



Cysylltu Bywydau Gorllewin Cymru
Galluogi • Grymuso • Ymgysylltu

West Wales Shared Lives
Enabling • Empowering • Engaging

A GUIDE TO SHARED LIVES IN WEST WALES



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

cefnogipobl
supporting people
supporting independence
cefnogi annibyniaeth



Cyngor Sir Gâr
Carmarthenshire
County Council



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

West Wales Shared Lives

West Wales Shared Lives aim:

- To provide community based Shared Lives services that promote independence and social inclusion for vulnerable adults.
- To recruit, train and support Shared Lives Carers to provide services from their own homes that promote the health and wellbeing of people placed with them and which are person centred and needs led.
- To deliver quality services in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government regulations and good practice guidance, which are underpinned by a culture of trust, openness and integrity.
- To offer flexible cost effective services that whilst increasing choices and options to service users also reflect the purchasing priorities of commissioners and investors.

What is Shared Lives?

Shared Lives is the provision of accommodation, support and/or care to vulnerable adults from the homes of specially recruited families and people living in the community. West Wales Shared Lives approve these people to provide Adult Placement services.

Approved Shared Lives Carers undertake to integrate people who use the service into their household and provide appropriate support and or care for an agreed fee.

Shared Lives Carers are supported to meet the needs of people living with them in line with regulations and standards applied to Shared Lives provision in Wales. This support is provided by Shared Lives Officers, who through regular contact and placement reviews, monitor the services they provide.

West Wales Shared Lives promotes the right of individuals to live an 'ordinary' and independent life in their community and to enjoy all the rights and responsibilities applied to any citizen of that community. This is achieved through the provision of a range of high quality service options for vulnerable adults which are underpinned by the following values:

1. **Increasing Opportunities -**

Offer a variety of service options to vulnerable adults and their families that include long term, short breaks, emergency and sessional/day service placements.



2. Promoting Choice and Control -

Through person focused planning enable people to have as much choice and control as possible over the support/care they receive.

3. Supporting Inclusion –

Provide housing related support services that develop and increase the opportunities available to vulnerable adults to reside and integrate into community life.

4. Ensuring Quality –

Operate quality standard systems which are measurable, transparent and accountable and meet National Minimum Standards for the provision of Shared Lives in Wales.

5. Supporting Good Health and Wellbeing -

Provide services that encourage and promote healthy lifestyles, are safe and support people to access health services.

6. Helping Families and Informal Carers –

Provide services that are flexible and responsive to the needs of families and/or informal carers.

7. Providing Information –

Provide information about Shared Lives that is accessible to service users and families.

8. Working Together –

Work in partnership with Shared Lives Carers, our investors and stakeholders, to review and evaluate services delivered, and respond to the purchasing priorities of commissioners based on the assessed needs of people who may access Shared Lives.

The staff within West Wales Shared Lives are committed to working with approved Shared Lives Carers to promote the physical, emotional and personal well being of people receiving Shared Lives services by ensuring that the services people receive are safe and appropriate to meeting a person's needs.

Shared Lives services provided are:

Long Term Placement: Accommodation with support and/or care is provided to people who need stability and continuity, and whose needs can be met by living as part of a family.

Long term placements last for a minimum of six months and allow people to enjoy the opportunities and experiences that family or home life can bring.

Short Term Placements: Accommodation with support and/or care is provided by Shared Lives Carers for a specific time. For example, someone may live in a Shared Lives placement for a year to build confidence for more independent living in the future.



Short Breaks:

Shared Lives Carers provide planned breaks to Service Users and their families or other Shared Lives Carers. Short breaks can be accessed by Service Users who want to experience different life styles or who just want a break.

Emergency Placements:

Sometimes a person may require accommodation, support and/or care at short notice, perhaps in the event of illness or family crisis. Emergency placements are usually time limited and quite short.

Sessional and Daytime Services:

Shared Lives Carers provide support and/or care from their own homes during the daytime, at evenings or over the weekend on a sessional basis.

Why are Shared Lives Services Needed?

People who require support and accommodation have a wide range of individual needs. Shared Lives offers vulnerable adults alternatives to more traditional buildings led services. If people cannot or choose not to live in their own homes, Shared Lives provides a needs led model of support and/or care that can enable people to remain part of community life.

Living with or receiving support from a Shared Lives Carer encourages the extension of social networks and offers added opportunities for people to learn or maintain skills, and gain wider life experiences than might otherwise be available to them. Short breaks give people the chance to enjoy a week or two in a range of different places, be tailored to each persons' likes and dislikes, ensuring they have a positive experience which they will enjoy remembering.

Who Will Use These Services?

Shared Lives suits anyone who needs support and/or care from another person in their day to day living. This can range from people who need constant support to people who just need to know that there is someone there for them.

They could be an older person, someone with physical disabilities, mental health problems or learning disabilities, or someone who misuses substances. For many reasons, such as ill health or the death of elderly parents, some people may not be able to continue living at home and wouldn't wish to live in residential care. Living or staying with an approved Shared Lives Carer would therefore give the person an opportunity to remain in a home environment.

It is hoped that people seeking accommodation with the service will be matched with Shared Lives Carers as near to their original home as possible, so that they can maintain contacts with their family and friends, and continue with their usual daytime and social activities. Some people will receive day services; others may go to work or college.



Who Are Approved Shared Lives Carers?

Shared Lives Carers come from all walks of life. Some are single, some have families and some don't, whilst some are retired. We recruit 'ordinary' people who have the time, commitment and genuine desire to help someone who needs accommodation, support and/or care. No special qualifications are required and it is not necessary to have had any particular work experience.

It is necessary to be patient, flexible, consistent, have a stable home situation, and to be enthusiastic to learn.

If you have these qualities and the kind of home that would be appropriate to share with a vulnerable adult, then you might well be a suitable Shared Lives Carer.

What does Becoming an Adult Placement Carer Involve?

Shared Lives provision is carefully structured to ensure that approved Shared Lives Carers are selected, trained and supported to a high standard. Being an approved Shared Lives Carer is not only a rewarding job but also a very responsible one. This is why the selection process is so thorough.

Prospective Shared Lives Carers go through a six stage application and assessment process before they can provide Shared Lives services.

Stages 1 to 3 of the process involves references being taken up, a Disclosure & Barring (DBS) check completed and a basic assessment of a prospective carer's home.

Although this is a formal process, it is a necessary and important way of making sure we are not placing vulnerable adults with people who are not able to support and/or care for them appropriately.

Stages 4, 5 and 6 involve an assessing Officer producing an assessment report which they present to an 'Independent Approval Panel'. The suitability of an applicant to become a Shared Lives Carer is measured against '25 skills and knowledge statements'; these statements define what is essential for anyone wanting to become a Shared Lives Carer.

Each Shared Lives Carer's approval will be reviewed annually. A condition of a Shared Lives Carer's approval is compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Adult Placements Schemes under the 'Adult Placement Schemes Regulations 2004'.



The '25 Skills and Knowledge' Statements:

1. Able to find out about any specific physical, social, emotional or cultural needs of the person you support and be able to meet them
2. Enable people to make choices and decisions with support from advocates if necessary
3. Understand and challenge prejudice, discrimination and oppression
4. Understand and balance the needs and lifestyles of all people in the household
5. Support people to communicate effectively
6. Communicate effectively
7. Provide a healthy and safe place to stay
8. Support people to be part of their community
9. Understand and respect confidentiality and privacy
10. Enable people to make and / or maintain friendships and relationships both in and out of the household
11. Build positive relationships with other people
12. Keep clear and accurate records
13. Protect people from abuse and neglect
14. Support people to achieve their potential
15. Support people to access education, employment and leisure facilities
16. Develop own skills and understanding through training and other opportunities
17. Understand Adult Placement including roles and responsibilities of carers and schemes
18. Understand policies, procedures and legal requirements and work positively with the Adult Placement scheme/service to put these into practice
19. Get involved in person centred assessment, care planning and review where appropriate
20. Support service users to assess and take acceptable risks
21. Support people to access health services and lead a healthy lifestyle
22. Support people to store and take their medication
23. Support people to manage their finances
24. Support people to manage their behaviour
25. Support people to worship and follow their faith

Do People Who Receive Services Have a Choice?

Matching a vulnerable adult to a Shared Lives Carer is a very important part of the process. Providing both with an appropriate placement or support plan may take time, particularly as consideration needs to be given to a range of issues such as:

- The kind of Shared Lives Carer the Service User would like and what they can offer.
- The special needs of the Service User, including age, gender and degree of dependency.
- Where people live.
- The life style of Service Users and Shared Lives Carers including similarities in ethnic background or religion.

Once a suitable match is identified, an introductory meeting with the person who needs a placement and the Shared Lives Carer will be arranged. If everyone feels happy with the match then a Placement Agreement will be drawn up and a start date identified.

It is recognised that once people have been approved, their circumstances may change, therefore reviews are to be held regularly to look at any difficulties which may have arisen.

It is very important that both the Shared Lives Carer and the Service User of the service are completely happy with the arrangement.

At any point during the matching and introduction process a Service User or a Shared Lives Carer can 'say no' and bring things to an end. We encourage and expect people to be open and honest about how they feel and not to establish a placement if they have concerns or worries about the match.

What Support Will be Offered?



Each approved Shared Lives Carer has a Shared Lives Officer who is able to provide advice and supervision, as well as offering practical and emotional support. This means that Shared Lives Carers have someone to contact who is there to support them.

The person who is placed with a Shared Lives Carer will have a Case Manager/Social Worker whose role is to advocate on their behalf and represent their interests. In emergencies, Shared Lives Carers also have access to the out of hours duty Social Work Team.

From time to time Shared Lives Carers who provide long or short term placements need a break, so short breaks can then be provided. Shared Lives Carers are encouraged to take part in Shared Lives Carers' Support Groups, and membership of the National Association of Adult Placement Schemes - Shared Lives Plus UK.

What Training Will I Receive?

Once a Shared Lives Carer has been approved they are provided with induction training, the completion of which is a condition of their approval. Post Approval Training is then provided which involves Shared Lives Carers maintaining a portfolio of training achievements.

Shared Lives Carers will also have the opportunity to think about and discuss issues relevant to providing support and/or care. Topics which may be covered include:

- Enabling people to make choices and decisions and supporting people to be part of their community
- Valuing people, understanding and challenging prejudice and discrimination
- Providing a healthy and safe place to live
- Understanding issues affecting people's individual rights
- The protection of vulnerable adults

What Are The Financial Rewards?

Shared Lives Carers will receive a weekly payment via Carmarthenshire County Council. This amount will vary according to the type of placement or support you are able to offer the person placed or matched with you. People providing Long Term and Short Break accommodation can expect to receive up to £357 per week pro rata. A Shared Lives Officer will be able to give more details.

If you are interested, but still need convincing of the rewards and the benefits of Shared Lives, please read on...

"Shared Lives has made such a difference to my life. I now am able to make real choices about things that really matter to me"

"For the first time in my life I am treated like an adult"

"I now enjoy regular holidays on my own and with my Shared Lives Carer, my life has changed so much for the better "

"I've never had so much money to spend on myself. I've been able to buy a TV, stereo, video and I go to the theatre in London at least two times a year with my carers"

"I am more self-confident, I can do a lot more things for myself. My Shared Lives Carer has helped me achieve things I never thought I would be able to do"

"Living on your own can be very lonely, my Shared Lives Carer is really like a best friend to me"

"Hospital was like a prison, now I can go out and meet friends and go to the pub when I like. When I do get depressed I can talk to my Shared Lives Carer and we are able to sort things out"

"I enjoy my Sunday dinner which my Shared Lives Carer cooks for me. I really look forward to the weekend now when I go to see her"

"My children live in England. They are very good but they have their own life to lead. I enjoy the company at weekends, it's nice to know that I can ring her when I need someone to talk to"

What Next?

You will hopefully by now have gained a better understanding of how a person who needs Shared Lives services may benefit from your involvement.

You may feel that you have something to offer? Or you may know other people who might be interested?

If you would like to become a Shared Lives Carer with West Wales Shared Lives, please complete an application form and return it to us at:

West Wales Shared Lives

St Davids Park,
Building 8,
Job's Well Road,
Carmarthen
SA31 3HB

Tel : 01267 246890

Fax : 01267 246394

Email : WestWalesSharedLives@carmarthenshire.gov.uk



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