Unaccompanied Minors

by Zain - Tuesday, August 21, 2012

http://www.higherlevelcare.org/services/unaccompanied-minors/

HLC provides two levels of care for Unaccompanied Minors. Temporary care is provided in partnership with the London Asylum Seekers Consortium (LASC) and more permanent care is provided in conjunction with the local authorities.

Sophia House in Croydon is run in partnership with LASC. It looks to temporarily house unaccompanied minors while they are being allocated a local authority. Placements typically last between 1 and 7 days, although they can sometimes be longer.

Long-term Residence

HLC also offers semi independent care to unaccompanied minors though local authorities, for example, when they come out of a temporary residence such as Sophia House. The goal of our unaccompanied minor service is to help integrate residents into the wider community in a safe and secure environment.

Accommodation

Unaccompanied minors put in the long-term care of HLC are usually housed in self-contained flats.

Staffing

Staff provide cover on a “needs” basis to encourage self development, they work closely with the young people and their social workers. Night-staff are on the premises to support clients with cooking and any issues that may arise. Key work sessions are carried out once/twice a week focusing on client’s present state and helping to achieve goals set by the clients and social workers.

Personal Support Plans

Each resident will be allocated a Key Worker; during the initial four-week assessment period an individual Personal Support Plan will be devised. This support plan is reviewed so staff can work towards helping residents’ move-on into independent accommodation where appropriate. HLC has developed an Outreach Support Service whereby service users establish tenancies in the community.

Opportunities

Residents are encouraged to take advantage of the many opportunities available whilst they are with us. Courses are available at local colleges, and connexions. In some cases qualifications can be achieved. There is a health and fitness centre and a strong emphasis is placed upon encouraging residents to adopt a
healthy lifestyle. Staff are available to teach cooking and other everyday life skills.

**Conduct**

Rules are kept to a minimum, in order to instil self-responsibility, but some are necessary and include:

- Behaviour to one another and guests is expected to be of a reasonable standard.
- Alcohol and drugs are not allowed inside the house.
- Guests are not allowed in resident’s bedrooms without prior permission.
- Residents are expected to be active in seeking employment or training where this is part of the Personal Support Plan.
- Residents are required to keep their rooms’ clean and communal areas tidy and to assist in the gardens.

**Length of Stay**

The staff and social workers determine this. Where appropriate, the aim is to help individuals achieve independence, so that they can proceed to move into their own place, confident that they have the skills to succeed.

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