

## A SHARED LIVES CHARTER

We have written this charter based on what Shared Lives carers told us an excellent Shared Lives scheme looked like to them. Our aim is to make sure that Shared Lives schemes are inclusive, fair and diverse, where all are valued for the contribution they can make.

We hope that this will be a living document. We encourage Shared Lives carers, managers and commissioners to adapt and improve this Charter and use it, together with the Quality Framework and The Ambassadors' Test in thinking about the development of Shared Lives in their area, particularly where changes are being planned.

The Charter, The Ambassadors' Test & The Quality Framework together set out what good looks like in Shared Lives. Our hope is that they will help to create an environment where individuals can be supported through Shared Lives to get the best care and support possible in order to live the life they choose.

The three fundamental elements of Shared Lives – the person who uses Shared Lives, the Shared Lives carer and the Shared Lives scheme are referred to throughout the Quality Framework. We have included a table to make it easier to see how the charter relates to the Quality Framework.

### In an excellent Shared Lives scheme:

- Shared Lives carers and scheme staff ensure that individuals supported by Shared Lives carers experience care and/or support in a family environment and have the opportunity to be part of the Shared Lives carer's family and social networks.
- The welfare of people who chose Shared Lives is at the heart of decision making and services.

- It is possible for people supported through Shared Lives to develop long lasting relationships with their Shared Lives carers, whether they are in a live-in, short breaks or day support arrangement.
- People supported through Shared Lives have the chance to grow and develop and make the most of their talents and opportunities so they can live the life of their choosing.
- People supported through Shared Lives, Shared Lives carers and workers, are supported to learn, achieve and participate fully in their Shared Lives scheme.
- The partnership between individuals living in Shared Lives arrangements, Shared Lives carers and Shared Lives workers is recognised and valued. This involves adapting policies and practices to remove barriers to participation so that nobody is marginalised.
- There is a commitment to treat everyone fairly according to their needs, regardless of their race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital or civil partnership status, age, disability or pregnancy and maternity status.

### Guiding Principles

Shared Lives schemes will recognise the unique nature of Shared Lives and will support and nurture the relationship between Shared Lives carers and the individuals they support. Shared Lives carers are part of the team supporting the individual and their contribution as the individual's main carer(s) will be valued and respected.

Shared Lives carers will support the individuals in their care as if they were a family member ensuring the person gets the right kind of support to meet their full potential.

## 1. Working in Partnership

In an excellent Shared Lives scheme, Shared Lives carers demonstrate a high standard of care and conduct and their unique perspective is respected and valued.

### An excellent Shared Lives scheme will:

- value you as a Shared Lives carer and will treat you with respect and without discrimination.
- recognise and respect you as someone who can play an active part in developing the scheme and its policies.
- recognise how well you know the person you support and value your contribution.
- include you in all meetings about the person and your role as a Shared Lives carer.
- comply with relevant standards, regulations and legal guidance.
- consult you on how the Shared Lives service is provided.

### Shared Lives carers will;

- demonstrate their expertise and make use of their skills to the best of their ability.
- provide the people they support with a positive experience of family life.
- attend meetings about the people they support.
- work with other agencies involved with the person.
- when appropriate show a willingness to work with and support contact with the individual's family and other people significant in their life.
- meet standards set out in regulation and guidance and follow scheme policies and procedures.
- respect the confidentiality of the people they support.

## 2. Information

We believe open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

### An excellent Shared Lives scheme will provide:

- all relevant information about the person before a match is made or, if an emergency arrangement is made, the next day, so you can care for the person safely and effectively.
- any new information about the person they receive once the individual is living with you.

- A Shared Lives arrangement agreement which you will have contributed to, a Shared Lives carers agreement, a licence agreement and a service user or care plan.
- all relevant scheme policies and procedures.
- information on any risks the person may pose to the community, you and your family and will work with you to consider the available information and to agree any risk strategies that need to be in place.
- details of fees and allowances that will be paid to you.

### Shared Lives carers will:

- inform the scheme about changes to the household.
- inform the scheme about any difficulties that arise; with them, their family or the people they support.

## 3. Learning, Development and Support

We believe Shared Lives carers must be helped to find learning and development opportunities throughout their life in Shared Lives. This will ensure they have the skills and knowledge they need and allow them to develop their practice to help the individuals they support live the lives they choose.

### An excellent Shared Lives scheme offers:

- high quality training that meets the needs of you and your family.
- responsiveness to both your experience of the training offered and your training requests.
- flexibility about training so it fits in with your role as a Shared Lives carer for example offering training at weekends.
- joint training with scheme staff, social workers and other professionals.
- mentoring and support from other Shared Lives carers.

## Support

### An excellent Shared Lives scheme will:

- allocate a dedicated worker who will visit you at home quarterly (or more often if needed) to provide support and to monitor the arrangement.
- make sure support from the Shared Lives scheme or emergency duty team is available at all times including out of hours and at weekends.
- give support and work with you when individuals you support are having trouble settling or showing challenging behaviour.

- respond to any concerns raised, provide a written response, where appropriate and carry out an immediate risk assessment when needed.
- support the development of an independent Shared Lives carer peer support group and put you in touch with other Shared Lives carers in your scheme.
- provide you with contact details and information about Shared Lives Plus who can give you independent support and advice if allegations or concerns are raised about you.
- work in a transparent manner and be open and honest with all feedback.
- work to ensure you are paid on time and at the agreed rate.

#### **Shared Lives carers will:**

- be prepared to develop their skills and attend relevant training.
- take up learning opportunities.
- let the scheme know if they are unable to attend training.

## **4. Fair treatment and respect for the individual**

Every person will be treated fairly, respected as an individual and be supported in meeting their needs.

#### **An excellent Shared Lives scheme will:**

- make sure you and your family are treated with respect at all times.
- consult and negotiate with you on any proposed changes to your terms and conditions or any other agreements with the Shared Live scheme.
- provide you with clear procedures for when things go wrong and enable you to access appropriate support if you face an allegation.
- operate a clear way of dealing with allegations and concerns and enable access to independent support.
- recognise both the emotional and economic implications for carers when a Shared Lives arrangement ends.
- support a designated Shared Lives carer who can offer support to carers who experience an allegation.
- make it clear that when investigations in relation to allegations have been brought to a conclusion, send out a final letter or report summing up, where possible the result of the investigation and the reasons for decisions that have been reached.

- direct you to any further help you can get if the report received is not fully understood or there is dissatisfaction with the process or outcome. This should include how to make representations against a decision.
- provide you with a clear and transparent complaints procedure including a step-by-step guide to the way complaints will be addressed and what service standards you can expect in terms of speed, detail and staff behaviour. Be clear about what can be achieved by making a complaint and what is not possible. If the scheme cannot help you, wherever possible you should be given information about alternatives.

#### **Shared Lives carers will:**

- involve the person using Shared Lives by making sure they have the information and support they need to be able to participate and make decisions about their own lives.
- respect the decisions individuals they support make without limiting or imposing choices upon them.
- recognise that each individual they support is unique and has the right to be who they are.
- respect the right of the individuals they support to make informed decisions even when those choices do not appear to be in their best interest.

## **5. Communication and consultation**

#### **An excellent Shared Live scheme will:**

- enable regular communication between Shared Lives carers, scheme workers and managers, senior management and councillors within the local authority.
- enable Shared Lives carers to have a voice in the scheme and a means of raising collective issues.
- hold social and consultative events for Shared Lives carers and the people they support.
- make sure Shared Lives carers are consulted in a meaningful, open way on matters which affect them.
- provide timely feedback from consultations.
- have an open and honest dialogue with Shared Lives carers.

#### **Shared Lives carers will:**

- respond to local consultations and discussions to support the development of the scheme.
- meet with scheme workers, managers and others to promote dialogue and a good working relationship.

<p><b>1. Working in Partnership</b></p>	<p><b>Quality Standard 1:</b> Shared Lives carer assessment, approval, induction and training.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 2:</b> Referrals, matching, introductions and establishing Shared Lives arrangements.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 3:</b> Person-centred Shared Lives, monitoring, support and reviews of Shared Lives arrangements.</p>
<p><b>2. Information</b></p>	<p><b>Quality Standard 1:</b> Shared Lives carer assessment, approval, induction and training.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 2:</b> Referrals, matching, introductions and establishing Shared Lives arrangements.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 3:</b> Person-centred Shared Lives, monitoring, support and reviews of Shared Lives arrangements.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 6:</b> Safe Shared Lives.</p>
<p><b>3. Learning development and support</b></p>	<p><b>Quality Standard 1:</b> Shared Lives carer assessment, approval, induction and training.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 3:</b> Person-centred Shared Lives, monitoring, support and reviews of Shared Lives arrangements.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 4:</b> Governance, planning, delivery and involvement.</p>
<p><b>4. Fair treatment and respect for the individual</b></p>	<p><b>Quality Standard 4:</b> Governance, planning, delivery and involvement.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 6:</b> Safe Shared Lives.</p>
<p><b>5. Communication and Consultation</b></p>	<p><b>Quality Standard 3:</b> Person-centred Shared Lives, monitoring, support and reviews of Shared Lives arrangements.</p> <p><b>Quality Standard 4:</b> Governance, planning, delivery and involvement.</p>

# SharedLivesPlus

THE UK NETWORK FOR SHARED LIVES AND HOMESHARE