

Do you provide unpaid care for an adult who receives support from health and social care?



Do you need a short term break from your caring role?



Did you know that direct payments can be used to pay for short term breaks?

What is a short term break?

A short term break is defined as time away from normal day to day living – going somewhere or doing something that helps you keep well. This is time for a carer to have a break from caring for their relative. A break from caring is different for each person and can change over time and circumstances. It is time away from the physical, practical and emotional parts of caring. A break can be any activity that gives time away from caring responsibilities, in any location that you and the cared for person choose.



What are direct payments for short term breaks?

The aim of the direct payment scheme in relation to short term breaks is to increase choice and flexibility when arranging, paying for and taking short term breaks. It is not a method of paying for holidays – although in many instances, taking a short break could feel the same as taking a holiday.

You do not have to be in receipt of direct payments to qualify for a direct payment specifically for short breaks.

How do I get a direct payment for a short term break?

If you are a carer of an adult who is in receipt of care/support from social services and need a break from your caring role, you should discuss this matter with the adult's Case Manager. The Case Manager will carry out an assessment of your needs (Carers Assessment) that will help to identify the positive aspect of your caring role as well as the pressures you experience. An outcome from the assessment may be that the Case Manager recommends a short break service.

How much money can I expect to receive?

Once the Case Manager has confirmed that you would benefit from a short break service, and that you would prefer this service via a Self- Directed Support or Direct Payment route rather than our traditional services, she/he will identify the value of the service the Trust will offer you to meet your need over a 12 month or an agreed period. The value of the service will be based on the equivalent cost of the Trust providing a bed based respite service minus the cared for person's contribution. You can put your own money towards the agreed amount to increase the funds if you wish.

How do I receive the money?

The calculated cost of the agreed short term service will be paid as a lump sum or on a regular monthly basis if preferred. If the adult you care for already has a direct payment this money will be paid into their direct payments bank account, if they don't then a separate bank account will need to be set up. You will then be able to plan how to use the money to pay for your short breaks over the agreed period.

What can I spend the money on?

Generally you will be able to choose to purchase the care and support that will meet the assessed need of the adult you care for, such as:

- ✓ **A placement in a residential/nursing establishment of your and the cared for persons choice**
- ✓ **Support within the home to allow you to take a break e.g. day sitting / night sitting**
- ✓ **Support away from the home, e.g. to enable the cared for person to experience a holiday which allows you the carer to have a break**

If you wish to have a mixture of traditionally arranged services and direct payments for your short breaks, this can be arranged.

Are there any items that I can't use the money for?

The Trust is keen to encourage flexibility within the use of direct payments for short breaks, however, the following is a list of examples that direct payments cannot be used for. The following list is not exclusive.

- ✗ **Alcohol / gambling / cigarettes**
- ✗ **Food (unless detailed as part of hotel or B&B accommodation)**
- ✗ **Clothes**
- ✗ **Toiletries or holiday supplies such as camera film, post cards, batteries etc.**
- ✗ **Souvenirs**
- ✗ **Duty free goods**
- ✗ **Gifts**
- ✗ **Personal items**
- ✗ **Phone calls**

In addition, **long term residential and nursing care cannot be purchased using direct payments.**

Do I need to keep any records for the expenditure associated with short breaks?

Yes, you will need to retain copies of your bank statements and any invoices and receipts for the care, support and accommodation you have purchased. You will be required to submit annotated bank statements on a quarterly basis. Failure to return this information may result in the flexible short breaks payment being suspended. Anyone who chooses to employ staff directly will also need to accept employer's responsibilities and have public liability insurance in place. This will be explained to you in more detail when you discuss the agreement between you and the Trust.

If I received a direct payment for short term breaks last year, will I automatically receive it again this year?

No. Payments are not automatically renewed each year. You will need a review with the Case Manager to confirm that you continue to need short breaks. They will then arrange the direct payment for you for another year.

Eligibility Criteria for Short – Break Service Provision

- ❖ The Service User must be an open case to the Community Team
- ❖ The Service User must be aged 18 years old or over
- ❖ The Service User must live with or receive an amount of care/support from an unpaid carer
- ❖ The Service User must reside in or be the responsibility of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust
- ❖ A “Carers Support and Needs Assessment” (NISAT) must **be completed** and recommend a level of short break service to support the carer in their caring role. The Case Manager must validate the recommendation from the Carers Support and Needs Assessment
- ❖ The Service User’s Assessment of Need must be completed addressing level of complexity, and identifying the most appropriate care environment
- ❖ Recipients must sign a Scheme Agreement and adhere to the terms and conditions of the Agreement