

OP14 Referral and Matching of New Placements**1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1 Shared Lives South West (SLSW) believes that the matching of new placements is the cornerstone of safe, effective and lasting Shared Lives placements.

2. General Principles

- 2.1 Comprehensive guidance on the step-by-step process for Referrals and Matching will be provided for SLSW employees.
- 2.2 SLSW will respond to all referrals in a timely manner in line with our referral guidance.
- 2.3 Clear and regular communication is required by all parties throughout the referral and matching process.
- 2.4 SLSW Carers must respond to suggested referrals within seven days.
- 2.5 SLSW will ensure that the support needs and preferences of referred individuals can be met by the suitable level of skills and values of the carer/s and their household environment and location.
- 2.6 SLSW will be as flexible as possible throughout the referral and matching process.
- 2.7 No SLSW placement can start without funding agreed by the local authority or the self-funder responsible for funding the placement.
- 2.8 SLSW will regularly provide local authorities with carer vacancy information to support referrals being made to the organisation.

3. Referral

- 3.1 A comprehensive screening of the referred person's needs will take place and will be cross referenced to match with a carer's skillset and household situation. This information will be shared between the referred person and the carer.
- 3.2 To enable this, key personal information of the individual requesting support will be gathered and will include some or all of the following:
- Needs assessment
 - Care plan/s
 - SLSW referral form
 - Risk assessments and all known risks
 - Finance and benefit information

- Key people and contacts in the person's life including professional and medical

3.3 Once all involved are in agreement to proceed the arrangement of introductions will take place.

4. Introductions and matching

4.1 SLSW will support as many introductory visits as required to make a safe match that all parties agree to.

4.2 SLSW staff will offer support to facilitate meetings in liaison with the carer. New carers will require more direct support with their first introductions and as they become more experienced they will become more self-directed, but SLSW commits to providing the carer with the level of support they require regardless of experience.

4.3 During introductions and matching, timely communication between all parties is required so all are kept informed and are agreeable to the pace and direction of the referral's progression.

4.4 When a placement starts it will be subject to a 15-week review which will be carried out by SLSW.

4.5 All new placements will be provided with ongoing monitoring and support.

5. Emergency Placement

5.1 SLSW is not an emergency service but will do all it can to assist referring partners and individuals in need to explore options for them.

5.2 SLSW will ask carers to provide their status for emergency referrals and will record this information accordingly.

5.3 Where SLSW is not able to help, it will commit to ensuring a response is provided promptly to the referring person.

5.4 The referral guidance provides instruction for how SLSW will handle emergency referrals with the Referral guidance.

6. Review

6.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if required.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 The Registered Manager has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.