

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Policy & Procedure no.58

Recruitment and Assessment of Shared Lives Carers

The Harrow Shared Lives Scheme aims to provide good quality support and/or care to people in Shared Lives (SL) arrangements. An important part of making this happen is making sure that SL Carers have the skills, knowledge and abilities to support each person effectively. The recruitment and assessment of SL Carers has therefore been designed with this in mind. We are committed to recruiting and assessing SL Carers in ways that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

How would this happen?

SL Carers are recruited through a process, which includes:

- attending a pre-application meeting
- completion of an application form
- proof of identity including a recent photograph
- taking up at least 2 written personal references from people who have known them at least 2 years (including visiting at least one of these)
- a local council check (including previous councils of they have moved home in the last 3 years)
- a reference from their last employer
- if the person has worked in social care before, checking why they left their last job
- obtaining a reference from their GP
- requesting confirmation from their landlord or mortgage lender that the person can provide a Shared Lives arrangement at their address and/or is not in arrears with their rent or mortgage
- checking whether they have a valid driving licence, where relevant
- carrying out an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check

- checking with the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA)¹ list / Barred Lists
- cross-references to the Health Care Professionals Council or other professional bodies where appropriate
- checking whether the person has the right to work in this country
- a full assessment (see below)
- completion of the programme of induction training which is necessary before approval
- approval by the independent Approval Panel
- satisfactory completion of a probationary period of six months

Prospective SL Carers are given a copy of the written guidelines for the assessment and approval process and information about how to appeal against a decision by the Approval Panel.

The assessment of SL Carers covers:

- their personal backgrounds and life histories
- their home
- their family and community links
- their previous experiences and educational and working histories, including explanation for any gaps in their working history
- what kinds of care and/or support they are able to offer (including any specific limitations to this)
- evidence of the knowledge and skills and abilities which will enable them to support a person in a Shared Lives arrangement.

The assessment report will be discussed with prospective SL Carers and they will have the opportunity to comment or add to it before it is presented to the Approval Panel. They will also be given a copy of the final report.

People who use the service are involved in the assessment and approval of SL Carers through:

- participation in pre-application meetings
- participation in induction training

¹ POVA list will be replaced by Barred Lists at the Independent Safeguarding Authority (for England, Wales and Northern Ireland) when this becomes operational in Oct 2009 and at the Central Barring Unit (for Scotland), implementation date expected to be in 2009 but not yet fixed.

- representation on the Approval Panel
-etc.

SL Carers will have the opportunity to continue to develop their knowledge and skills through ongoing / post-approval training, through regular monitoring and support visits from their SL Worker and through an annual review of their work which will include an individual learning and development plan.

If Support Carers are recruited to provide back up for a person's main SL Carer (e.g. a sitting service or specialist support), the application process will include all the same steps, references and safety checks as for SL Carers (see above). It will also include at least one assessment interview covering their experiences and skills, relationship with the person in the Shared Lives arrangement, their understanding of the person's needs and their own training needs and how these will be met. The assessment report will be presented to the HSLs independent Approval Panel for recommendation. The Support Carer will have the opportunity to comment or add to the report and will be given a copy of the final report.

The induction and other learning and development opportunities for Support Carers are described in the policy on Training and Development for SL Carers, Workers and Managers.

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

- Standards of conduct and practice
- Equal opportunities
- Training and development
- Working with volunteers
- Recruitment and employment of workers and managers
- Continuous improvement in the service
- Consultation and participation in running the service
- Supporting and reviewing SL Carers
- Approval Panel
- Carer Agreement