



Inspection Report on

Vale of Glamorgan Shared Lives

**Vale Of Glamorgan Council
Hen Goleg
College Fields Close
Barry
CF62 8LF**

Date Inspection Completed

02/08/2024

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About Vale of Glamorgan Shared Lives

Type of care provided	Adult Placement Service
Registered Provider	Vale of Glamorgan Council Adults and Children's Services
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	18 April 2023
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

Supported individuals are fully engaged in family life with the Vale Shared Lives Service. The service provider has effective systems in place to ensure individuals are matched with the most suitable approved carer. The ethos of the service promotes individuals to experience care and support in a family setting and achieve personal goals and aspirations. Positive outcomes for individuals are at the heart of the service. The service provider has clear processes in place to arrange and maintain continuity of support to individuals. This impacts positively on the well-being of those receiving a service. Shared lives carers (SL) receive effective and regular support from the shared lives team of staff and project workers.

Project workers are dedicated, knowledgeable, and genuinely caring. The quality of the service is consistent at times of organisational change. The responsible individual (RI) ensures effective management of the service and completes their regulatory duties. Project workers receive effective and valued support on a day-to-day basis. We found detailed action plans in place to drive and embed quality monitoring and service improvement. The service has met the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection.

Well-being

Individuals access the right information at the right time and told us project workers are “Available, responsive” and “*There when we need them.*” The provider offers accessible information about the service and is available in Welsh for those who request it. The service captures the cultural, spiritual and emotional well-being needs of the individual. Careful consideration is given when the service makes introductions to ensure individuals meet SL carers with similar interests, a suitable home life and the skills and knowledge to meet their care and support needs. Individuals, SL cares and the service complete an arrangement agreement, which details everyone’s responsibilities. The agreement is missing some information, so they may not have all the details they need before agreeing to accept the arrangement terms.

Individuals are treated with dignity and respect. The service fully includes them and their representatives in decisions which affect their life. They are given the choice of where they want to live or stay for short breaks, and introductions to new SL carers is done in a manageable way. Individuals told us of the positives of being part of a shared lives arrangement and they enjoy being with their approved carers. We found SL carers to be compassionate and strong advocates for individuals and they told us they are immensely proud of seeing each person achieve their goals and surpass some personal milestones.

Individuals told us they are happy and do the things which are important to them. The service offers the opportunity for people to have fulfilling lives and be part of a shared lives family. For those who experience a successful shared lives arrangement we found they have lots of enriching experiences. They told us they belong, and value being part of family life and enjoy all the things families do together, such as holidays, celebrations, days out and the comfort of homelife. Individuals receive support to safely maintain and experience relationships outside of the family network, which helps develop their independent skills and enable a fulfilling and active social life beyond the shared lives home.

The service has systems in place to protect individuals from harm and abuse. Policies are in place relating to safeguarding, whistleblowing, and the suitability of the service. Robust assessments of new shared lives carers ensure individuals will receive support from people who are deemed to be appropriately skilled, knowledgeable and have the right values to become an approved shared lives carer.

Care and Support

Individuals understand what care, support and opportunities are available to them. Information is available detailing what to expect from the service. Easy read material and a new website offer accessible ways of finding out about Vale Shared Lives. Individuals can access most information they need to make an informed decision about their care and support. However, information on how to raise a concern or complaint is not clear enough. Project workers meet with individuals to complete their personal plans to ensure care documentations fully informs the SL carer of a person's needs. The service refers to the personal plan as the 'About Me' plan.

Individuals are protected from harm and abuse. The service provider completes a thorough assessment with those who express an interest in becoming an approved carer with the service. Assessments are comprehensive, and the service follows robust recruitment procedures. The monitoring and oversight of the SL carers and on-going suitability ensures care and support in-line with the About Me plan is consistent. Approved carers have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities as set out in the Carer Agreement, which is a regulatory requirement.

Individual circumstances are considered. Project workers reflect on a wide range of information about those referred to the service to establish whether individual needs can be met. There is a thorough process when matching an individual with a suitable SL carer and home environment. Approved carers access the About Me plan before an introduction is complete. All parties receive an arrangement agreement which details everyone's responsibilities. About Me plans are detailed, and person-centred. We found most plans are reviewed every three months as required. We were consistently told carers are "*Kind and caring.*"

Individuals receive support to be as healthy and active as they choose. The About Me plan details the level of support required to maintain their health, attend appointments and manage prescribed medication. Individuals receive the right care at the right time and the service maintains records relating to the health and well-being of those living with an approved carer. Representatives told us "*The service is extremely sensitive to the needs of people*" and "*They go above and beyond.*"

Project workers maintain regular contact with SL carers and individuals when monitoring service delivery and keep detailed care records. They understand their roles and responsibilities and operate with a high level of skill and experience. Individuals experience consistently good outcomes with their care and support needs.

Environment

Vale Shared Lives operate from premises with suitable office space for training, meeting rooms and staff facilities. We found confidential documentation stored securely in line with legislative requirements. The service operates in two local authority regions and is based in the Vale of Glamorgan. For inclusive events and other occasions, the provider works closely with partners to make themselves available to SL carers and individuals outside of the region.

The service fully assesses the suitability of a SL carers home, and project workers continue to monitor the environment during planned and unannounced visits. Approved carers understand their duty to maintain their home.

Leadership and Management

The structure of the service is clear and systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the service has improved. The RI regularly meets with management, and we found good day-to-day oversight of the service. The RI carries out quarterly monitoring visits, which is a regulatory requirement and produces a six-monthly quality-of-care review. This informs the provider of what is working well and what the service is working towards. The RI engages with individuals and SL carers to seek their views to inform service improvement. The provider is creative in developing methods to reach more stakeholders to gather quality feedback, for evidence-based development of the service.

The provider follows robust recruitment procedures for all staff and SL carers. Disclosure and barring certificates (DBS) are complete. The service carries out thorough assessments with people who express an interest in becoming an approved carer. Information relating to skills, knowledge, experience, family history, environment and social circumstances are comprehensively assessed. SL carers receive training and an annual review to monitor their skills and knowledge, and to document the ways in which they are supporting individuals to meet their outcomes. Most SL carer training is up to date, but we highlighted only a few carers have completed medication awareness training. The provider has improved systems for oversight of training, and this is working well in bringing all core topics, such as medication, up to date.

Policies and procedures are in place, and mostly up to date. All staff and SL carers have access to necessary policies and there is a good level of understanding about safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures. The service safeguards individuals from financial abuse. We found significant improvements to the policy and procedures to inform SL carers of their role and responsibilities when supporting individuals to manage their day-to-day finances.

Project workers are suitably trained and qualified for their role. They receive regular supervision and tell us they are valued and listened to. There is a culture of strong and supportive teamwork and the relationship between the workers and the carers is mutually respectful and professional. The SL carers appreciate the support they receive from the service.

The provider maintains the statement of purpose (SOP) which is a legal requirement to inform stakeholders of the service and how it will be delivered. The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the service, and it is kept under review.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	
23	The service provider has insufficient procedures in place to support individuals to safely manage their finances.	Achieved
2	The service provider has ineffective procedures relating to the provision of the service.	Achieved

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