Contact details

If you think you could meet this challenge or just want more information contact:

Share the Care Team
Senior Practitioner
Learning Disability Team
Rathlea House
Mountfern Complex
8a Rugby venue
Coleraine BT52 1JL
Tel: 028 7034 7871
Cookstown and Magherafelt area
phone 028 7936 5000
Ballymena area phone 028 2566 7150

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) is the independent body responsible for monitoring and inspecting the availability and quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland, and encouraging improvements in the quality of those services.

You can contact the RQIA at:
9th Floor Riverside Tower
5 Lanyon Place, Belfast
BT1 3BT
Tel: 028 9051 7500
email: info@northerntrust.hscni.net
web: www.northerntrust.hscni.net

This document is available, on request, in accessible formats, including Braille, disk, audio cassette and minority languages.
What is Shared Care?

Adults with a learning disability in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area need your help and support, as do their families and carers. The demands of caring for a person with a learning disability can be very stressful.

Carers and other family members need the chance to have a break from the everyday responsibilities associated with looking after someone with a disability. The Share the Care scheme allows families to have a break from these demands and responsibilities.

There are approximately 500 adults with a learning disability living at home in the Causeway area. The degree of disability ranges from mild to severe. Some adults also have physical disabilities.

How can I help?

If you have time and energy to spare, and can offer a friendly home on an occasional basis to an adult with a learning disability - then you may just be the person we are looking for.

Do you need special qualifications?

The answer is No!

The best qualities you can have are patience and understanding. You do not need to have a family of your own but you do need to have time and a genuine desire to help. Experience in working with adults with a learning disability, although not essential, would be an advantage.

What help will I get?

Help will be offered in a number of ways.

Training
You will be expected to participate in some training e.g. first aid, manual handling, and management of medicines. These will be led by experienced medical, nursing and social work staff. The training will be aimed at giving you a basic understanding of what is involved in working with adults with learning disabilities, and will offer advice on how to handle problems which might arise.

Advice and preparation
Joining in Share the Care is a big responsibility and not to be taken lightly, even if you are only hosting people for short breaks.

Before you join the scheme, a social worker will visit you and talk in detail about the extent of your current commitments and whether you could take on this responsibility.

You and your family will be prepared thoroughly for your guest. You would have the opportunity of meeting your guest prior to respite placement and he/she would spend some preparatory sessions in your home “getting to know you”.

Support
Throughout the whole process you will have the close guidance and support of Share the Care scheme and multi-disciplinary staff within the learning disability team. You will also receive an allowance to cover all the expenses of looking after your guest.