

# Shared Lives in Northern Ireland

Annual Report 2017-18



“We can honestly say giving up a few Saturdays a month to give Ann and Bill new opportunities and to help their families by enabling them to have a break from their caring responsibilities, has been one of the best things we have ever done. Our own family really enjoy having them in their lives too.”

Stephanie and Martin Kenny, Families Matter Shared Lives Service

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# Foreword

## Marie Roulston

Director of Social Care & Children's Services  
Health & Social Care Board



I am very pleased to introduce the 'State of Shared Lives in Northern Ireland' report funded by the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB) and produced by Shared Lives Plus.

We are working with the five Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCTs) and Shared Lives Plus, to expand the use of Shared Lives care in Northern Ireland. Shared Lives is also traditionally referred to as adult placement by several schemes in Northern Ireland. The current expansion project is possible thanks to funding from the Department of Health Transformation Program.

This report provides a useful baseline in relation to a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges

in delivering an expansion of a Shared Lives approach as the sector develops in Northern Ireland.

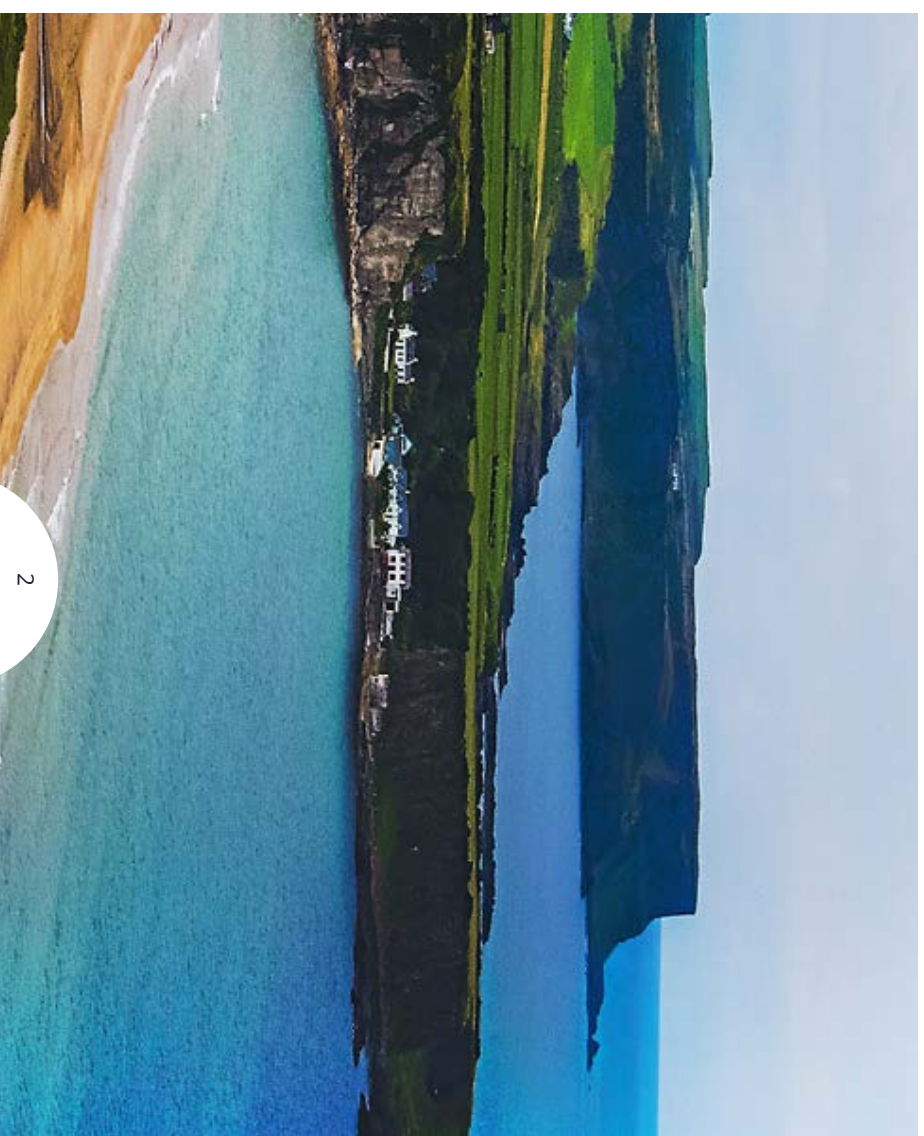
Shared Lives is an alternative to home care, care homes and day opportunities for people in need of support. Its approach offers personalised, quality care where carers share their lives and homes with the people they support. It provides people with the support they need to live as independently as possible and build a full life in their communities. It also offers them greater choice of who provides support and where they receive it. Shared Lives offers great care at a reasonable cost. It is rare that very personalised services can be both excellent in quality and highly competitive financially.

What sets Shared Lives apart is its ability to develop meaningful relationships between people and their scheme carers, something that is sometimes missing in traditional care and support services. Individuals who need support are matched with approved and compatible carers and families, who support and include the person in their family and community life.

This report provides a broad overview of the state of Shared Lives in Northern Ireland currently operating in four of the Health and Social Care Trusts (Belfast

HSCT, Northern HSCT, Southern HSCT and Western HSCT).

I hope that we can spread this message about Shared Lives much more widely and that we can, by working together, see significant growth in numbers of people supported in coming years.



# Adult placement definition

- Under Adult Placement Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 an “adult placement carer is defined as a person who enters into an agreement with an adult placement agency to provide care or support for persons in need, which may include accommodation in the carer’s home.”
- The adult placement model is commonly referred to as Shared Lives in England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland three health trust schemes broadly refer to it as adult placement but also use different brand names for each of their schemes. The remaining scheme is commissioned by Belfast Trust from a third sector provider (Positive Futures) who uses ‘Shared Lives’ in its name and branding.
- At the core of adult placement is providing care in a more normal setting, sharing family and community life. An adult needing care moves in with, or regularly visits an approved adult placement carer after careful matching and agreement of both people. In Northern Ireland adult placement is normally offered to people aged 18+ but it is used by people aged 16+ in other parts of the UK.
- The outcomes can be startling, with people reporting feeling settled, valued and like they belong for the first time in their lives. They make friends and get involved in clubs, activities and volunteering, all of which strengthens their relationships and our communities.

**“Shared Lives (adult placement) offers an alternative approach for people who need support, where trained Shared Lives carers share their own homes and family lives with adults after a careful matching process. This approach has a strong track record as a social care service going back many years and... continues to grow in what is an increasingly challenging context for social care. ”**

Simon Stevens, Chief Executive, NHS England



# Key messages

Key findings for the period April 2017- March 2018 include:

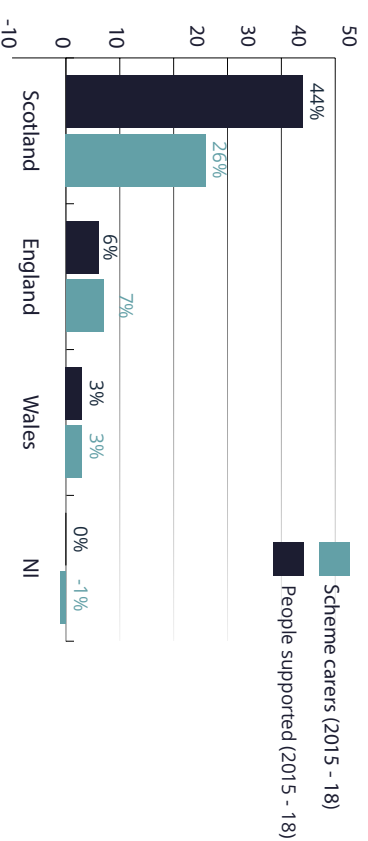
- 221 adults with a learning disability were supported by adult placement schemes in Northern Ireland. The total number of people supported remained static in the three year period from 2015 - 2018.
- There are 214 scheme carers in Northern Ireland, a small decrease between 2015 - 18.
- Adult placement schemes are well managed and deliver safe and high-quality care in Northern Ireland. Annual RQIA inspections in 2018 for all schemes highlighted good practice across key inspection areas with no areas for improvement. Shared Lives is consistently rated as one of the highest performing social care models by regulators in the rest of the UK.
- Northern Trusts ‘Share the Care’ adult placement scheme accounts for 54% of adults accessing support and 51% of scheme carers in Northern Ireland, reflecting greater investment and higher staff numbers compared to other schemes.
- Most of the support provided in Northern Ireland is short breaks in the homes of scheme carers (49%) followed by day support (26%) and longer-term care arrangements of over 4 weeks (24%).
- The most effective methods of recruiting carers for schemes is word of mouth and leaflets followed by presentations to local groups and Health Trust websites.

- Adult placement is currently supporting just under 3% of all adults with a learning disability in Northern Ireland in receipt of a social care service. This is low compared to other types of social care support accessed by adults with a learning disability<sup>1</sup>: day centres (41%), supported housing (13%) and residential / nursing homes (16%). In the best performing schemes in England, 10% of the learning disability population in a local authority area are being supported in an adult placement care arrangement.

- The number of people accessing adult placement is also low when compared to other regional models of social care. For example, in March 2018, there were approx. 2,100 foster care families in Northern Ireland and 2,451 children were being fostered<sup>2</sup>.

- The challenges that schemes face in Northern Ireland especially in relation to carer payment rates and recruitment has hampered overall recruitment of carers and growth in the numbers of people being supported. Use of the adult placement model is growing in other parts of the UK in relation to overall numbers of people being supported and numbers of carers being recruited.

## Growth of Shared Lives across UK 2015 - 2018



<sup>1</sup> 2013-14 figures - Review of adult learning disability community services phase II – Oct 2016 - RQIA

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/advice-information/all-about-fostering/fostering-statistics>

# Regional expansion project 2018 - 19

- The Department of Health has supported a transformation bid in 2018 from the Health & Social Care Board to expand the adult placement model in Northern Ireland. This was to expand capacity for adults with a learning disability and develop and offer services to older people and other groups.
- A regional project group has been established with representatives from both learning disability and older persons directorates across all five Health & Social Care Trusts. This is led by the Health & Social Care Board and a Shared Lives Plus representative also sits on this group.
- This regional group has also established several working groups including:
  - Regional processes (including rates of pay)
  - Co-production
  - Quality assurance and performance
  - Recruitment & training for staff and host carers
  - PR and communications
- The Health & Social Care Board has released funding for dedicated project staff in each Health Trust to support the scaling up of the model.



# Current challenges

- Very low awareness levels within the Health & Social Care sector and among the general public about adult placement as an option, for example, compared to fostering.
- Schemes currently pay different rates of pay to carers – some of these allowances are considered very low by potential carers especially in comparison to other options e.g. direct payments.
- No regional approach to communications or branding e.g. the four current schemes all use different brand names and communications.
- Just under 50% of carers in Northern Ireland are aged 50+. This represents a challenge in the next 5-10 years to attract younger carers to support the longer-term sustainability and growth of schemes.
- Recruiting carers from a broader base of experience and background e.g. many current carers have looked after a child with a learning disability and then moved into an adult placement arrangement.
- Current Health Trust structures do not make it easy for the model to move across and expand into other areas of adult care. Adult placement has grown in the rest of the UK to support a much broader group of vulnerable adults.
- Three of four schemes in Northern Ireland are delivering their adult placement services with relatively small teams; equivalent of 2-3 full-time staff. Expanding services requires further investment.
- Some potential and existing carers feel that the recruitment process can be very bureaucratic and intrusive with ongoing monitoring and inspections.
- The term “volunteer” is sometimes used to describe an adult placement carer. Adult placement carers are dedicated people and may have volunteering experience, but they cannot be defined as volunteers once they undertake this role, as it is a paid role:




**Adult Placement carers are classed as self-employed by HMRC, and are paid caring allowances, not expenses. They are also entitled to a tax break as adult placement carers under qualifying care relief legislation because they provide care and support in their own home.**

# Our role

Shared Lives Plus is the national membership charity for shared living in the UK – we do not run schemes. We support our members who are schemes and carers with guidance, best practice, a community of people sharing their lives, legal advice and insurance. We promote supportive shared living through Shared Lives and Homeshare, with local and national governments. We believe everyone should be able to choose who they spend time with - and do what matters to them. We want to reduce loneliness and help make our communities more connected.

There are 153 adult placement schemes in the UK (including four in Northern Ireland). 95% of all adult placement schemes in the UK are members of Shared Lives Plus.

## Key services

	Support member schemes & carers		Evaluation tool - My Shared Life
	Strategic advice - government & commissioners		Quality framework - schemes
	Carer insurance, helplines, legal advice		UK performance reports

## Northern Ireland

The National Lottery Community Fund with support from NESTA has funded a development post since late 2016 in Northern Ireland. This role is to support the wider expansion of the model in Northern Ireland both within learning disability but also out to other groups, including older people. This reflects the wider uptake and growth of adult placement in other parts of the UK.



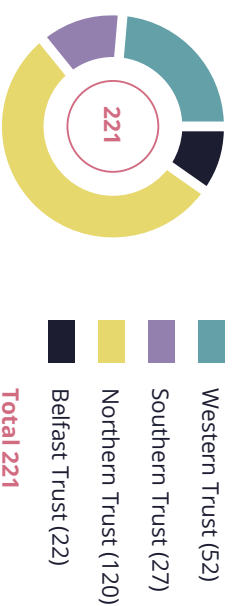


# Northern Ireland statistics April 2017-March 2018

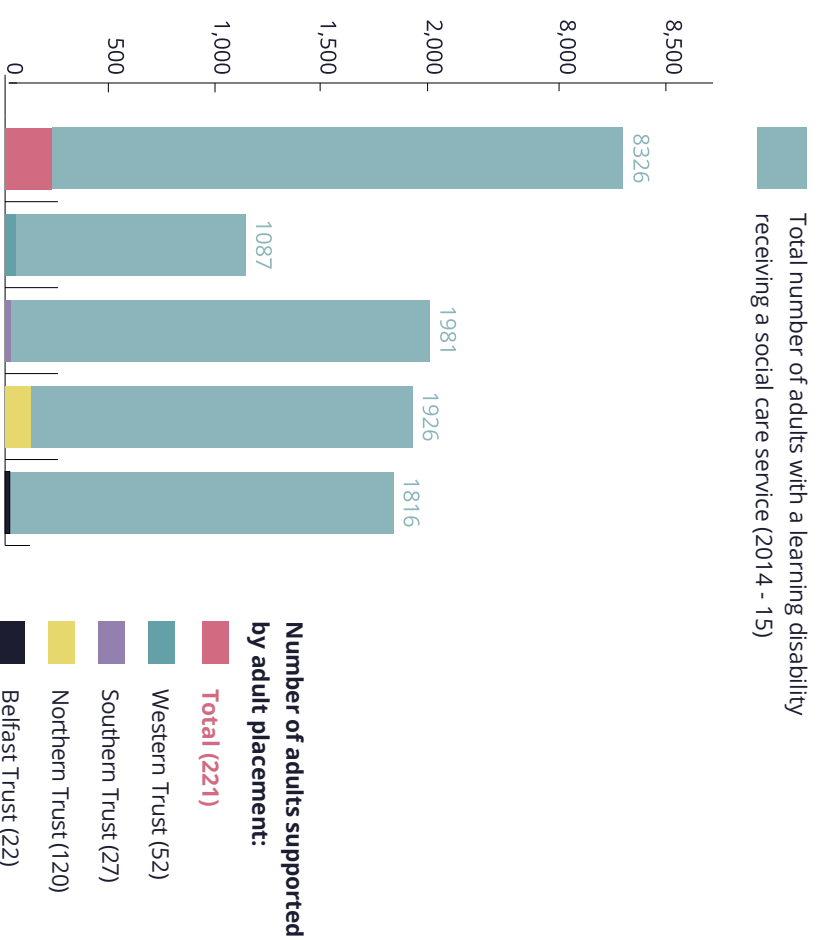
Key statistics for the period April 2017- March 2018 include:

- The number of people supported by Share the Care scheme (Northern Trust) is bigger than the combined total of people supported by the other three schemes.
- Nearly 80% of people supported by schemes in Northern Ireland are aged between 25-64.
- Both Northern and Western Trust schemes deliver significantly more short breaks care than other schemes.
- Adult placement schemes are supporting between 1 - 6% of adults with a learning disability in their Health Trust area as a proportion of all adults with a learning disability in receipt of a social care service.
- The number of adults with a learning disability being supported in Northern Ireland would triple if all four Trust schemes were able to support 10% of adults with a learning disability in receipt of a social care service in their Trust area.

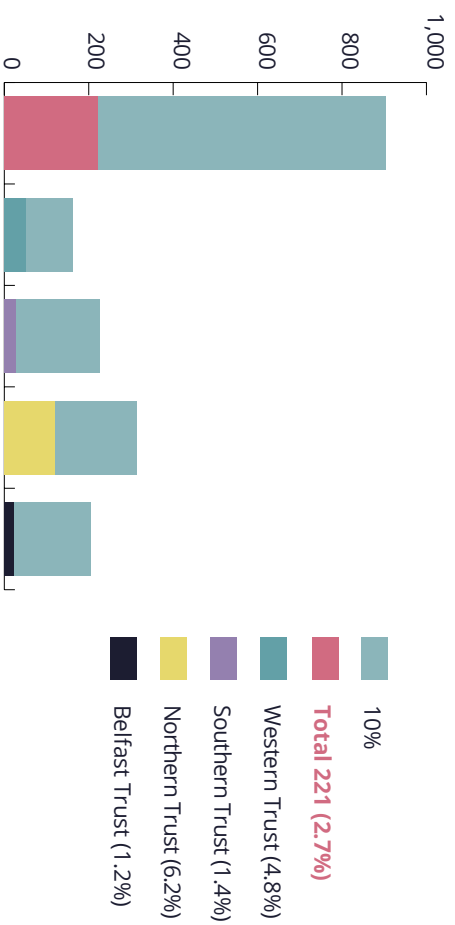
## Number people supported by Health Trust



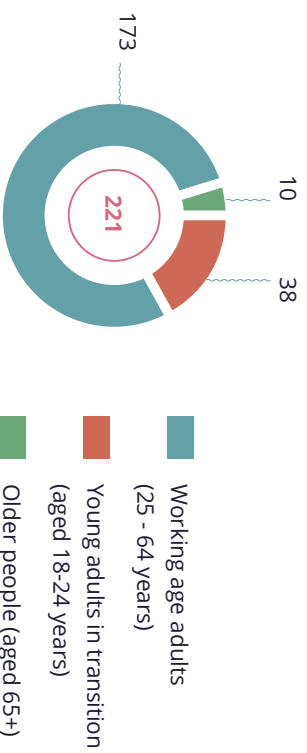
## Adult placement use compared to number of adults with a learning disability who receive social care, by Health Trust



Use of adult placement, by Health Trust, compared to supporting 10% of the total number of adults with a learning disability receiving social care<sup>3</sup>

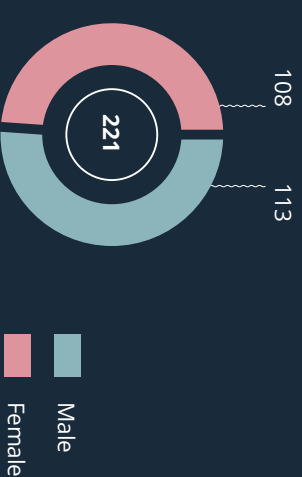


## Age profile of people supported in Northern Ireland



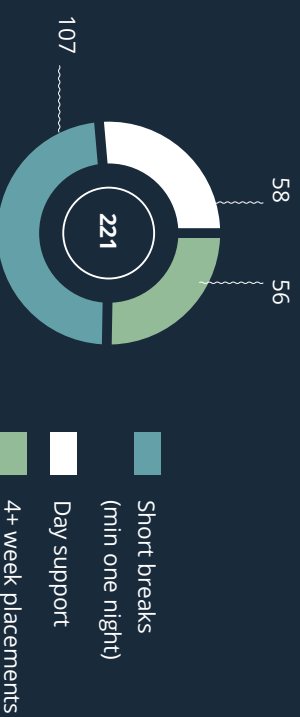
<sup>3</sup> 2017-18 adult placement figures compared to adult LD statistics (2014-15) in Review of adult learning disability community services phase II – published Oct 2016 - RQIA

## Gender of people supported in Northern Ireland

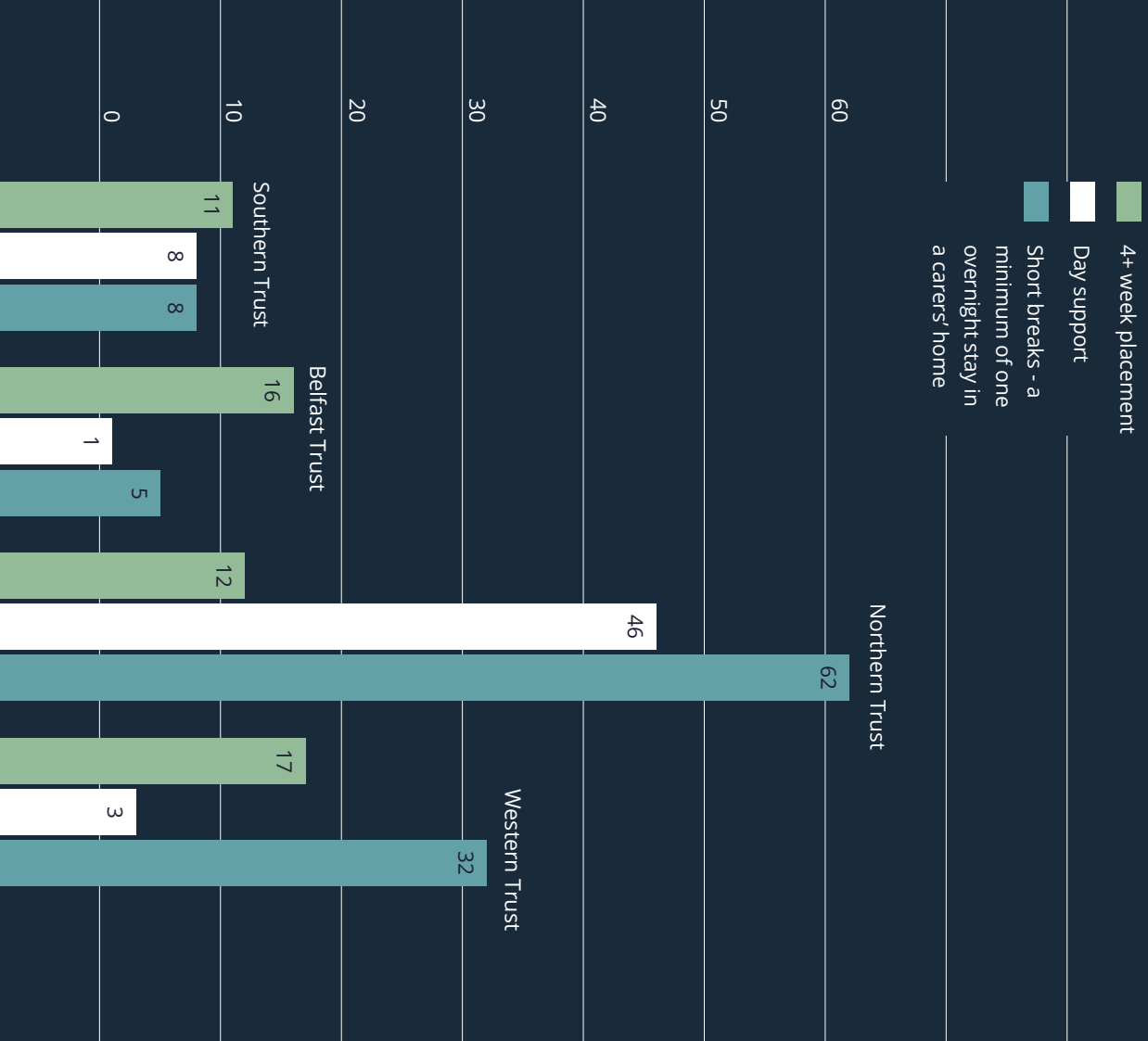


## Type of care provided

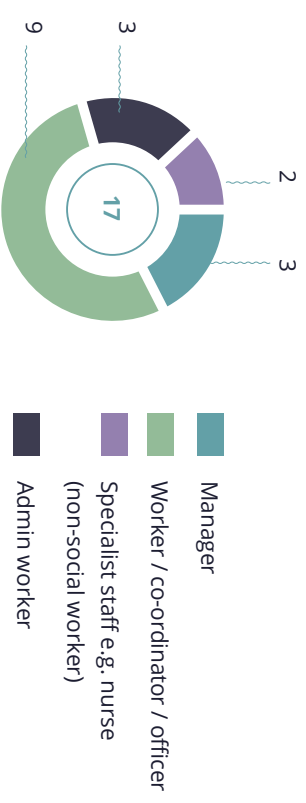
49% of adult placement care provided across Northern Ireland is short breaks, 26% is day support, followed by 25% longer term care placements.



## Type of care provided by Health Trust

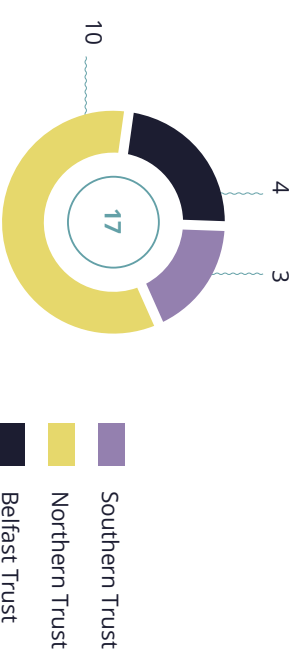


## Analysis of Scheme staff in Northern Ireland



## Comparison of staff numbers across Health Trusts

- full and part time posts



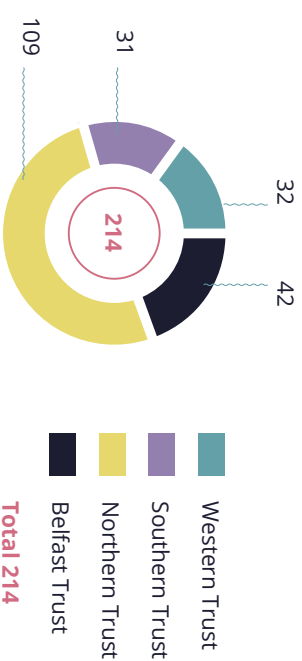
18

# Scheme carers

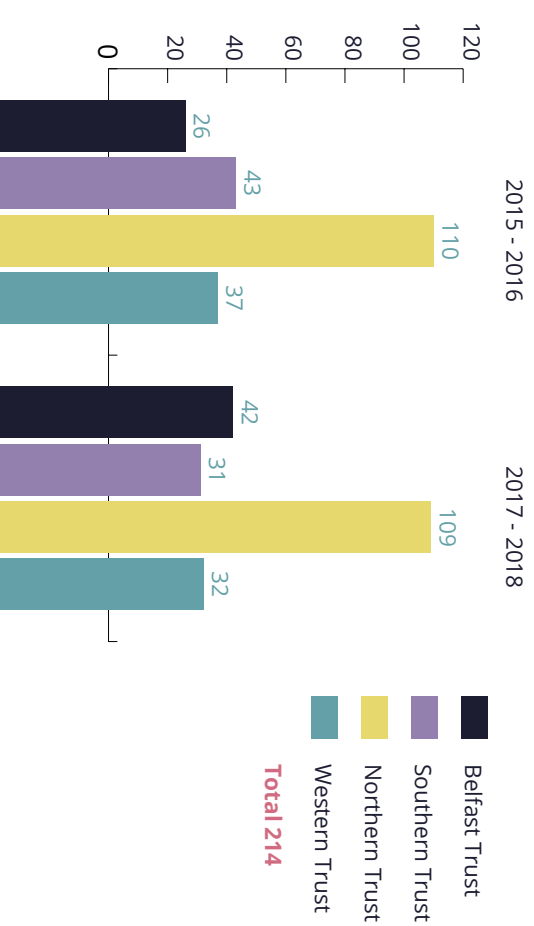
## Key findings

- The number of carers in three of the four schemes over the period 2015 – 18 has reduced to 214.
- 45% of carers in the Southern Trust are aged 65+ (70% of all scheme carers would be aged 50+).
- 30% of carers in the Belfast Trust commissioned scheme are aged 65+ (80% of all carers are aged 50+).
- Over 60% of scheme carers in the Northern Trust and 85% of scheme carers in the Western Trust are aged between 18-50.
- Nearly 80% of adult placement carers in Northern Ireland are female.

## Number of scheme carers by Health Trust

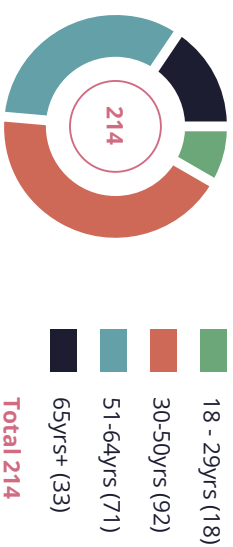


## Scheme carer numbers by Health Trust 2015 - 2018

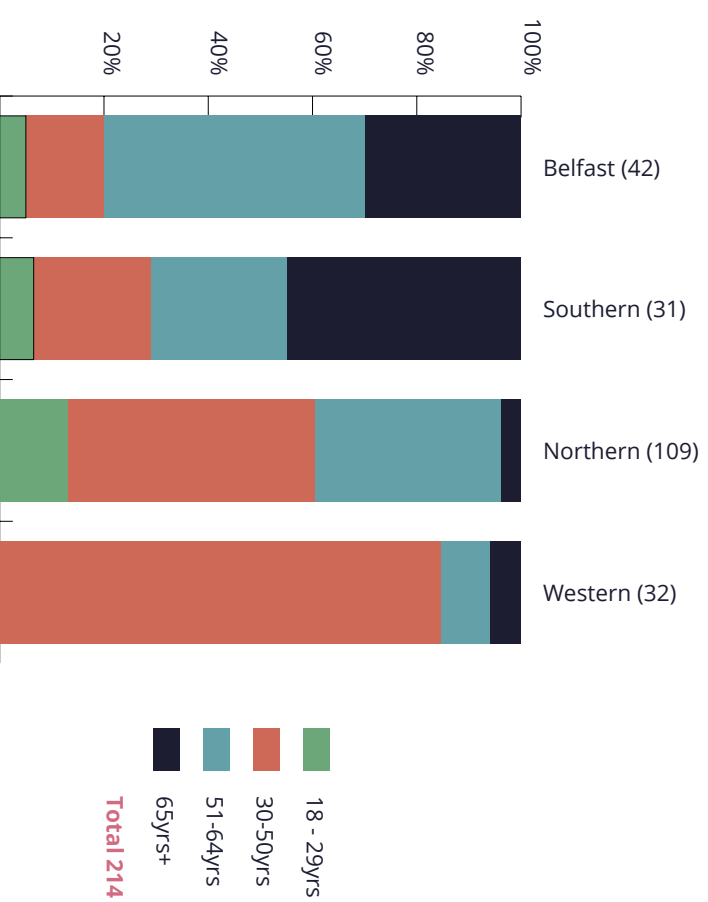




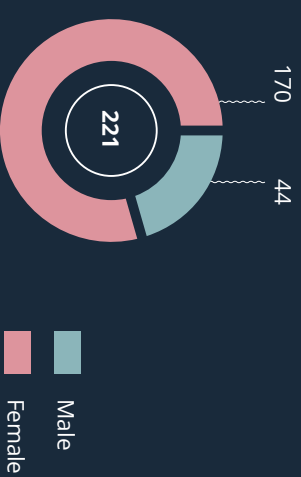
## Age of scheme carers in Northern Ireland



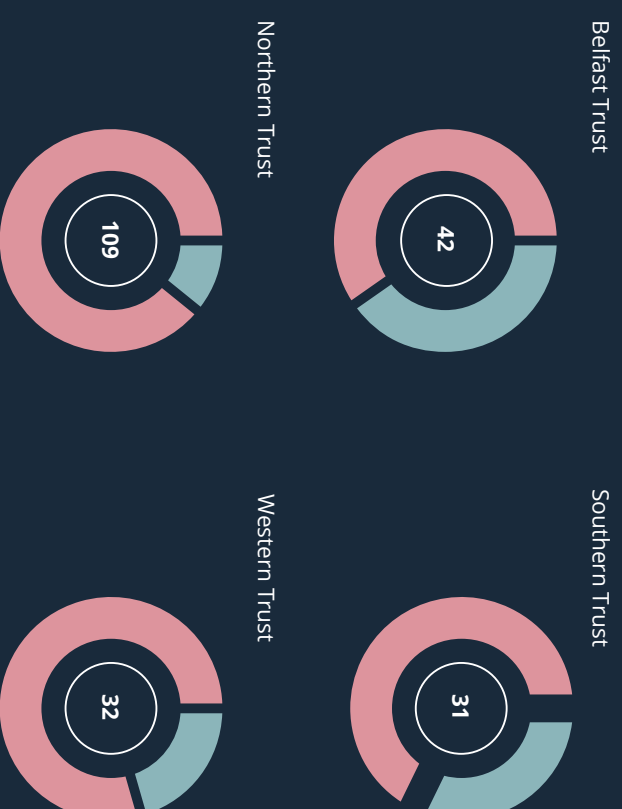
## Age of scheme carers by Health Trust



## Adult placement carer gender in Northern Ireland

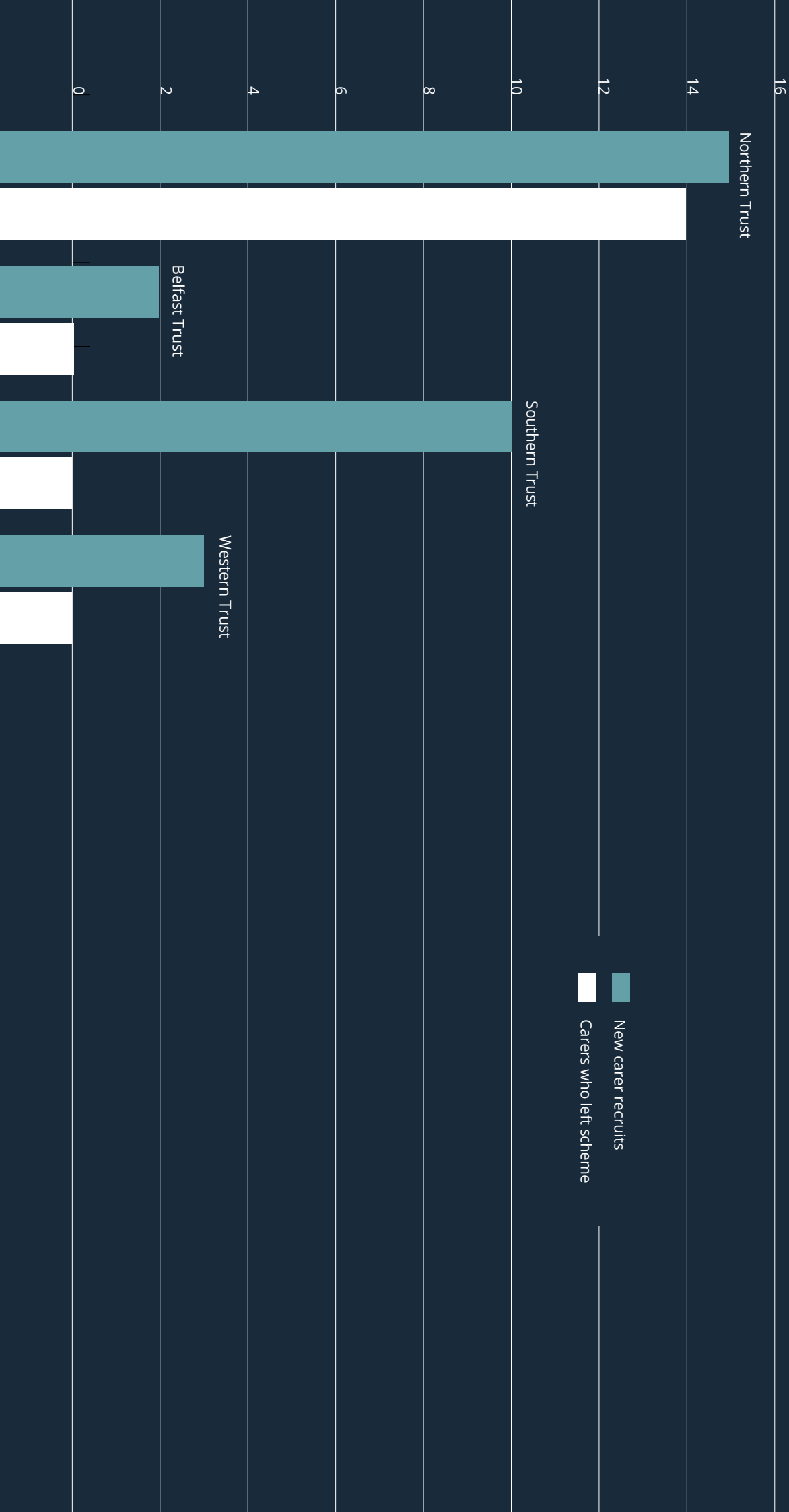


## Scheme carer gender by Health Trust



# Scheme carer recruitment by Health Trust

## April 2017 - March 2018





## Personal stories

# Families Matter

## Shared Lives service

### Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

### Paul's story

Paul lived with Mary, his foster carer, since he was very young and grew up regarding her as his mother. He fondly called her 'Mum'. Paul also enjoyed the company of his 'foster cousin' Rose, who frequently visited Mary's house with her family.

Over the last few years Mary struggled with cancer and in September 2015, the cancer became much more aggressive. Realising that her aunt was in deteriorating health and would struggle to look after Paul, Rose decided that she wanted to provide support for Paul. Through Families Matter Shared Lives Service, Rose and her husband Martin were approved as short-term carers for Paul in September 2015. It meant they were able to provide short breaks for Paul during Mary's illness.

Sadly, Mary passed away in February 2016. Already familiar with the house through his short breaks with them, Paul was able to move in with Rose and Martin and make it his permanent home. He has benefited from living with the family, who are warm and caring and encourage Paul in all aspects of his life.

Rose and Martin have fully embraced the ethos of Shared Lives.

Families Matter Shared Lives enabled Paul to be supported through his grief by people he knew, who cared about him and enabled him to move on to become a permanent part of a new warm and loving home. Recently Rose's daughter, Sarah, was also approved as a Shared Lives carer, and cares for Paul when Rose and Martin have breaks away.

Paul, along with his carers, is a frequent visitor to Shared Lives events where he enjoys meeting other people. Martin is also a Shared Lives champion and helps to promote the service and recruit new carers.

# Shared Care

## Southern Health & Social Care Trust

2017 - 18

### Rosemary, Gabrielle & Sean's story

Rosemary is a young woman supported in a live in placement by Gabrielle and Sean Haughey, host family carers.

She is on a training course and associated supported work placement four days a week. Rosemary enjoys living on the family farm and on her day off, in the evenings or at weekends she loves helping to care for her own pet rooster, the two dogs Riley and Fred, and the four cats. She also loves going with Gabrielle to visit the grandchildren.

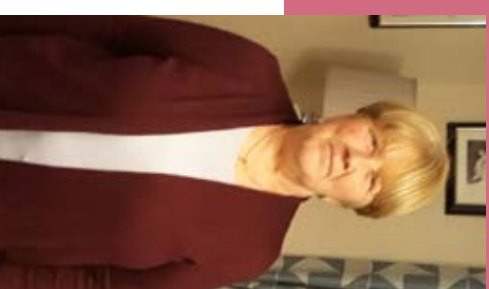
Gabrielle says: "Rosemary is very caring, involved in everything they do and she's part of the family."

When Gabrielle and Sean plan time away together, Rosemary may be supported in their home by their daughter Sile, who has also been approved by the Shared Care scheme. When all the family are away together, Rosemary can have a short break with Lily, who has also been assessed and "matched" with Rosemary's interests and support needs.

Lily likes "helping others and the variety it brings to my life" while Rosemary enjoys taking her teddy bear to visit Lily, who "looks after it too".



~~~~~ Rosemary and Gabrielle enjoying the garden



~~~~~ Lily



~~~~~ Gabrielle and her daughter Sile



# Adult placement regulation

All adult placement schemes need to register with RQIA.

It also undertakes annual inspections underpinned by the following:

- Adult Placement Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007
- Draft minimum standards for adult placement agencies which were produced in 2005 and currently seen as good practice guidance
- The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- Previous inspections outcomes and information received since previous inspections

## RQIA assesses agencies in four areas:



Is care safe?

Avoiding and preventing harm to service users from the care, treatment and support that is intended to help them.



Is care effective?

The right care at the right time in the right place with the best outcome.



Is care compassionate?

Service users are treated with dignity and respect and should be fully involved in decisions affecting their treatment, care and support.



Is the service well led?

Effective leadership, management and governance, which creates a culture focused on the needs and experiences of service users in order to deliver safe, effective and compassionate care.

**“In Northern Ireland, the people who use Adult Placement Agencies are in the main, individuals with a learning disability. Inspection outcomes would indicate that the model works well for the people who use these services and there were no areas for improvement identified during our most recent inspections.”**

RQIA, May 2019 (see next page)

## Inspection outcomes March 2018

| Health Trust   | Registered scheme name                                           | Inspection reports:<br>4 schemes (March 2018)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Belfast Trust  | Positive Futures<br>Families Matter<br>Shared Lives Service      | <b>Evidence of good practice was found in all 4 schemes in the following areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• carer recruitment</li> <li>• induction</li> <li>• communication and engagement with service users and other relevant stakeholders</li> <li>• person-centred care</li> <li>• carer training</li> <li>• quality monitoring</li> <li>• home monitoring visits</li> <li>• announced/unannounced</li> </ul> |
| Western Trust  | Lakeview Adult<br>Placement Agency                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Southern Trust | Southern Health &<br>Social Care Trust adult<br>placement scheme |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Northern Trust | Causeway Share<br>the Care Scheme                                | No areas for improvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

<https://www.rqia.org.uk/inspections/view-inspections-as/map/>

## Expansion of adult placement

RQIA has also met with the Health & Social Care Board on several occasions in relation to plans to expand the model both within learning disability and to older people and other groups. It has not identified any regulatory issues in relation to the model being expanded to support the reform of adult social care in Northern Ireland.

# The cost of adult placement

One of the regional expansion projects key aims is to develop new regional carer payment rates. Some schemes recognise that over time pay rates have varied and some rates are so low that they are acting as a disincentive to potential new carers. This is not the case across all Health Trusts. Self-Directed Support (SDS) has been launched in recent years and offers a more attractive option for many people who would like to provide day and overnight care.

## Day and short breaks

Each scheme in Northern Ireland has developed separate day and short breaks rates. Some schemes use a points-based tool to determine the level of carer payment. Payments are for an agreed number of hours rather than by the hour.

Several schemes acknowledge that their day and short breaks rates are very low when compared to other types of payments available e.g. direct payments. For example, one scheme pays £15 per session (up to 8 hours).

## Longer-term care arrangements

Schemes have developed different payment bands for longer term care placements which reflect service user need and the level of care provided.

For example, weekly banding payments for one scheme range from over £300 to just under £425.

## Adult Placement cost savings



Average £26,000 a year cheaper than other forms of care for people with learning disabilities.



Average £8,000 a year cheaper for adults with mental health problems

# Conclusions and next steps

- Expanding the adult placement model offers a unique opportunity to support the transformation of adult social care in Northern Ireland. If scaled up, it could be offered to many more vulnerable adults and their families who are looking to access more person-centred and community-based care.
- Adult placement schemes also deliver well managed and safe care as evidenced by RQIA inspection reports which underline the high quality of care provided. This compares favourably to other more traditional models of adult social care which are under increasing pressure, often driven by time constraints in relation to the care provided.
- The statistics in this report underline that while the adult placement model is well established in Northern Ireland, the overall number of people being supported is not growing unlike all other parts of the UK. This applies to both the numbers of people using adult placement and the numbers of scheme carers regionally.
- The model faces several challenges which need to be addressed collaboratively with key stakeholders working together to enable the model to flourish and expand. These include:
  - low awareness levels about the model
  - no consistency around scheme carer payment rates which are often so low (day/short breaks) that they act as a disincentive to potential carers
  - different brand names for services
  - current Health Trust structures do not make it easy for adult placement to expand into other adult care directorates
  - the carer base in some schemes is growing older with a significant number aged 50+ - this represents a longer-term threat to sustainability if more younger carers are not recruited
  - concerns from existing and potential carers about the amount of paperwork and scrutiny involved
  - many schemes operate with a small core of staff who do an excellent job but greater investment in schemes would be required to support a significant scaling up of capacity
- The current project led by the Health & Social Care Board in conjunction with all five Health Trusts represents a significant opportunity to develop a regional vision and strategy for growing the adult placement model of care. If this opportunity is not grasped there is a real risk that the total number of people being supported by adult placement in Northern Ireland may not grow significantly in coming years.

# About us

Shared Lives Plus is the UK's membership network for shared living, supporting more than 150 Shared Lives schemes across the UK, 20 Homeshare schemes and nearly 6,000 Shared Lives carers. We have a unique overview that informs the support and guidance we provide to our members and enables us to be a voice for the service with governments and decision makers. We are funded by our membership, but mainly significant project grants, including the Welsh Government, UK Government, NHS England, Big Lottery Fund, Accelerating Ideas and Nesta, Lloyds Bank Foundation of England and Wales, Pears and Dunhill Medical Trust.



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## Acknowledgements

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- Health & Social Care Board
- Share the Care – Northern Health & Social Care Trust
- Shared Care – Southern Health & Social Care Trust
- Families Matter Shared Lives Service – (Positive Futures) – Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
- Adult Placement and Host Care – Western Health & Social Care Service
- Service-users and carers from both Shared Care and Families Matter Shared Lives Service whose stories are included in the report


### Contact us

Please contact us if you would like an informal chat, more information or you are interested in investing or setting up a new scheme.

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