



Fife Health
& Social Care
Partnership



Short breaks for carers

Helping to deliver a better
experience and outcomes
for carers

Who is a carer?

You are a carer if you provide, or intend to provide, care for another person on an unpaid basis.

Any unpaid carer could benefit from a short break. However, only those carers who meet our local eligibility criteria can receive direct social work financial support for a short break.

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What is a short break?

A Short Break is any form of support which enables a carer to have time away from their caring routines or responsibilities. It is time for yourself; time away from your caring role so you can recharge your batteries and enjoy the other things that are important to you, whatever that may be.

“Break is where you can become yourself again – It’s not being asked about cared-for person’s health”.

We have defined a short break more fully as -

“A Short Break can take any number of forms in order to achieve the carer’s desired outcomes. The purpose is for carers to have a life outside or alongside their caring role, supporting their health and wellbeing. This can also benefit the cared-for person and others (e.g. family members) and may sustain the caring relationship.”

What is the purpose of a short break?

Short breaks are intended to help you have some time for yourself, to reflect and recharge. You will be supported to identify your personal needs and potential benefits of a short break.

A short break is to support you and your caring relationship, and to promote your own health and well-being, as well as that of the person you care for, and other family members affected by the caring situation.

“Gives you a positive outcome to look forward to”.

What does a short break look like?

Short breaks are your time to do whatever is important to you. Therefore, anything is possible. The key is that the activity benefits you personally and gives you time to do the things you enjoy and fulfil you, alongside your caring role. Breaks from caring may:

- be for short or extended periods
- take place during the day or overnight
- involve the person with support needs having a break away from home allowing the carer time for themselves
- allow the carer a break away with replacement care, if required
- take the form of the carer and the person they care for having a break together, with assistance if necessary

A Short Break can be anything you, as a carer, want it to be! Key to them is that you achieve your personal outcomes and give you a break from the demands of your daily caring routines.

“I want to be alone – to have time to be myself, to spend time with my friends”.

“It is different for every single carer – length, type, place – it’s all individual”.



Outcomes of a short break

The advantages of a short break are unique to you. It may be to help you rest and be able to continue in your caring role. It could be as simple as to give you time to pursue your own leisure activities alongside your caring role. The outcomes of a break will be personal to each carer and cared-for person, and may include:

- having a change to enjoy a life alongside your caring role
- feeling better supported
- improving confidence as a carer
- increasing your ability to cope and succeed
- reducing your feeling of social isolation and loneliness
- improving your physical and mental health and wellbeing
- improving quality of life
- increasing your ability to maintain the caring relationship - and sustain your caring role

“Gives you a positive outcome to look forward to”.

“Carers should come back from a break refreshed and ready to carry on with their caring responsibilities”.



Who is eligible to receive a short break?

Short breaks don't need to cost money. Your personal network, other family or friends, may be able to step in to give you time to yourself by taking over some of your caring role for a short time periodically or on a regular basis.

However, we know that some short breaks may have a cost.

Some sources of support that we have made available will be available to all carers – often called universal support. This includes general information and advice from a wide range of partner organisations. Other support will only be available to those carers who are in greatest need, and whose caring role may be at greatest risk of failing.

Eligibility Criteria

There are many pressures on public money including those to support carers. The demand for support is greater than the supply available. Therefore we apply some criteria for support. In Fife we have eligibility criteria which we use to assess a carer's needs for support. The assessment asks the carer a series of questions about their caring situation and the answers to these, as assessed in partnership with the carer, will determine the level of risk faced by the carer.

If the risk is critical and the caring situation is at risk of failing, we may offer additional tailored guidance and appropriate support to the carer, including a short break, to help them to meet their personal outcomes to improve their caring situation and live a positive life alongside their caring role. This may include tailored support and/or access to funding to meet the cost of a short break. If you meet the critical eligibility and your break is a specific outcome in your carer support plan, the break you choose could be funded and we will waive all charges.

For carers who do not meet eligibility threshold, we can still offer information, advice and support including signposting to other organisations that could help to meet their support needs. In some instances financial support may be available from other organisations to meet the carers need for a short break.

How do I access short breaks?

Short breaks are discussed as part of an Adult Carer Support Planning conversation. In the first instance you can speak to your social worker, or to one of the carer organisations in Fife. They will work with you to agree the sort of short break that might help you most and can refer you for more information if needed.

Useful contacts

There are organisations in Fife that can help you to achieve your short break outcomes. Fife Council's 'On Your Doorstep' web-site (<http://www.onyourdoorstepfife.org/>) provides information about the organisations and community groups that can offer advice, support and assistance to access short breaks.

Fife Health & Social Care Partnership commissions support for carers. Listed below are the key local organisations we work in partnership with to support carers to access short breaks as well as some of the key national carer organisation:

- **Fife Voluntary Action**
www.fifevoluntaryaction.org.uk • 0800 389 6046
- **Crossroads Central Fife**
www.crossroadsfifecentral.org • 01592 610540
- **Fife Carers Centre** • www.fifecarerscentre.org • 01592 205472
- **Fife Young Carers** • www.fifeyoungcarers.co.uk • 01592 786717
- **Shared Care Scotland** • www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk
- **Take a Break** • www.takeabreakscotland.org.uk
- **Euan's Guide** • www.euansguide.com
- **ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland)** • www.aliss.org
- **Leuchie House, National Respite Centre** • www.leuchiehouse.org.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a short break?

A short break is time for yourself. It is time away from your caring role so you can recharge your batteries and enjoy the other things that are important to you, whatever that may be.

Who are short breaks for?

Any unpaid carer could benefit from a short break. However, only those carers who meet our local eligibility criteria can receive direct social work financial support for a short break.

What are the benefits of a short break?

The advantages of a short break are unique to you. It may be to help ensure you are rested and able to continue in your caring role for the longer term, or it may be so you can live the life you choose to, meet friends and invest in your other personal relationships. It could be as simple as to give you time to pursue your own leisure activities alongside your caring role. The outcomes you are seeking, and how you will achieve them, will be discussed as part of your support plan conversation.

What activities can I do on my short break?

Short breaks are your time to do whatever is important to you. Therefore, anything is possible. The key is that the activity benefits you personally and gives you time to do the things you enjoy and fulfil you, alongside your caring role.

How much does a short break cost?

Breaks don't need to cost money. Your personal network, other family or friends, may be able to help you get time to yourself by taking over some of your caring role for a short time periodically or on a regular basis in order to give you the break you need.

However, if you meet local eligibility criteria and your break is a specific outcome in your carers support plan, the break you choose could be funded and we will waive all charges.

What if I don't meet local eligibility criteria?

If your personal caring circumstances mean that you do not meet the local eligibility criteria then we can offer you information and advice but the cost of your break will need to be met directly by you.

Can I get help to pay for my short break if I do not meet the local eligibility criteria?

It is possible that you could apply to receive some financial support to help you pay for your short break. Shared Care Scotland, through their local partners, offer small personal grants so that carers can take a break from caring. <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/shortbreaksfund/>

How do I access short breaks?

In the first instance you can speak to your social worker, or to one of the carer organisations in Fife. See the list of useful contacts on page 5.



Further Information

You can find out more about Health and Social Care services in Fife:



Online

www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org



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