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Shared Lives Schemes - Adult Placement

“Shared Lives” schemes (formerly known as Adult Placement) offer accommodation in a family home. Whilst the focus is on fully sharing family life, “Shared Lives” (SL) placements can offer a full range of support including personal care. People using these services have the opportunity to be part of the carer’s family and social network.

The arrangements are distinguished by the following features:

- They are provided under the umbrella of specialised organisations that recruit, approve and train the carers.
- These organisations also receive referrals, match the needs of service users with host families and monitor the arrangements after placement.
- SL Carers can use their family home as a resource but do not employ staff to provide care to the people they support.
- SL agreements provide committed and consistent relationships.
- The relationship between the SL Carer and the person placed with them is of mutual benefit
- SL Carers can support up to three people at any one time.

Currently a high proportion of shared lives placements are for people with learning disability but they also work well for people with mental health needs and older adults. Shared Lives placements are available right across Devon. People using the schemes must be at least 18 years of age. There is no upper age limit.

Shared Lives Carers can provide;

- long term accommodation and support
- medium term accommodation and support as a stepping stone to someone moving on to their own home
- short breaks
- day time support
- “kinship” support where the SL Carer acts as 'extended family' to someone living in their own home.

In a Shared Lives arrangement that offers accommodation, the individual usually shares the whole house and mealtimes whilst having the privacy of their own bedroom. Shared Lives schemes are registered by the Care Quality Commission. The schemes in turn monitor individual placements.

Matching is a key feature of Shared Lives arrangements. Matching of the individual and the Shared Lives family is usually done by a placement officer in close consultation with the person, their family, their care manager and other key people who know the individual well.

After moving in, the person will receive most of their day to day support directly from the host family. The level of support will depend on the needs of the individual. This would normally be agreed between all parties prior to the placement beginning or during a trial period. As a minimum, support usually includes prompting with daily routines, providing and preparation of meals, help with budgeting and could, by negotiation include help with laundry, transport and daily living. In some circumstances it could include help with personal and intimate care including washing and using the toilet.

In Shared Lives the host family undergoes a thorough assessment and approval process to make sure that they have the skills and knowledge to carry out their work. The process involves a number of meetings, a comprehensive training programme and presentation to an Approval Panel.

One of the features of Shared Lives Schemes is the flexibility to meet different needs. It is worth noting that it does not offer the same occupancy rights and security that goes with owning or renting your own home. People living in Shared Lives arrangements are provided with a licence agreement but this does not offer the same security as an assured tenancy. The guest can be asked to leave at four weeks notice and has no legal means of challenging such action.

Further factsheets can be found online at www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets

If you have any further questions please contact **Care Direct 0845 1551 007**

A large print version of this factsheet is available on www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets but if you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk.

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