

Question: How have you been supported to advocate or self-advocate to support your human rights?

1. My name is Justyna and I am a member of the Grassroots Forum of Mental Health Reform. I am also a decision support champion for the Assisted Decision-Making Act. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

2. I am a migrant woman with mental health difficulties. Today is important because we want to make sure that people with psychosocial disabilities and invisible disabilities are not forgotten in discussions about human rights and the UNCRPD.

3. I have had to advocate for myself in mental health services and something that would improve this for migrant people is access to interpreters and translators.

4. There should also be a legal right to independent advocacy. There is an opportunity to make this happen in the reform of the Mental Health Act, which will be introduced before the summer recess.

5. Advocacy services should be fully funded. Cairde is an organisation working with migrants and providing mental health supports in different languages.

6. We worked on a Cultural Competency Toolkit with Mental Health Reform.

7. In my experience, there should be more training for people providing services to people with mental health difficulties. For example, people working in social welfare offices should be trained in human rights and the UNCRPD and in cultural competencies.

8. There should be more opportunities for employment for people with mental health difficulties and psychosocial disabilities. Some people don't even know that they can report discrimination to the Workplace Relations Commission.

9. When you are experiencing a mental health difficulty it can be very hard

to self-advocate. Sometimes, I felt that I was not being listened to.

10. The Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act should make things better, but some people with mental health difficulties are still excluded from these legal protections. That is unfair and would not be accepted in other areas of life.

11. Finally, there is not enough support for advocates and advocacy and that means that we cannot access all of our human rights.

12. Please help us to change this. Thank you.