

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Policy & Procedure No. 21

Being Missing from a Shared Lives Arrangement

The Harrow Shared Lives Scheme has responsibilities to protect and promote the health and safety and well being of people in Shared Lives (SL) arrangements. Most of them will spend time out and about in the community without causing any concerns. However some people may be confused or easily disorientated and so can become lost. There is also a chance of accidents or other mishaps, so SL Carers need to know what to do if the person they are supporting does not come home when expected or appears to be missing.

How will this happen?

Because the people in SL arrangements are all different it is difficult to give definite rules about what SL Carers should do when a person does not come home when expected or appears to be missing. For one person it might just mean he/she has missed the bus while for another person it could mean he/she is in great danger.

Just as happens in ordinary families, it is helpful if you let your SL Carer know if you are going out and roughly what your plans are and/or when you expect to be home again. This helps to avoid false alarms. If you change your plans, again it is helpful if you let your SL Carer know this.

If you do not return when expected or appear to be missing your SL Carer will:

- check around the house and garden and/or immediate neighbourhood
- try to contact you on a mobile phone or some other way
- check with the person or place you were visiting (if known)
- check with your friends or relatives to see if you are with them
- contact your SL Worker or the Scheme or the out-of-hours emergency service to let them know and to agree what further action is necessary
- inform the Police if you are likely to be at immediate risk or when it has been agreed with the Scheme or out-of-hours emergency service that this is appropriate

- provide the Police with a description and any other information they may need (or, if appropriate, work closely with your family to do this)

Once you have been found, the SL Carer and/or SL Worker will make sure that all relevant people are informed – such as the Police, your relatives, etc. The SL Worker or Scheme will also take responsibility for notifying the Care Quality Commission when you are missing for more than 12 hours and when you have been found again.

SL Carers will support you in the daily life and activities and goals you choose as part of your Service User Plan and will respect your choices and freedom and dignity. If you have a tendency to wander away or to get lost the risks around this will be properly assessed and a risk management plan will be included in your Service User Plan. If there are likely to be any restrictions on your choices and freedoms these will also be discussed and agreed with you as part of your Service User Plan.

See these other policies and procedures and documents for further information on:

- Making choices and decisions
- Equal opportunities
- Daily life and inclusion in the community
- Risk assessment and risk management
- Health and safety
- Accidents and dangerous occurrences
- Safeguarding against abuse or neglect
- Restriction of liberty
- Recording
- Service User Plan
- Individual planning, monitoring and review