



## **Guidance on Short Breaks (CCD 4/2008)**

### **Introduction**

This paper is about short breaks. Short breaks are sometimes called respite care. It is written by the Scottish Government and COSLA, an organisation that speaks for all the local authorities in Scotland.

The Scottish Government and local authorities want Scottish people to be healthier. They also want more people who need care to be able to live in their own homes. Making sure that carers and the people they care for can get short breaks is a good way of doing both these things.

The Scottish Government says that family carers are as important as health and social care staff. It says that carers are “partners”, and they must be involved when any plans are made for the person that they care for.

Because the Scottish Government thinks that short breaks are so important, it will make 10,000 extra short break weeks available by 2011.

This paper has been written to help people in Community Care Partnerships to make their short break service better for carers and the people they care for.

If you want to speak to someone about anything in this paper, you can phone 0131 244 5389.

## Short Breaks

Short breaks should be good for carers and the people they care for. Short breaks are when a carer has a break or when the person being cared for has a break. It is also when they have a break together.



Short breaks can take place in

- a special house or flat
- a care home
- someone else's home
- supported housing.

It is a short break when someone comes to the home to let the carer go out. It is a short break when the person being cared for goes out with a volunteer or paid carer. It can be a short break when the person being cared for goes to a day centre.

## What are short breaks for?

Short breaks can stop carers from getting ill. They let carers spend time with other people. They give carers and the people they care for the chance to do something different.



Short breaks can help people to get used to other carers.

Young carers need a break so that they can do the same things as other people their age

Sometimes people will need a short break in an emergency, like when a carer is ill.

## **Planning**

Community Care Partnerships must write a plan for their short break service. The plan should talk about emergency short breaks and planned short breaks. It should say who can get a short break. It should say how the Community Care Partnership checks that the short breaks are good for carers and the people they care for.

Local authorities usually deal with people who need a short break for social care reasons.

NHS Boards usually deal with people who need a short break in a healthcare service. NHS Boards should see how they can help people with healthcare needs to have short break somewhere else.

## **A good short break**

A short break should be good for the carer and the person they care for.



People should be able to choose where and when they have a short break and how long it lasts for.

Staff who care for people on a short break should be well-trained.

If people need transport to go on a short break, it should be arranged.

Short breaks should not cost too much.

Self-directed support (direct payments) can be used to pay for short breaks.

## Information

People must be able to get information about short breaks. They need information about



- what short breaks are available
- how to get a short break
- who can get a short break
- how much short breaks cost.

Local authorities, the NHS and voluntary organisations must work together to give carers information and support. One way of giving carers this information is at their carer's assessment.

[Shared Care Scotland](#) has information about all kinds of short breaks. You can call them on 01383 622 462.

## Who can get a short break?

Community Care Partnerships will write rules about who can get a short break. Carers get short breaks so that they can look after someone at home. Carers who find it hard to carry on caring for someone at home are most likely to get a short break.

## Checking the short break service



At the moment, local authorities must tell Audit Scotland how many short breaks they provide each year.

The Social Work Inspection Agency asks carers and the people they care for what they think of the short break service.

The Care Commission checks that care homes and daycare services offer a good short break service.

## Paying for short breaks

Local authorities can charge for short breaks. They can only charge the person who is being cared for. They will look at how much money he or she has access to, and then they will say how much the person being cared for has to pay.



People needing care should not have to pay too much or they may choose not to have a short break. If carers do not have a break from caring, they can get ill. If carers get ill, the person they care for may have to go into residential care. This will cost more

than providing short breaks, so local authorities need to think about this when they decide how much someone should pay.