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SOUTHWEST ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION INC.

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CLIENT AUTHORITY

Explanation

- Name of Advocate
- Explain rights and responsibilities of advocate (see overleaf)
- List similar matters (see overleaf)
- Name of advocate
- Specific rights arise from the Information Privacy Act 2000, Freedom of Information Act 1982 & the Health Records Act 2001

Through this authority I appoint _____

of Southwest Advocacy Association as my advocate in the matter of

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

This authorisation gives him/her the right to speak, act or write on my behalf as is deemed necessary.

I give _____ my permission to seek and gain access to any information or documents held by you that I am entitled to.

Please release to my advocate those documents and that information to which I have access rights.

This authority is valid until _____ (date)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

(optional) _____

Note to Client

Thank you for agreeing to sign a Client Authority for Southwest Advocacy Association.

Our advocates are better able to assist you when they have one of these Authorities, as some agencies (e.g. Centrelink, hospitals, solicitors, local councils, etc.) will not release information or documents to anyone but the person named in them. The Authority you signed gives permission to our advocates to ask for these documents and information.

You have the right to withdraw your permission at any time. Please inform SWAA if you wish to revoke this Client Authority.

Our advocates have been trained to make sure that any documents or information that they receive is kept safe, secure and private.

If you have any problems about this, please ask our Advocate, Co-ordinator or the President of Southwest Advocacy.

Note to SWAA staff

You must explain to the client the purpose of the Authority, and what it entitles you to do on the clients behalf, before they sign their Authority.

1. The purpose of an Authority is to provide written proof that the client has appointed you as their advocate in a certain matter.

Advocates have the power to do whatever the person signing the Authority (the 'principal') has the power to do, within the context of the terms of the Authority. For example, if a client signs the Authority appointing you as advocate for a child protection issue, you cannot rely upon the Authority to seek information from a bank regarding their bank account balance.

Advocates have a responsibility to consult with their principals (the Client) wherever possible. The power to decide remains with the Client; the advocate acts within the terms of the instructions given.

Ensure that Client instructions are clear and are recorded in writing on the SWAA Client File. You may even wish to have the client sign the recorded instructions.

2. Where the Client has numerous subject areas to be addressed, many matters may be covered by one Authority (list them all), but several Authorities should be used for unconnected subjects.
3. You should advise the Client of the meaning of the Authority and refer them to the various Acts which give rise to information access rights. Clients must also be provided with the SWAA Privacy Statement.

Clients must sign in pen or permanent ink, in their own handwriting, using their usual name.

4. It is essential that you make duplicate copies of this Authority; one for the Client's record and one for Agency records.

Please keep signed Authorities in a safe and secure place until they are used.