Shared Lives Scheme

Everyone has the right to choose where he or she lives and stays. Shared Lives offers a community based alternative to other forms of support.

ategi aims to provide high quality, individual support to people within the ordinary homes of carefully chosen and trained shared Lives Carers.

At ategi we believe that the needs of the people who live or stay with our Approved Carers are of the greatest importance. Good practice in all Shared Lives arrangements is promoted by ategi staff and Shared Lives Carers working to the principals and values outlined in our scheme guide.

These principles promote a person’s right to:

- Choice
- Fulfilment
- Independence and autonomy
- Privacy
- Dignity
- Respect

Everyone who becomes an approved Shared Lives Carer with ategi will receive training and guidance, ongoing support from a named worker, a fulfilling and positive experience and payment for their role.

Thurrock
Q: What is the shared lives Scheme?
A: The Shared Lives Scheme arranges accommodation and support to vulnerable adults in the homes of carefully chosen people living in the community. We call these people Shared Lives Carers.

Q: What can Shared Lives Carers expect from ategi?
A: Shared Lives Carers can expect regular support from a named ategi worker who will provide advice as well as practical and emotional support. Shared Lives Carers will be given training, some of which they will be required to take part in but some optional depending on their needs. Shared Lives Carers receive a payment for the work they do. They will get clear guidance about what is expected of them and will have regular opportunities to review their role.

Q: Who will use the Shared Lives Scheme?
A: The service will suit adults who need support from another person in their day-to-day lives and who choose to have that support within an ordinary household setting. This can range from people who need constant support to people who just need to know there is someone around. They could be an older person, someone with mental illness, someone who is physically or learning disabled or someone with brain injury or a history of substance misuse.
Q: What can people expect if supported by ategi Shared Lives Scheme?

A: People who live or stay with Shared Lives Carer can expect to have their own room within the Carer’s home. They will be able to join in the usual household activities if they wish but will have privacy in their room when they prefer. They can expect to stay somewhere that is matched to their needs. They will be encouraged to continue with their usual interests and to keep in contact with friends and family if they wish. They will be asked what they think about the support they receive and will be given opportunities to say whether or not they are satisfied.

People who are supported by ategi Shared Lives Carers are usually entitled to have a Local Authority Care Manager who represent their interests. They will be encouraged and supported to learn new skills and develop their confidence and independence.

Q: Do people have a choice about where they stay?

A: It is very important that everyone involved is clear about what they want and what they can offer. A big part of our work will be to try and match people who have similar interests and lifestyles and whose circumstances are suited to each other. This may mean that finding the right place to stay will take longer but we try to make sure that people are only introduced to Shared Lives Carers we feel would be appropriate. When a suitable match has been identified we arrange for people to meet each other to see how they get on together. This may take several visits but will ensure that both parties feel comfortable with the idea before Shared Lives agreements are made. The final choice lies with the individuals and the Shared Lives Carer.
Q: What if things don’t work out?
A: Everyone will be working together to make things work. Much of this will rely on all concerned being honest and open about their feelings from the beginning. If, at any time, people feel unhappy with arrangements we would try to work through problems by talking things over with those concerned. If we cannot find a solution we will end the arrangement and look for an alternative. It is very important that both the Shared Lives Carer and the person using the service are completely happy with the arrangements and that the experience is a positive one.

Q: What types of support are offered by ategi Shared Lives Carers?
A: ategi Shared Lives Carers can offer short term or long term arrangements:

**Short term** - Many people rely on the support of family members or friends to help them with their day to day lives. ategi Shared Lives Carers offer the opportunity for vulnerable people and their regular Carers to take a break from each other. After careful introductions people can stay at their Shared Lives Carers home for a night, a weekend or for a couple of weeks depending on theirs and their Carers needs.

**Long term** - ategi Shared Lives Carers offer a home to people who want alternatives to other forms of support and accommodation. Many people have lived successfully for years with Shared Lives Carers. They have been able to enjoy the opportunities and experiences that home life can bring whilst retaining and developing their own independence and confidence. Shared Lives Carers can also offer sessional or day time support from their own home.
Q: Do shared Lives Carers get paid?
A: Shared Lives Carers will be paid whenever someone is with them. The amounts will vary depending on the kind of support that is provided. Details will be given to people when they apply.

Q: What about tax?
A: Shared Lives Carers may be liable to pay tax on money they receive. Special arrangements have been agreed with the Tax Office.

Q: How do people become ategi Shared Lives Carers?
A: Complete an application form and send it to ategi who will make contact to discuss the application and answer any further questions. All applicants will attend training and will undergo an assessment with an ategi co-ordinator before a report is compiled and presented to the independent Approval Panel. The process is intended to be thorough as well as being informative and enjoyable. Full details of the process will be given to all applicants.

Q: What do Shared Lives Carers think about the service?
A: Here are some comments from ategi Shared Lives Carers.

we are very satisfied with the support we received and are more confident in carrying out our role
ategi Shared Lives are always contactable whenever I need advice or assistance
I feel highly appreciated and valued and the support I receive is excellent

Thurrock
Q: What do people who have used ategi Shared Lives think?
A: Here are some comments from people who have lived or stayed with Shared Lives Carers:

- 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 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 lives to lead. I enjoy the company at the weekends. Its nice to know I can ring my Shared Lives Carer when I need someone to talk to
- My Shared Lives Carers always have time for me and are very considerate people. They have helped me enormously
- The training helped me know what I was letting myself in for and it helped me make my mind up
- 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 could do
- Living on your own can be very lonely. My Shared Lives Carer is really like a best friend to me
- Because I live on my own it’s nice to have the companionship. Just having her in the house makes me feel more secure
- Shared Lives has made such a difference to my life. I am now able to make real choices about things that really matter to me
- We like to be able to have someone with us who can join in and get as much pleasure from family life as we do
- The Shared Lives team are all very friendly and are always on the end of the phone if needed
- Because I live on my own it’s nice to have the companionship. Just having her in the house makes me feel more secure
if you would like to know more please contact us at:
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