

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

ADOPTER RECRUITMENT

Adopter Enquiries / Pre Stage 1

Enquiries will be received by telephone, email or via the Adoption Counts website. The information pack will be emailed out or sent by post if specifically requested. Written information will be provided within 24 hours of enquiry.

An online enquiry form will be completed on the website by the person making the enquiry and this will be forwarded to recruitment and enquiry staff via an automated system. The form will automatically be populated to CHARMS. A telephone response will be provided within 24 hours of receiving the enquiry by recruitment staff in the hub. . This will be an initial enquiry call during which brief information will be obtained in order to inform an initial decision about whether or not to invite to an information event. The majority of initial enquiry calls will take place within office hours but where there are specific reasons why the enquirer cannot do this a call will be offered in the early evening. A social worker in a spoke team will be asked to undertake this. Where an enquirer is not being invited further into the process advice and where appropriate signposting information with a view to signposting to the National Gateway for Adoption and / or other agencies.

Information events will be promoted as the most effective means of providing the information. In rare circumstances where a potential adopter is not able to attend the event the information will be offered either via a pre-arranged telephone call or if preferable to them a visit will be made to their home by a social worker. The decision to invite to information event can be made by the recruitment officer and recruitment manager. The recruitment manager will consult with a social work qualified manager in making these decisions at any stage in the process where enquiries contain complex issues.

Information events to take place every 10 working days at agreed venues across the agency's 3 spoke model. The events will not be publicised on the open website and will be offered only after an initial conversation has taken place and decision made to progress to this stage. Events will be scheduled across the region every 10 working days and the next available event will be offered. If this is declined in favour of waiting longer to attend one nearer to their home address this will be recorded on the CHARMS adopter record along with the reason why.

Information events will follow the agreed consistent format (See Appendix) with a DVD and will be delivered by a team manager unless unavailable in which case another manager,

recruitment manager or senior practitioner will present. A recruitment and assessment social worker will also attend the event. People attending events will be asked to complete a questionnaire by email or at the event providing feedback on the information they have been given and their experience with Adoption Counts.

Where possible those attending events will be offered an opportunity to have a conversation with a member of staff at the event to answer any initial questions. If this is not possible due to time / staffing a telephone conversation will be arranged as soon as possible.

Following the information event potential adopters will contact recruitment staff at the hub by telephone or email to arrange for an initial assessment call to take place. This process will be explained at the event. This conversation will be to answer any further questions and enable a decision to be made about proceeding further. The conversation will follow the agreed criteria (Appendix / template). If the potential adopter has not made contact within ten working days of the information event the recruitment staff will contact the potential adopters to enquire about their decision, to offer to answer further questions and to request feedback. The outcome of this call and reason for not proceeding will be recorded on the CHARMS adopter record.

Following the initial assessment call, and where the individual or couple wish to proceed, the decision as to whether to proceed to initial assessment visit will be made by the recruitment manager within 24 hours and the potential adopter informed. The majority will be informed the same day (or at the end of the call if the conversation was with the recruitment manager). Where the enquiry contains a complex practice issue referral to social work qualified manager would be made to assist with this decision.

The recruitment officer / manager will contact the potential adopter within 24 hours (or at the end of the call if the decision is made) to arrange date / time of initial assessment visit.

The initial assessment visit will be undertaken by a recruitment and assessment social worker from a spoke office. Where the potential adopter lives in one of the five local authority areas the spoke covering this area will take the enquiry. Where the potential adopter lives outside of the local authority areas the spoke office within the closest traveling time will be allocated the enquiry. Enquiries will also be allocated based on capacity and distribution of work across the agency but every effort will be made to avoid unnecessary additional travel for adopters or staff.

The recruitment worker will access a shared calendar (accessible to hub and spoke staff) and this will already be populated with time slots from duty social worker rota. Slots will be available at 9am, 12pm, 3pm. and 6pm. (the last slot available on a Friday will be 3pm). Adopters will be encouraged to be available for visits in normal office hours to keep evening working to a minimum.

The recruitment worker will email the named social worker to undertake visit. The potential adopter to be given by telephone and email the date, time and name of social worker doing visit. The social worker could if needed change the precise time of the visit but it should take place on the day scheduled. The initial assessment visit must take place within 2 weeks of the detailed conversation. The social worker will follow the areas contained in the initial assessment visit template and record the visit in this document. A decision as to whether to invite the enquirer to register their interest will need be made within a timescale of 5 days

following the visit. This allows 3 days for worker to write report and 2 days for spoke team manager to make decision. The manager's decision will be recorded in the initial assessment visit template.

The recruitment staff will be advised of decision. The social worker who undertook the visit will advise the enquirer along with the reasons by telephone. Where the decision is negative the social worker will explain the reasons why and offer advice about next steps or signposting to other agencies if appropriate. If the decision is positive an ROI will be sent from Hub. The ROI will be returned to the hub staff by prospective adopters and recruitment staff will notify spoke manager within 24 hours.

When issuing the ROI the hub staff will provisionally book the adopter onto a rolling programme of preparation training.

The recruitment staff will monitor / track ROI decisions and timescales.

Appendices

Pre-stage 1 flow chart

Initial enquiry form

Information event format

Initial assessment call template

Initial Assessment Visit Template

Adoption Counts branded ROI