

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Policy & Procedure No. 22

Palliative Care, Death and Dying

Why do we need this policy?

The Harrow Shared Lives Scheme recognises that the quality of care, which people receive in their last days is just as important as the quality of life, which they experienced before this. People in Shared Lives arrangements are encouraged to say what they would like to happen when death approaches, and also after they have died.

How would this happen?

If you are ageing or ill and living with a Shared Lives (SL) Carer, you will have the opportunity to discuss whether it is possible for you to stay there and under what circumstances you may need to move to a hospital or other place where more specialised care is available. In arriving at a decision consideration will need to be given to any other members of the household and the availability of palliative care services, when needed.

SL Carers and SL Workers will be open to discussion about death and dying and your physical and emotional needs will be considered as part of your Service User Plan, as well as your comfort and well-being in this situation. If your needs are changing during the course of an illness, these will be reviewed promptly and whenever necessary in order to provide additional personal support or aids or appropriate input from other professionals or bereavement counsellors.

Throughout your illness (and also in the event of an accident or unexpected death) your SL Carers will respond in the same way as they would with any other family member and will contact the doctor and/or other health professionals or the emergency services as necessary.

They will have received training, advice and ongoing support so that they know what to do in these situations. They will also have information available to them in their Carer's Handbook.

During your illness and/or death your SL Carers will respect your privacy and dignity at all times. They will receive additional support from the SL Worker and other relevant professionals and so will members of their family and others in the household. Your own family and friends will be welcome to visit you and will also be supported during this time.

Your SL Carer will respect your religious and/or cultural preferences and will follow any particular instructions you have left or will know who to contact after you have died.

Your SL Worker will take responsibility for notifying Care Quality Commission of your illness, when this is necessary, and if you have died while in a Shared Lives arrangement.

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

- Making choices and decisions
- Contact with family and friends
- Cultural and religious customs
- Personal care
- Record keeping
- Service User Plan
- Individual planning, monitoring and review
- Supporting and reviewing SL Carers
- Accidents and dangerous occurrences