Handout 16: Tensions: Advocacy and the Development and Maintenance of Professional Relationships

Sometimes the fear of the development of tension and conflict within an organisation and with other workers in the community services industry can act as an inhibitor to advocacy.

There are some areas that require consideration and effort. It is therefore important to:

- Be clear on what it is you want to achieve
- Seek discussions with your workplace colleagues and identify ways of persuading colleagues or management members
- Conduct some research to ensure that the issue is of “client significance” and that of the workers
- Research outcomes will need to include the identification of the issues, who it affects, how many it affects, the impact on those affected, what you propose to do about it, and with whom
- Ensure information provided is done so in a courteous and professional manner
- Ensure the message sent is about change NOT ABOUT them
- Seek ways of working together in the interests of the “common good”
- Share tasks, costs and work out ways to share the decision-making process around strategies
- Ensure that clients are actively involved, or at least have that choice presented to them.