

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Policy & Procedure No. 56

Training and Development for Shared Lives Carers (Support Carers) and Workers in the Service

The Harrow Shared Lives Scheme aims to provide good quality support and care. This can only happen if everyone working in the service is operating in line with legal and good practice requirements. Therefore workers (whether paid or unpaid and including managers) and Shared Lives (SL) Carers are provided with the training and information and experience that allows them to act responsibly and competently in meeting your needs.

How would this happen?

Workers, volunteers and SL Carers are recruited through a process which includes taking up references, criminal records checks, cross-references to the Health Care Professional Council or other professional bodies where appropriate and consideration of their previous experiences and working history. Selection depends on demonstrating they have the skills, knowledge and abilities to support people. Managers and SL Workers will also be required to have relevant professional or NVQ qualifications.

All workers (including managers) follow a planned programme for induction within their first 12 weeks that complies with Skills for Care common induction standards and Learning Disability induction standards where appropriate and is linked to the relevant knowledge and skills sets published by Shared Lives Plus. This covers:

- values underpinning the service
- policies and procedures
- up-to-date knowledge and good practice guidance for this type of service
- the importance of listening to people who are using the service and of the link between continuous development of workers and the continuous improvement of the quality of the service and outcomes
- the sharing of responsibility for continuous development between workers themselves and the service.

New SL Carers will cover similar ground and will meet common induction standards before they are approved. They will also receive further training after approval and/or before they start providing SL arrangements and/or after they have gained some experience of working in the service. For SL Carers who intend to support people who have Learning Disabilities their induction training will be tailored to meet the requirements for the Learning Disability Induction Award before they are approved for this.

Some SL Carers require back up from Support Carers to allow them to carry out their role – for example by providing a sitting service or specialist support. All Support Carers are assessed and checked by the Scheme and the SL Worker and SL Carer jointly assess their learning and development needs for their support role. Their induction may be specifically tailored to their role and the individual they will be supporting. However if they are providing considerable levels of support they may be required to follow a programme that meets all the common induction and/or Learning Disability induction standards.

All workers (including managers) have an annual appraisal of their work, which includes identifying any learning and training needs and ways of meeting these. SL Carers have a review of their work at least once a year, which does the same. The individual's learning objectives are recorded and monitored throughout the year and increases in knowledge and competency are assessed and recorded through regular supervision and the appraisal / review process. Where appropriate, SL Carers and workers will have the opportunity to have their learning and competence assessed in order to gain nationally recognised qualifications.

Workers and managers are expected to take responsibility for keeping a record of their own training and for making sure this complies with any professional or registration requirements that apply to them.

Information about individual and collective training needs are gathered together and analysed each year and training and development opportunities are planned and delivered on the basis of this. The analysis and training and development plans take account of guidance from Skills for Care, the Health Care Professionals Council and Shared Lives Plus, as well as regulatory requirements and the changing and national context for policies and practices, not just local issues.

Training and development opportunities provided by the service are evaluated as part of the annual quality assurance assessment of the service, in order to see if they have been effective and what can be

improved. This includes asking for feedback from people who are using the service and from SL Carers and workers.

The service has a specific budget for training, which is used for meeting the identified training and development needs of workers and SL Carers and Support Carers. Workers will have at least 5 (pro rata) paid training or development days per year. Training and development opportunities can take many forms, such as:

- group learning led by suitably qualified workers
- one-to-one input / individualised learning and development meetings
- taking part in external training courses
- shadowing more experienced people
- peer group discussions
- use of resources such as CDs / videos / workbooks / reading materials / the internet
- research
- hearing about the experiences of people who use services and their families etc

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

- Standards of conduct and practice
- Equal opportunities
- Recruitment and employment of workers and managers in the service
- Working with volunteers
- Recruitment and assessment of SL Carers
- Carer Agreement
- Supporting and reviewing SL Carers
- Carer's Handbook
- Continuous improvement in the service
- Consultation and participation in running the service