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Title: Providing Respite Services for Adult Service Users and their Carers

Aim / Summary:

The aim of this policy is to explain what services are defined as respite care, how eligibility for those services is determined and what level of provision will be provided or funded by the Council.

Document type (please choose one)

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Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Please include any supporting documents

1.

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3.

Review date

Amendments



Providing Respite Services for Adults and their Carers Policy

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1 Background information

Unpaid carers play a vital role in supporting people to continue to live at home. The 2011 Census Report identified 57,426 carers in Nottinghamshire who were providing between 1 and 19 hours a week of unpaid care for a friend or relative, and 21,680 who were providing over 50 hours a week.

Respite services are an essential part of the overall support provided to unpaid carers and to people with care needs to help to sustain the caring situation at home and to prevent crises.

1.1 Definitions used in this policy

A Carer is defined as any person who provides unpaid care and support to a person who is frail, or has a long-term physical illness or disability, or who has a learning disability or who experiences mental health or substance misuse problems. The carer could be a relative, friend or neighbour. The carer may or may not live with the person. The term does not include people who are paid to provide care, for example care workers. It also excludes volunteers and foster carers. For the purpose of this policy, the term “carer” is used but it is recognised that someone may have more than one unpaid carer supporting him or her, for example, a mother and father.

Respite services are those services which provide substitute care for a person when the person's carer is not able to meet needs that are normally met by the carer. Respite services are therefore provided over and above the normal level of service provided to the eligible person. There are three kinds of respite service, as outlined below.

- **Short term respite service** is a form of planned respite care which is provided primarily to the person with care needs, to give that person some time away from his/her carer and the family situation.
- **Respite breaks** are a form of planned respite care which are provided primarily to the carer, to give the carer time off from caring and also to offer the carer a chance to do something that he or she wants to do - for example, an activity to promote health and wellbeing or to access leisure activities.
- **Emergency respite service** is any service provided at short notice to offer substitute care to the person with care needs, because of circumstances which may be unplanned for, untoward or unavoidable. They are one-off occurrences – for example, significant illness or hospitalisation of the carer.

1.2 Context of this policy

Carers' rights in community care law are mainly contained in four statutes and one set of directions:

- **Disabled Persons Act 1986** – section 8 states that consideration must be given to whether a carer is able to continue to care when assessing the needs of a disabled person.
- **Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995** – this gives the carer a right to request an assessment.
- **Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000** – includes a duty to inform carers of their right to request an assessment and the power to provide services directly to the carer.
- **Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004** states that carers assessments should always consider a carer's outside interests when carrying out an assessment, for example work, study or leisure.
- **Community Care Assessment Directions 2004** – includes a duty to involve and consult carers in social care assessments.

Eligibility for carers is contained in the Carers and Disabled Children's Act 2000 and gives a power, rather than a duty, to Local Authorities to meet eligible needs.

However, the new **Care and Support Bill**, which is currently going through Parliament, will give carers their first ever legal entitlement to public support, putting them on an equal footing with the person they care for.

2 Principles and Commitments

- a) Both planned and emergency respite services will be:

- focussed on prevention; they will be designed to help people to stay at home, sustaining caring relationships and preventing crises.
 - designed to avoid social isolation for carers, so that they are not housebound by their caring role.
 - designed to give carers peace of mind that should an emergency or crisis situation arise for the carer, the person being cared for would have access to alternative care.
- b) The majority of respite service will be planned, although emergency respite care will also be available, subject to availability.
- c) No limit will be set on the amount of emergency or crisis care that a person can access. All emergency and crisis care will be reviewed after 72 hours.
- d) The most cost-effective form of respite will be offered to the carer, to meet the substitute care needs of the service user during the period of the respite care.
- e) There will be a range of respite service options, including residential respite, sitting services, Shared Lives respite, support provided in the home or to take the service user out and about. The Council will also consider funding some or all of the support needs of a service user, if the person goes away on holiday with or without their carer; in this situation, the holiday must be clearly linked to an outcome in the service user's support plan. Note – the Council will not pay towards any other costs of the holiday itself, for example, accommodation, travel or food.
- f) Service users and carers assessed as eligible for planned respite services will be offered a personal budget. The budget will be determined as part of the support planning. This can be taken as a managed service or direct payment.
- g) At the point when the cost of the service user's personal budget (including respite care during the year) exceeds the expected cost of supporting that person in another form of service package (e.g. residential care or supported living), then discussions will be held with the family to consider the options i.e. moving the service user out of the family home, or the family contributing more towards the overall cost or changing the respite service package.

3 Determination of eligibility for the provision of respite services

3.1 Short term respite

For a service user to be eligible to receive and use personal budget funding from the Council towards short term respite services, the following conditions will apply:

- The person being cared for is eligible for support and services from the Council under the national eligibility criteria
- The community care assessment identifies that the person needs to have a break from the caring situation and this is specified as an outcome to be met by the support plan, from the person's personal budget allocation

3.2 Respite breaks

For a carer to be eligible to receive and use a carers' budget from the Council towards respite breaks, the following conditions will apply:

- The person being cared for is eligible for support and services from the Council under national eligibility criteria
- The carer has requested a carers assessment and this assessment identifies the need for the carer to receive respite breaks

3.3 Emergency respite service

For a service user or carer to be eligible for emergency respite service, the following conditions will apply:

- The person being cared for is eligible for support and services from the Council under national eligibility criteria
- The caring situation is under such great strain due to unplanned, untoward or unavoidable circumstances, that the Council must fund or provide alternative short-term support and service to avoid critical harm to the service user and/or carer.

4 Allocation of planned respite service after a decision of eligibility is made

4.1 Short term respite

The level of the service user's personal budget (as set by the Resource Allocation System) will determine how much short term respite can be funded, in addition to other regular support services.

If a service user wishes to fund additional short term respite service, then he or she will be able to do this in accordance with the Resource Allocation Policy.

4.2 Respite Breaks

The person being cared for will be assessed against a matrix band system, to determine the level of support needs that that person has, relative to other people.

The decision about the band of need determines the number of sessions of respite breaks that are allocated to the carer, per month.

Sessions are defined as follows :

Morning	1 session
Afternoon	1 session
Evening	1 session
Night time	4 sessions

The number of sessions is as follows :

Low needs	7 sessions per month	e.g. 12 days and nights per year
Medium needs	14 sessions per month	e.g. 24 days and nights per year
High needs	21 sessions per month	e.g. 36 days and nights per year
Complex needs	28 sessions per month	e.g. 42 days and nights per year

Individual circumstances will also be considered during the carers' assessment and the following factors may lead to additional sessions being allocated to any carer:

- the context of the family situation e.g. intensity of the caring situation and number of people being cared for by the carer
- the carer's individual needs e.g. related to age, or any ill health or disabilities
- The sessions can be used in a flexible way to meet the needs of the carer, in the most appropriate way for him/her. In practice, service availability may be a determining factor of what respite breaks can be accessed and when; the Council will support the carer to understand the range of options and choices available.

Each session will attract an agreed level of funding, which will be allocated as a personal budget.

5 Charging for respite services

Service users and carers will be asked to make a contribution towards their personal budget, in line with the Council's Fairer Contributions Policy.

Any emergency respite care will be categorised as Carer's Crisis Prevention and Unplanned Break Service, which is free to carers.

6 Reviewing eligibility for respite services and allocation of respite sessions

The provision of respite services and allocation of sessions will be reviewed at least annually.

If a decision has been made to change the provision of respite following a review, notice of this decision will be given in writing, at least 28 days in advance of the withdrawal.

7 Complaints

If any service user is not satisfied with the process that has been followed or the way that his/her case has been handled, he or she can make a complaint under the Council's [complaints procedure](#).

Staff must ensure that service users and their representatives are informed of their rights. See the Publications Directory for the fact sheet "[Have your say about our services](#)". There is also an [easy read version](#).

8 Key actions to meet the commitments set out in the policy

The Council will:

- Enhance carer support as part of the 'Living at Home' programme through increased provision for carer breaks at the Care and Support Centres and provision of assistive technology e.g. Lifelines and sensors, by March 2014.
- Maintain emergency breaks for carers who need help through the Carer's Crisis Prevention and Unplanned Break Service, which is free to carers.
- Develop a matrix banding system to determine the level of support needs of a person for whom respite care will be provided.
- Develop a costing methodology so that a carer can be allocated with a personal budget equivalent to the value of the allocated respite breaks sessions.