Shared Lives Guidance

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**Shared Lives Scheme Guide**

**This Guide will tell you about Shared Lives and the Shared Lives scheme**

PSS Shared Lives scheme

**If you have any questions about what you read or you want further information about Shared Lives arrangements you are welcome to contact:**

**(Contact name, address and telephone number of Shared Lives scheme**

**Name**

**Address**

**Telephone No.**

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*(Insert Information about the Shared Lives scheme, its aims and objectives and the range of services it provides. This can be summarised from the Statement of Purpose.)*

**Equal Opportunities**

*(Insert Equal Opportunities statement / summary of Shared Lives scheme policy)*

**What is a Shared Lives arrangement?**

A Shared Lives arrangement can be:

* somewhere to live
* somewhere to stay for a short break
* somewhere to go for day time support

In Shared Lives arrangements you are supported by someone called a Shared Lives carer who will share their home with you and include you as part of their family.

There are lots of different kinds of Shared Lives carers. Some are couples and some are single people, some have children, some provide support to more than one person.

All Shared Lives carers are part of a Shared Lives scheme. The Shared Lives scheme is registered with the Care Quality Commission / Care and Social Schemes Inspectorate for Wales / Care Inspectorate Scotland / RQIA for Northern Ireland.

Your Shared Lives worker can tell you more about this.

The Registered Provider for this Shared Lives scheme is:

Name

Address

Tel. No

**What can a Shared Lives arrangement offer me?**

**In a Shared Lives arrangement:**

**YOU** will have chosen your own Shared Lives carer(s).

**YOU** will share a home, which will be clean and well looked after.

**YOU** will be part of your local community.

**YOU** will have the company of other people but also have your own independence as an adult.

**YOU** will be able to meet new people and make new friends.

**YOU** can get the support you need to do things you choose to do.

**YOU** can learn new skills.

**YOUR Shared Lives** carers will respect you, and support you to make choices and decisions and be in control of your own life.

**What does our Shared Lives scheme do?**

**The Shared Lives scheme:**

1. Finds people who want to be Shared Lives carers:

* We do lots of checks (including checks with the police) to make sure that they are safe
* We make sure they are the right kind of people to be Shared Lives carers and have the skills to support you properly
* We give them training and other opportunities to continue to develop their skills and knowledge

1. Matches you with Shared Lives carers who we think will be right for you.
2. Introduces you to Shared Lives carers, and helps you get to know each other by spending time together (including overnight stays if you are going to live or have short breaks in the Shared Lives carer’s home).

When you have decided which Shared Lives carers are right for you, we write a **Service User Plan** and a **Shared Lives Arrangement Agreement** together with you**.** These explain the details about the support you will be provided with, and you will have a copy of both documents.

After you have begun your Shared Lives arrangement a Shared Lives worker from the Shared Lives scheme will visit you and the Shared Lives carer regularly to make sure things are going well, and to help you and your Shared Lives carers sort out any difficulties.

We make sure that reviewmeetingsare held regularly (at least once a year) to talk about whether you or your Shared Lives carers want to change anything about the arrangement.

**Who do I tell if I would like a Shared Lives arrangement?**

You could tell your **Social Worker** or **Care Manager** if you have one, or another supporter.

You could also tell a **Relative** or **Friend** so that they can find the right person to help you.

**Can I choose my Shared Lives carers?**

**YES!**

1. We will tell you about Shared Lives carers who we think you might get on well with.
   * We will tell you where they live
   * We will tell you about their house
   * We will tell you how many other people live there and how old they are
   * We will tell you what they enjoy doing and whether they have any pets
2. If you would like to, we will then arrange for you to meet up to see what you both think.
3. You can bring someone else with you if you want to.
4. Sometimes you may need to meet a few different Shared Lives carers before we find the right one for you.

**How will the Shared Lives carers know about me?**

Your **Social Worker** or **Care Manager and Shared Lives worker** will talk with you so that you can work out together what you want the Shared Lives carers to know about you and what they need to know about you to support you properly.

It will help if you can tell them things like:

* what you do during the day
* what you like doing in the evening and at weekends
* which people are important to you
* what things you need support with each day

Information given to your Shared Lives carers is confidential. It will only be shared with other people if this is necessary in order to support you properly or keep you safe. Your Shared Lives carers will discuss with you if they may need to share any information and the reasons why. There is more about this in our policy on Confidentiality.

**How will my Shared Lives carers support me?**

This depends on what you need and want. Your Shared Lives carers can support you with all sorts of things, such as:

* making a cup of tea or learning to cook
* washing your hair or getting dressed
* taking your medication
* managing your money
* going out
* doing things that you enjoy

Your Shared Lives carers will know what things you need support with and how you would like this to be done because we write these things down in your **Service User Plan**.

**Will I have to keep to lots of rules?**

**NO** –

There may be a few rules that everyone sharing the house is asked to keep. For example:

* not smoking in the house or (if you are staying there) in your bedroom
* helping to clear up after meals
* not playing loud music (especially late at night)

If you do not agree with the house rules you may decide these are not the right Shared Lives carers for you.

There may also be a few other rules that will be to help you to stay safe and will be written down in your **Service User Plan.** These will be discussed and agreed with you beforeyou decide to go ahead with a Shared Lives arrangement.

**Will my Shared Lives carers get paid?**

**YES –**

Shared Lives carers will be paid some money for providing you with the support or accommodation or food that you need. The total amount can be between £…………. and £………. per week. Some of that money usually comes from your Local Authority and can be paid directly by the Local Authority to the Shared Lives carer, or you may be given a personal budget for this.

You will need to pay some of your own benefits or wages towards the cost of your Shared Lives arrangement too. You will be told exactly how much before you decide to go ahead with the arrangement, and it will be written in your Shared Lives Arrangement Agreement.

Extra payments may be made for *…………………[list items]*. You will be told how much this will be if it applies to you.

We do make sure that you still have enough money so that you can buy things for yourself, and do things you want to do.

**Will I be able to spend my own money?**

**YES –**

The money you have left after you have paid your Shared Lives carers is yours to spend on the things you want.

If you find it difficult to manage your money alone, your Shared Lives carers can support you with this if it is agreed as part of your Service User Plan.

**What will my Shared Lives carers write down about me?**

Your Shared Lives carers will write a diary.

You can help with this if you want to.

In the diary your Shared Lives carers will write about what is happening, for example things like:

* appointments for you
* people who come to visit
* times when you are ill

and anything else that happens that is important.

Your Shared Lives carers may also need to write down information about any medicines you have and when you take them.

Information written down is confidential and your Shared Lives carer will keep it in a safe place where other people cannot read it.

**If I am living with the Shared Lives carer:**

**Will I have my own room?**

**YES –**

You will be able to have your own room

**Can I bring my own things with me?**

**YES** –

If you are staying with your Shared Lives carer your bedroom will be furnished but you can bring with you any of your own things you want that will fit into your room.

People will often bring with them a television, computer or stereo

**Can I still do the things that I like doing?**

**YES** –

Your Shared Lives carer will know what you like doing as this will be written in your Service User Plan.

We will try to find a Shared Lives arrangement that is not too far from where you live now so that you can still do the same things that you do now, if you want.

If it is not possible to do the same things we will tell you and, if you want, your Shared Lives carer and Shared Lives worker will support you in finding out what else is available and to try something new.

**Will I still be able to see my family and friends?**

**YES** **-**

This is important and both the Shared Lives scheme and your Shared Lives carers will do everything they can to support you in seeing or staying in touch with your family and friends.

**Will I be able to visit my family?**

**YES -**

If you are living with your Shared Lives carers, you can visit your family whenever it is OK for both of you.

Your Shared Lives carers can help you with arrangements to visit if you want.

**Will my family and friends be able to visit me?**

**Yes –**

Your family and friends will be welcome to visit you while you are staying or living with your Shared Lives carers.

Your Shared Lives carers will make sure that you can see them privately in your own room or in another room in the house.

**What happens if I am not happy about something in my Shared Lives arrangement?**

1. If there is something that you are unhappy about concerning your Shared Lives arrangement, you should, if you can, tell your Shared Lives carers, so that you can sort out the problem together.
2. If there is something you do not want to talk to your Shared Lives carers about, you can tell:
   * a **member of your family** or a **close friend;**
   * your **Social** **Worker** or **Care Manager;**
   * another **supporter**, or
   * your **Shared Lives worker**.

These people will all be able to support you in sorting the problem out.

1. Because the Shared Lives scheme is registered with the Care Quality Commission / Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales / Care Inspectorate Scotland/ RQIA for Northern Ireland, you can also contact them at their local office if you want to say something about your Shared Lives arrangement.

The address and telephone number of their office is:

1. If you have a problem about something to do with your Shared Lives arrangement, you may want to make a complaint. You can do this in any way you want, such as telling someone, phoning, emailing, writing a letter, or using a form.

A Complaints Form is at the back of this booklet in case you need it. We will also give you a copy of our policy on Complaints and Concerns when you first get involved with Shared Lives and you will find information about this in your Shared Lives Agreement too.

If you would like independent support to make a complaint you can ask your Social Worker or Care Manager or Shared Lives worker if you can have an advocate to help with this, or you can ask a family member or friend to help you.

**When do Shared Lives arrangements end?**

Some Shared Lives arrangements last a long time because you and everyone else agree that things are going well for you and your Shared Lives carers. Other arrangements end, and the reasons could be things like:

* You have become more independent and no longer need the support of your Shared Lives carers

or

* Either you or your Shared Lives carers have not been able do the things you both agreed to in your Shared Lives Agreement or Service User Plan

or

* You feel ready for a change

or

* Your Shared Lives carers feel that they are not the right people to support you anymore.

Sometimes, if you or your Shared Lives carers tell us that there has been a very serious problem in your Shared Lives arrangement, we may decide that we need to end the arrangement straight away. If this happens it will be because we have a responsibility to safeguard both you and your carers. In this situation we will work with you and your family and Care Manager to find an alternative service that suits you and to make sure that the change happens as smoothly as possible.

We can try to find you a new Shared Lives arrangement if you want.

**What happens if I do not want to stay in my Shared Lives arrangement any more?**

Sometimes people want to move on from their Shared Lives arrangement and this is OK.

You will need to tell your Social Worker or Care Manager, if you have one, or your Shared Lives worker. You will also need to tell your Shared Lives carer, but if you find it difficult do not worry, your Social Worker or Care Manager or Shared Lives worker will help you do that.

Your Shared Lives carer, Social Worker or Care Manager and your Shared Lives worker will work together and with you to plan how you are going to move on to something new.

We can try to find you a new Shared Lives arrangement if you want.

Often when you have decided that an arrangement should end, you will need to continue with it for a little while longer – this is called a ‘notice period’ and it will say in your Shared Lives Agreement how long this will be. This gives you and everyone else the time they need to make new arrangements.

**Words we use in Shared Lives and what they mean**

**Shared Lives carers**

These are the people you will visit or stay or live with who have been trained and chosen to be Shared Lives carers and are supported by a Shared Lives scheme.

**Shared Lives worker**

The person who gives information and advice to your carers and makes sure your Shared Lives arrangement is working OK for everyone.

**Social Worker or Care Manager**

The person who works for Social Services and is there to support you and to help organise things that you might need like day services and transport. You can contact your Social Worker or Care Manager if you are worried about anything, and do not want to talk to your Shared Lives carer.

**Service User Plan**

This is where we write down lots of information about the ways that you would like your Shared Lives carers and other people to support you during your time in a Shared Lives arrangement.

**Shared Lives Arrangement Agreement**

This is where we write down what kind of service you will receive from the Shared Lives scheme, how much it will cost, and all the things that you, your Shared Lives carers, your Social Worker or Care Manger and the Shared Lives worker agree to do to make the arrangement work.

**Advocate**

This is someone who can support you in speaking up for yourself or, if you want, will speak or write on your behalf.

**Reviews**

These are the regular meetings that we will have with you and your Shared Lives carers (and your family or representative if you want) and your Care Manager to check that things are OK and to decide if any changes need to be made to your Service User Plan or Shared Lives Agreement.