to understand your options or articulate your wishes
 - Health professionals may not be listening to you
 - In **England** you are only entitled to be supported by an IMHA in certain circumstances when you are subject to the Mental Health Act or where certain treatments are being considered.
 - In **Wales** you are also entitled to an IMHA if you are a voluntary patient not subject to the Mental Health Act.

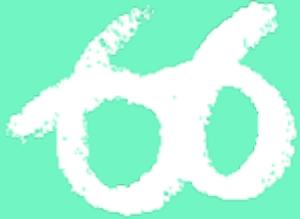




The Mental Health Act
1983 in England and
Wales is undergoing a
major review.

Sir Simon Wesley

Introduction to the Mental Health Act Review



“If I was asked to name the most important theme [of the Review] it would be this - patients must be supported to make more choices for themselves”.

He went on to say that access to advocacy was an integral part of supporting patients to make choices for themselves, and that this was essential to upholding their dignity.



The Review recommends that advocacy should be provided to all patients on an "opt-out" basis.

Recommendations

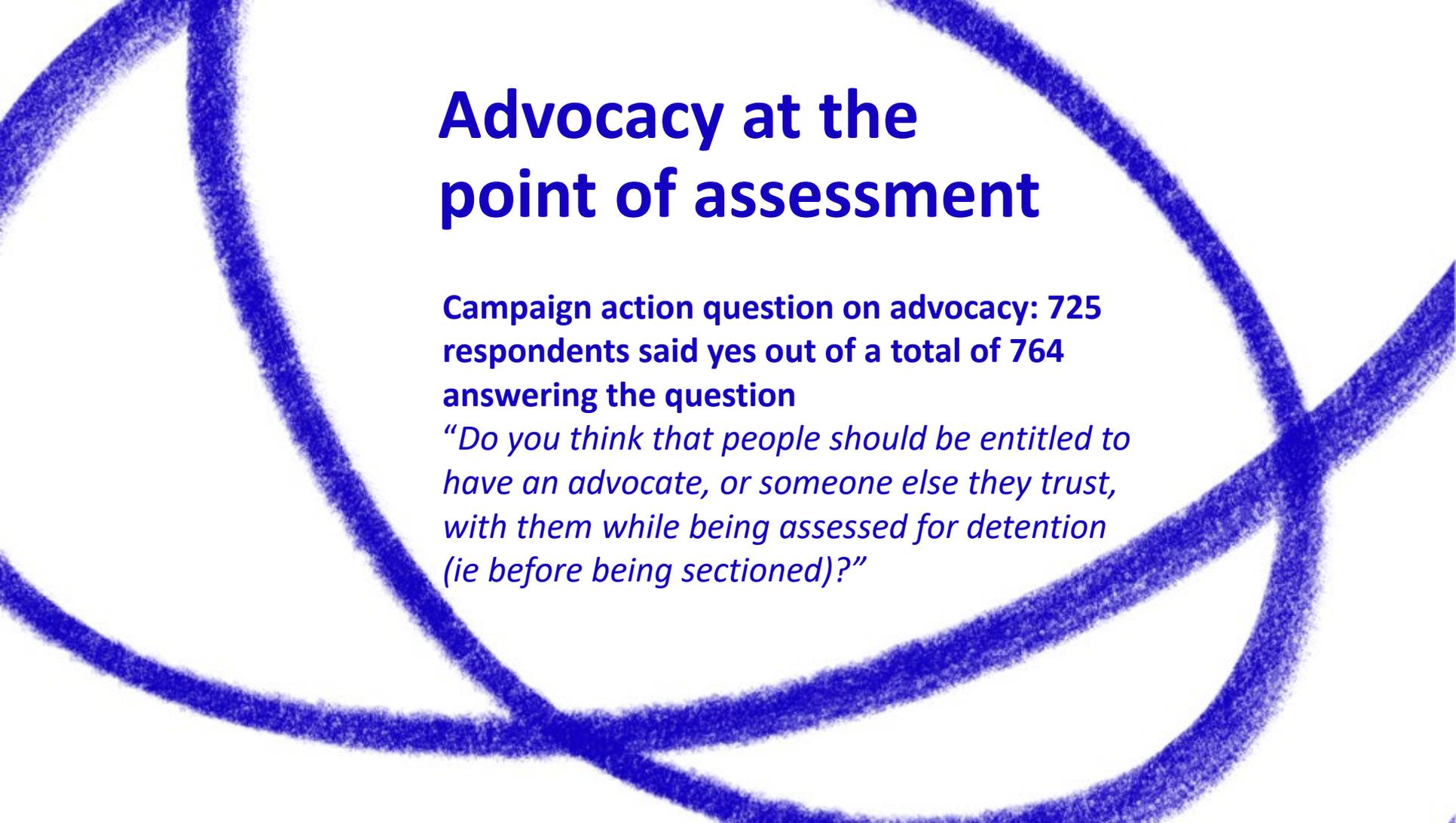
This will mean that those entitled to an advocate will be automatically referred to one rather than having to request one, and advocates will regularly visit wards to speak to patients.

Advocacy for all?



- We know that patients from black communities are over represented in hospitalisations and compulsory detention in Britain.
- 3-4 times for black communities
- 18 times for those describing themselves as black British born (*McKenzie 2021*)
- The Mental Health Act Review is recommending that advocacy is extended and that 'culturally competent advocacy' is available for racialised communities.





Advocacy at the point of assessment

Campaign action question on advocacy: 725 respondents said yes out of a total of 764 answering the question

“Do you think that people should be entitled to have an advocate, or someone else they trust, with them while being assessed for detention (ie before being sectioned)?”



Would it interfere with the
therapeutic interview?

Or be a valuable voice in
decision making?