

# Highland Partnership

## Short Break Services Statement

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## Introduction:

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into effect in April 2018. The Act places a duty (under section 35) on Local Authorities to prepare and publish a Short Breaks Services Statement (SBSS). These statements provide information about the short break services available locally and across Scotland for carers and the person or people they care for. This information needs to be accessible to, and proportionate to the needs of, the persons to whom it is provided.

This Short Break Services Statement (SBSS) is designed to provide you, as an unpaid carer, with information about the type of short break services available both locally and across Scotland for both you as a carer and for the person or people you care for.

This Statement has been developed collaboratively by NHS Highland, The Highland Council, and carer organisations. It includes information gleaned from the informed views of local carers, people with care and support needs, practitioners, and representatives from a range of agencies. By working together, we believe this has enabled us to have a greater understanding about what people want and need from a short break.





## Background:

By developing a statement, we want carers in Highland to consider whether a planned short break might make a positive difference to their life; and by giving them a better understanding of what a short break might look like help them envisage how it could make that difference.

The content of this statement has been informed and developed by what carers have told us in our consultation around the Carers Strategy and other development work. The statement will continue to be reviewed and updated in line with feedback from carers.

The aim of the statement is to help carers and cared-for people understand:

1. What short breaks are
2. Who can access them
3. What short break opportunities are available in our area and across Scotland to carers, and
4. How carers can:
  - access short breaks and find further information
  - identify what a short break means for them, and how they can be supported to meet their needs and achieve their outcomes

It will also support professionals and organisations delivering carer services to support carers to access bespoke short breaks.

In Highland we are committed to ensuring that carers who need one, have access to meaningful, personalised short breaks.

## What is a Short Break?

We know that providing unpaid care can be a rewarding task: however, it can also be tiring and feel unrelenting. A short break is anything which allows an individual of any age to have some time and space away from their caring routines or responsibilities - it should be tailored to meet the specific needs and wishes of the individual carer.

A short break helps in supporting the caring relationship and promoting the health and wellbeing of the carer, the supported person, and other family members affected by the caring situation. For carers, a short break can often be crucial in supporting their willingness and ability to continue to care.





# Who can have a Short Break?

Unpaid carers and the people they care for (the cared for person) sometimes need a bit of extra help to have a short break and to make the arrangements for this.

This statement is for carers, young carers and cared-for people. The definitions below should help people identify if this applies to them or someone that they know.

1. The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 describes a 'carer' as an individual who provides, or intends to provide, care for another individual (the "cared-for person"). This is not the same as someone who provides care professionally, or through a voluntary organisation.
2. A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who is affected by illness, disability, frailty, mental health challenge or alcohol and / or drug use.

## Adult Carers:

The main principle regarding adult carers who provide substantial care, is that they should be treated as key partners in care.

## Young Carers:

The fundamental principle is that they should be viewed as children first and foremost. As such, assessment and care planning should focus on alleviating the caring role through a family support approach.

Many carers support people through giving practical help. People tend to associate caring with physical tasks but giving emotional support can also be a big part of caring. Whether you give practical or emotional support or both you are a carer.

The circumstance of each carer is unique. Carers can be any age and carers are part of every community and culture. Carers may be parents, spouses, grandparents, daughters, brothers, same sex partners, friends or neighbours. Some carers may be disabled or have care needs themselves.

Sometimes two people with care needs are carers for each other. Some carers can provide care and support for more than one person.

## Outcomes:

The short break should make a difference to the carer's life, and this is sometimes described as a positive personal outcome. We have been making a collective effort to understand what is important to people and what it is that truly makes people feel that they have had a short



break. This approach is beginning to make us think differently, beyond what people may have experienced with 'traditional respite'.

It is inevitable that short breaks for carers must include consideration of how the care needs of a cared-for person or persons (child or adult) that the carer supports will be met. Some carers may have a caring role that is reciprocal and may need to plan Short Breaks for themselves and their mutual carer.

Through outcome focused conversations and working with carers to produce their Adult Carer Support Plan we aim that carers will be supported to identify the need for and potential benefit of their short break. The outcomes of a break will be personal to each carer and cared-for person, but may include:

- Having more opportunities to enjoy a life outside / alongside the caring role
- Feeling better supported
- Increased ability to cope
- Reduced social isolation and loneliness, for example increasing social circles, connections and activities
- Increased ability to maintain the caring relationship and sustain the caring role
- Improved quality of life and health and wellbeing
- Reduced likelihood of breakdown and crisis

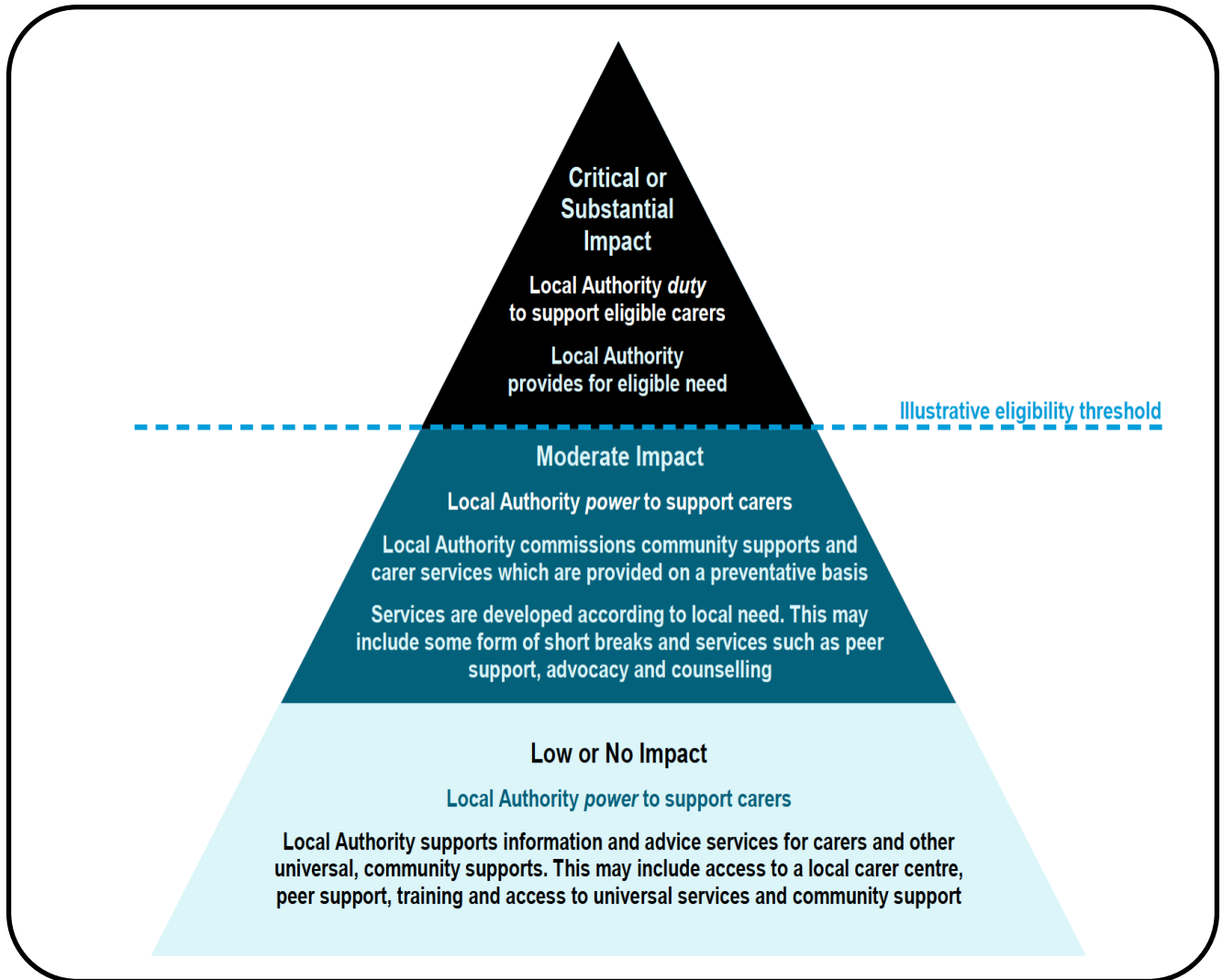
## Eligibility:

Within the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 the Scottish Government has placed a responsibility on each local authority to set its own Eligibility Criteria – including to set out who will be eligible for statutory support to ensure they get a short break. The Eligibility Criteria adopted by Highland was produced by the National Carers Organisation and has been identified by the Scottish Government within their Statutory Guidance.





## Diagram of Eligibility Threshold



It is based on specific risk areas of a carer's life rather than the priority of needs which forms the basis of other social work provision. To ensure you receive the right support, at the right time and in the right manner we will work with you to explore:

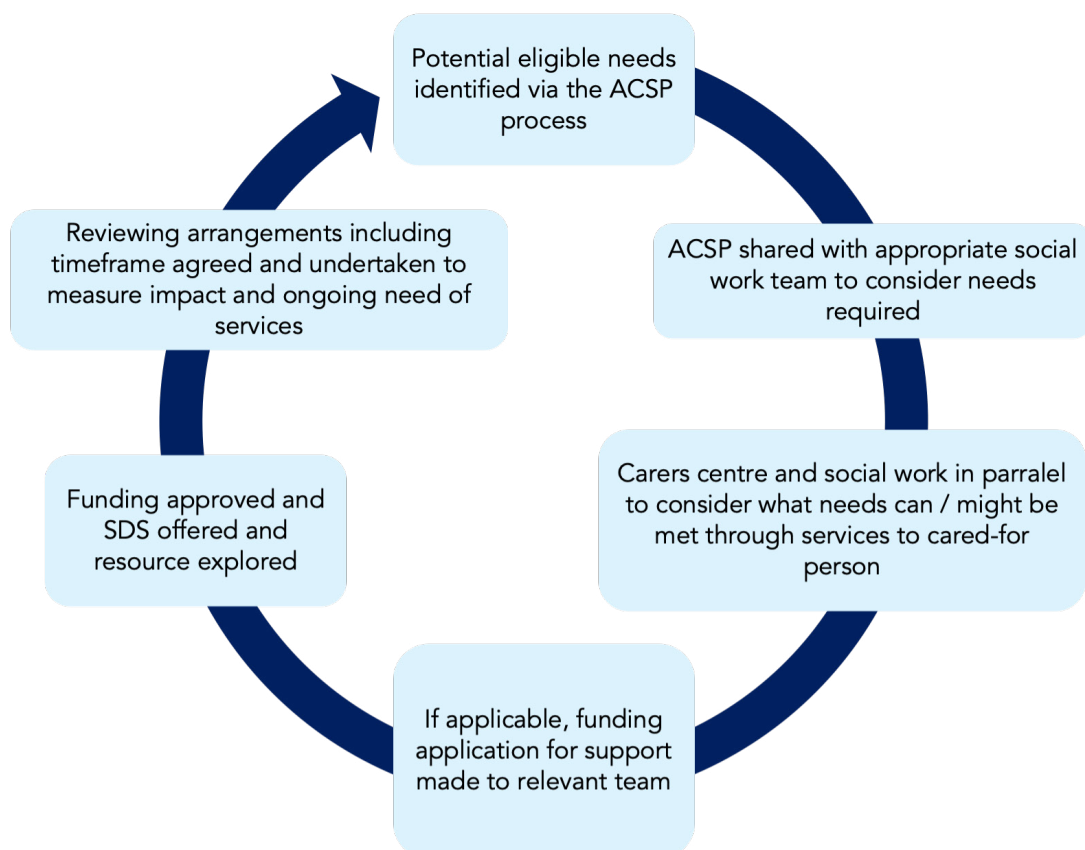
- The impact caring has on your health, wellbeing, employment opportunities as well as your chances to socialise
- Your relationship with the person you care for (or your wider family) and explore if these relationships are becoming difficult
- The amount of time you spend caring each week
- How long it has been since you last had a break
- If you are the only person caring and if you care for more than one person
- Your ability to make arrangements to take a short break with support



This will be done by:

- The Carer Centre working with you to explore the above and use this information to form your Adult Carer Support Plan (ACSP)
- If potential eligible needs are identified via the ACSP process, then your ACSP will be shared (with your permission) with the appropriate social work team who will work in parallel with the Carer Centre to jointly consider how these needs can be met.
- If the identified needs can not be met via universal services, adapting services to the cared-for person (CFP) and/or information already available then an unpaid carer may be eligible for statutory support.
- In these circumstances a funding application, highlighting unmet need will need to be made to the relevant team.
- If funding is approved, then an unpaid carer will be offered Self Directed Support via one of the 4 Options available, see below section on Accessing Self Directed Support for further information.
- Reviewing arrangements will be agreed upon and undertaken to measure the impact the services are making, and if there is an ongoing need for services.

## Eligibility Process Cycle



Some of your identified personal outcomes may be achieved through accessing universal services. Universal services are those which are provided to the public in general (e.g. Carer Centre, Support Organisations or group meetings, leisure and recreation facilities, dedicated support groups or neighbourhood networks).

Where you do not meet the eligibility criteria for a short break provided through statutory supports, you still may be able to access a short break provided by one of our partners, e.g. the Carer Centre or respite organisations.

## Accessing Self-directed Support (SDS) to plan your own short break:

If you are eligible for specific assistance to have a funded short break as part of your completed Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statement, SDS can allow you to decide how much control and responsibility you want to take over your funding.

SDS allows carers to have choice, control and flexibility around developing a short break.

These options are:

- **Option 1:** A Direct Payment (a cash payment) where you choose how the budget is used, and you manage the money.
- **Option 2:** You direct how the budget is used, but the money is managed by someone else (sometimes called an Individual Service Fund).
- **Option 3:** You ask NHS Highland to choose and arrange services for you.

- **Option 4:** You can choose a mix of these options for different types of support.

Workers with organisations who support carers can offer advice and support around how the four options of SDS can support a carer to plan and develop short breaks.

## Short Break Resources in Highland

There are a set of existing short break services in Highland which are most often accessed by carers using an SDS Option 3. These services can provide residential accommodation in a care home or building-based day care for the cared for person - and this acts to provide the carer with break. There are also services which can provide the carer with a break by looking after the cared for person in their own home.

On top of this there are a range of other services which can often be accessed using an Option 1 or 2.

And finally there are services for carers which can be accessed by those who are not necessarily eligible for statutory support. Accessing the Well-being fund would be an example of this.





**“By working together, we believe this has enabled us to have a greater understanding about what people want and need from a short break.”**





## Traditional Respite Services

Traditional respite services include the cared-for person having a break away in a care home or other residential facility that can meet their needs.

Many people benefit from this type of traditional arrangement, and it is anticipated that this type of support will continue to meet the needs of some carers and cared-for persons. In several circumstances this will be the only help that some carers are looking for.

In Highland there are a variety of residential homes available for respite in a variety of locations. All Adult Social Work Teams have access to the regularly updated availability of facilities offering respite placements. If there is an eligible need identified the social work team will often liaise directly with the cared for person and their unpaid carer to make the arrangements necessary for a planned break.

## Replacement Care Services (Home based Respite)

This includes individual support provided in the home of the cared-for person for periods of a few hours on a regular basis to enable the carer to have time to themselves and spend this in a way of their choosing.

You may be able to also receive overnight support for the person you care for enabling a break away or a nights undisturbed sleep.

We recognise the level of demand there is for help of this sort and therefore, with support from staff linked to third sector organisations supporting carers we anticipate that solutions within the carer's own home will become more regular occurrences

Replacement Care Services can be accessed via the Carers Centre or Social Work Team where an eligible need has been identified.

## Day Care

We have day care resources within Highland which are typically based in a community building and provided by a local authority or voluntary organisation. The degree of flexibility varies; most have fixed opening hours on particular days; some offer a drop-in service whereby people can attend for part of the day only.

Day care is often not primarily provided for short breaks or respite purposes but services which offer more flexible arrangements, designed around the needs of both the client and carer, can achieve this purpose. Day care services are subject to charges in that transport costs will have to be met and the cost of meals where provided will be charged.

Some facilities offer self-referral and others will require a referral from your G.P or your local Social Work Department.





## Supported access to clubs or activity groups

These opportunities may focus on a particular activity (e.g. sports clubs, leisure activities) or may be based in a community building. These generally take place over a few hours perhaps once or twice a week or, in the case of children who have a disability, they may be planned over the school holidays. In addition, these groups or clubs may be specific to the diagnosis of your cared for person (e.g. dementia clubs or MS Society meetings etc.) The availability of adapted equipment or trained workers can vary dependent on the type of facility to be accessed therefore enrolment may depend on the requirements of the person you care for.

To find out how you might access these services it is preferable to contact the service provider directly.

## Alternative and Creative breaks

Increasingly, with the development of Self-directed Support (SDS), more people are finding creative ways to take a break that don't necessarily involve external services. For example, they might use leisure equipment, computers, gardens or anything else that may provide a break from normal routines.

Because each carer and the person they care for is unique, carers and cared-for-people will continue to work with services and supports to develop increasingly personalised, flexible, and responsive ways to meet their outcomes and design a break that works for them.

## Well-being Fund

Utilising a Power within the Carers Act (2016), NHS Highland currently operates a Carer Wellbeing Fund allowing applications to be made for creative, meaningful and potentially bespoke breaks from their caring role regardless of eligibility.

Local Social Work Teams and Carers Centre's can discuss this option with you as part of an assessment and where a need has been identified they can submit applications to the fund on your behalf.

### Other types of breaks

There are currently various short break funding opportunities available for carers.

- 'Time 2 Be'
- 'Wee Treat Grant'
- Respite (Short Breaks) Fund
- Caroline Thomson Legacy Fund

The grants identified above are managed by Connecting Carers and they can be contacted on **01463 723575** or by visiting their website:

<https://connectingcarers.org.uk/>

## Emergency Breaks and Emergency Plans:

It is always best to take the opportunity to plan short breaks; however, there are times when people need access to emergency support including alternative care for the cared-for person. Emergency arrangements are different from short breaks but can sometimes achieve some short break outcomes.

Where possible an Emergency Plan should be discussed by the carer and the cared-for person and plans prepared in advance of any crisis.

Carers would usually ask about this when the cared-for person they are supporting is undergoing an assessment and care planning. Another time that this could be discussed is when a carer is offered or undertaking an Adult Carer Support Plan or young carer statement.

Cared-for people who do not have an assessment can still make an emergency plan; if they do not have or want external support they can record their own plan. Further advice and a useful template is available at: **Emergency Planning Toolkit – ENABLE** or via Connecting Carers.

## Waiving of Charges:

Charges for short breaks for carers must be waived under the carers (Waiving of Charges for Support) (Scotland) Regulations 2014, whereas support to the cared for person may continue to be charged for and this is important when considering a short break for carers.

The following prompts may assist in determining whether the short break is being provided predominantly for the carer. Such support will have been identified in the completed Adult Carer Support Plan or young carer statements. The assumption being that the care or support meets the identified needs of the carer and that such needs are eligible under the eligibility criteria:

- Is the care to be provided to the cared for person?
- Is the care replacing care usually provided by the unpaid carer?
- Is the care to be provided to enable the carer to have a break?
- Aside from the need for a break, is the carer willing and able to resume their caring role after the planned break?

## Feedback and Review:

We welcome all feedback on this short break services statement to continue to provide accessible information to people.

The Highland Health and Social Care Partnership are responsible for this statement.

Please let us know your suggestions for ensuring this statement is communicated to everyone who needs it.

The short breaks statement will be reviewed annually.



