

Short Breaks (Unpaid Carers) Template

Reporting Period:

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Overview

Short breaks

Please outline:

- Briefly outline your aims/objectives of the utilisation of the Short Breaks funding in the region.
- What is working well in arranging/providing the delivery short breaks via this funding stream?
- What is not working so well?
- Describe how short breaks funding is enhancing/adding to your offer of respite/short breaks for carers?
- Describe how/if short breaks funding is helping to change the understanding of what unpaid carers want?

Engagement took place with carers in 2023 through an annual event organised by through the West Glamorgan Carers Partnership Board. One of the workshops in the event was around short break provision where carers were asked what was important to them. In addition to this, a survey was circulated to carers and young carers through the regional and local networks to gain further views from carers who were unable to attend the event and asked them what respite/short breaks matter most to them, and how we can help them to access and get the most from what is on offer.

Carers could vote for the most important short breaks/respite types for them via the online survey where they were asked to rank the short break options in order.

The main reflection from the preferred options is that carers and young carers want to have flexible, personalised, short break options given what matters to each carer is different. This is reflected in the 1st four preferred options indicated by carers, for example, day trips, overnight stay, an outing (cinema, meal, hairdressers), support with tasks at home.

On that basis it was agreed that the short break funding would be utilised for a flexible grant / voucher scheme so carers are able to apply for funding to pay for a range of items or activities that will provide them with a break from caring.

The grant scheme administration was awarded to Swansea Carers Centre and NPT Carers Centre for the Adult grant schemes and YMCA Swansea who administered the Young Carers scheme across both Swansea and NPT.

The application form and feedback form were co-produced with carers. Carers requested a simple process given they often have limited time. Support was also available to those people who needed help in filling in the form.

A different approach was taken for young carers given they needed a lot more support for applying and purchasing the items. It was recognised that the administration for a young carers grant is much more time intensive.

There were challenges reported from providers given as soon as the grant scheme was open there was a huge influx of applications. One provider had to closely manage the applications due to 200+ applications coming through in one day.

There was positive feedback from carers given they were able to apply for a short break of their choice and the application process was very simple and easy to use.

It has been agreed that once the providers are awarded the grant in 2024-25 the implementation and rollout of the grant scheme will be co-produced with providers, carers and partners. Please refer to lessons learned section below.

Through the engagement last year there were also clear messages coming through from carers and partners that we need to improve communication around the available respite and short break provision. There are number of options, which could include development of a regional website which stores the information, though this would need to be discussed further with carers. It was also recognised that there was a need for a single point of contact for respite and short breaks in both local authorities. Two local part time posts were therefore agreed, with the partners match funding the other 50% of the posts. It was agreed that these 2 local posts would work as a virtual regional team linking in with the West Glamorgan team and regional carers development officer. These posts will provide the subject matter expert in terms of what short break / respite provision is available, who is eligible and support the development of the mapping and gapping work.

Reporting

This section of the report focusses on activities (outputs) and impact (outcomes) of the Short Breaks funding. You can copy and paste infographics, for example, to add to the reporting as long as they are easy to read.

Quantitative measures

Please outline:

- How many short breaks were provided in total and broken down by numbers provided by each delivery partner for Year 2 (2023/24). If you can add in the same information for 2023/23. That would be very helpful as it will provide a baseline to compare year on year activity.
- Information on the types of short breaks delivered (e.g., group activity for unpaid carers/ holiday for unpaid carer and family, individual sporting/recreational activity for an unpaid carer etc)
- Demographic information on unpaid carers using short breaks and the context (age, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality etc)
- Numbers and percentages of satisfaction and other ratings – obtained by feedback surveys.

The adult short breaks scheme was administered by NPT Carers Services and Swansea Carers Centre.

Across the West Glamorgan region, a total of 481 Adult scheme short breaks were provided, with 135 being provided by NPT Carers Service and 346 provided by Swansea Carers Centre (breakdown of the Adult Scheme is shown below):

Summary of short breaks delivered to Carers by NPT Carers Service	Number of Carers who accessed a Short Break in 2023/24
Spa Breaks	5
Overnight Stays	83
Day Trips	21
Wellbeing Event	1
Complementary Therapy	7
Household	13
Family Meal Out	1
Gym Membership	4
TOTAL	135

Summary of short breaks delivered to Carers by Swansea Carers Centre	Number of Carers who accessed a Short Break in 2023/24
Wellbeing Activities e.g. Holistic Therapy	32
Overnight stay	161
Day trip	47
Household chores: cleaning, gardening	24
Household Maintenance	41
Access to physical activity e.g. gym membership	14
Other	23
Sitting service	4
TOTAL	346

West Glamorgan Total	TOTAL	Rankin
Summary of short breaks delivered	S	g
Overnight stay	244	1
Day trip	68	2
Household Maintenance	41	3
Household chores – cleaning, gardening etc	37	4
Wellbeing Activities e.g. Holistic Therapy	32	5
other	23	6
Access to physical activity e.g. gym membership	18	7
Complementary Therapy	7	8
Spa Breaks	5	9
Sitting service – To look after the person you care for	4	10
Wellbeing Event	1	11
Family Meal Out	1	12
Total	481	

Demographic Data:

The adult short breaks scheme demographic data is broken down (as shown below):

1. The age of the carers. Please state the total number of carers who accessed a short break:

Age Group	Number of Carers	Breakdown
Under 12 years	0	

12-17 years	0	
18-24 years	10	(0 x NPT / 10 x Swansea)
25-44 years	286	(80 x NPT / 207 Swansea)
45-64 years	152	(51 x NPT / 101 x Swansea)
65-80 years	28	(4 x NPT / 24 x Swansea)
Unknown	0	

2. How the carers identify:

Identity	Number of Carers	Breakdown
Female	437	(126 x NPT / 311 x Swansea)
Male	44	(9 x NPT / 35 x Swansea)
Non-Binary	0	
Identified in another way	0	
Other	0	

3. How many people from the following sexual orientation groups were supported in 2023/24? This question is voluntary.

Sexual Orientation	Number of Carers	Breakdown
Straight/heterosexual:	447	(130 x NPT / 317 x Swansea)
Gay or Lesbian	7	(2 x NPT / 5 x Swansea)
Bisexual	9	(0 x NPT / 9 x Swansea)
Identified in another way	0	
Unknown	18	(3 x NPT / 15 x Swansea)

5. How many carers from each of the following ethnic groups were supported in 2023/24?

Ethnic Group	Number of Carers	Breakdown
White English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British:	457	(135 x NPT / 322x Swansea)
White – Any other White background:	7	(0 x NPT / 7 x Swansea)
Asian/Asian British/Any other Asian background	1	(0 x NPT / 1 x Swansea)

Black /African/Caribbean /Black British Any Other Black/African/Caribbean background	4	(0 x NPT / 4 x Swansea)
Asian/Asian British Chinese	2	(0 x NPT / 2 x Swansea)
Any other ethnic group / Any other ethnic group, please specify	3	(0 x NPT / 3 x Swansea)

Feedback Surveys:

The feedback surveys were co-produced with carers who asked that we keep the forms simple and concise so they are quick to complete.

Both providers of the **Adult Short Break Scheme** administered surveys to each successful short break application, **185 completed surveys** were collected.

- My queries were dealt with efficiently and effectively: **168 (90.8%)** responses strongly agreed or agreed with this question.
- The respite I received has improved my wellbeing: **174 (94%)** responses strongly agreed or agreed with this question.
- I am happy with the application process: **182 (98.3%)** responses strongly agreed or agreed with this question.

In addition to the above questions, the following question was asked where they could provide text:

- Please provide any further comments you may have regarding the application process
- Has your overall wellbeing improved, declined or stayed the same following the respite you received from this grant scheme

Please refer below to the quotes in the section below.

The feedback survey was not mandatory and therefore, there is a disparity between the number of short breaks accepted and the number of survey responses. However, this has also been included the lessons learnt in order to support the collection of this data in the future scheme/s. The plan will be to co-produce the approach with carers to understand better how we can encourage them to provide the feedback data in the simplest way possible, giving they often have limited time.

A specific survey for the **Young Carers Short Breaks** scheme was held. The scheme and survey were administered by YMCA Swansea, **20 complete surveys** were collected:

- I am happy with the application process: **19 (95%)** responses scored this as a 5 or 4 out of a possible 5.
- My questions were answered quickly and effectively: **18 (90%)** responses scored this as a 5 or 4 out of a possible 5.
- The short break I received has improved my wellbeing: **18 (90%)** responses scored this as a 5 or 4 out of a possible 5.

Qualitative indicators

Please outline:

- Summary of findings of information gathered about unpaid carers' views of the impact of the short break for them.
- Please provide information on common themes.
- Are there differences in what unpaid carers tell you that may be related to the type of short break is how does impact of a single trip/ activity compare to a weekly break opportunity etc. Think about what outcomes were achieved for unpaid carers, e.g., improved well-being, better able to manage their caring responsibilities and why.
- Are there stand out examples of the difference a short break has made to one or more individuals that you may wish to highlight (provide as a case study)?
- Please do not provide quotes in isolation.

As noted above, significant engagement took place with carers prior to considering how the funding would be allocated and carers told us they wanted more choice around the short break provision, considering what matters to carer is different. In the information collated the following short break provision were the 1st four preferred options indicated by carers, day trips, overnight stay, an outing (cinema, meal, hairdressers), support with tasks at home.

You will see in the data above on page that **overnight stays** were the most popular, with **51%** of carers opting for this and the second most popular was **day trips** with **14%** of carers opting for this.

Household chores, household maintenance and wellbeing activities were the next most popular, with **6-8%** of carers opting for these.

As noted above, the feedback survey was not mandatory and therefore, there is a disparity between the number of short breaks accepted and the number of survey responses. However, this has also been included the lessons learnt in order to inform how collation of the feedback data in the future scheme/s, through engagement with carers.

In the feedback form the following question was asked where they could provide text:

- Please provide any further comments you may have regarding the application process
- Has your overall wellbeing improved, declined or stayed the same following the respite you received from this grant scheme

The feedback form was co-produced with carers and therefore did not ask them to provide details on the type of short break, which means we are unable to correlate the quotes to a specific type of short break. This has been picked up in the lessons learned and will be incorporated into the next feedback form.

Please refer below to the quotes we received for the **Adult Carers Short Break Grant Scheme**:

"I don't think it can get better there is not much help for carers and as especially unpaid carers, Swansea carers centre is amazing in everything they do "

"It was a clear and easy form to fill in and i have found it invaluable to help me afford a day out. The first trip i have had for 17 years. Thanks so much."

“This has been life changing God bless you all “

“Thank you for helping me find myself again”.

“Applying was simple to do and required little input from me”.

“The application was a straightforward process, and the result (successful or not) was passed on promptly. “

“With out your support I could never pulled it off very grateful”.

“For most families with children with disabilities there is so many forms and bureaucracy so it was nice to have a simple and non-lengthy process. Thank you for keeping it simple”.

“The change from vouchers to bank transfer has been a better process as not restricted with hotel stay. The bank transfer will allow us two nights away which we are incredibly grateful for.”

“I found the application process a lot easier, being an autistic adult and struggling with form filling I found it straightforward and to the point.”

“The process is very easy, and all staff are very helpful”

*“I think it's an amazing thing. Unless you are a carer it's hard to understand the fatigue and burnout you can feel accompanied with the guilt for feeling like you want a break. A little bit of time to yourself resets the spirit :)
You can't pour from an empty cup!”*

“Very simple to complete over the phone. Didn't have to wait too long for it to be approved. Previously grant was given as vouchers which caused issues but this year its bank transfer which is much easier to go and use the money to book suitable break at cheaper prices than the voucher site gives.”

Please refer below to the quotes we received for the **Young Carers Short Break Grant Scheme**:

“The application process was easy to follow, I didn't have to complete lots of questions that was wonderful. Sometimes I find form filling overwhelming, it was made simple and easy. Thank you.”

“Without the YMCA we would be lost, thus funding and their support has made a huge difference and impact on our children and family.”

“I just want to say thank you! The application was very easy and straightforward.”

"I am grateful for the opportunity to apply for funding to be able to do something that I wouldn't of been able to do otherwise giving me a respite from my responsibilities at home."

This section focusses on how Short Breaks funding is contributing to learning and development of a wider and more person-centred provision of respite and breaks for carers in your region.

Contribution to change

Please outline:

- What is being delivered via the short breaks funding that is different from the core respite services in local authorities in the region?
- Without this funding, would the region be providing this range of short breaks?
- What learning can you identify from the provision of the Short Breaks fund regarding unpaid carers and respite/breaks from caring?
- What action are you taking/planning because of this learning?
- Are there types of respite/ breaks from caring that you plan to provide more/less of?

In West Glamorgan we recognise how important it is for carers to have a break from caring – this is one of the key priorities identified in the co-produced strategy. By having a well-earned break from their caring roles supports their emotional wellbeing and mental health. Carers have told us this funding is similar to a 'lifesaver' and without it, they are concerned they will experience burn out and potentially reach crisis point. This could then lead to more demand on statutory services and add pressure to already stretched services.

Provision of a grant scheme enables carers to choose exactly what type of short break provision they have and when they take it. This was addressing what carers told us in our engagement event and feedback from our survey.

One of the barriers that carers flagged in relation to accessing short breaks was issues with transport, so carers were allowed to claim travel expenses as part of their grant claim.

Number of carers supported is very low % compared to total number of carers across the region. The number of carers supported through this grant scheme is 606 carers (young and adult) which equates to 0.5%. This does not include the short break schemes that are funded through the AMSER scheme, the schemes we provide through the RIF or other locally funded schemes, so does not provide the whole picture.

A lessons learned process took place with partners, carers and providers and the following issues were noted with a revised approach planned for 25-26:

- Carers provided positive feedback on the grant scheme given it was an easy application process
- Carers requested that a simple feedback form was utilised to gather feedback given they don't have time to populate lengthy feedback forms
- Difficult to carry out any means testing to prioritise the grant applications as this would be very resource intensive and result in carers having to provide additional information
- Agreed we want to take a more targeted approach in 24-25, for example targeting those who are in receipt of care packages, have a social worker
- We want to be able to target carers most in need, though noted this
- There were 10 BAME carers supported in Swansea and this may be the result of the fact that Swansea Carers Centre has a BAME support worker in place. However there were no BAME carers supported in NPT.

- Based on the ethnicity data, need to ensure the grant reaches a wider range of carers. Plan to link in with our other RIF funded schemes which include organisations supporting BAME carers.
- A sample audit will be carried out to undertake a due diligence to ensure there has been no fraudulent claims
- Carers have requested more choice in the way they can ‘spend’ the funding for the short breaks –pooling the funds to support group breaks, for example, group of carers go to a spa day. This could also include young carers, where a group of them could go to a theme park etc.
- Concern that some carers did not understand that they were eligible for this support (not recognising/identifying they are a carer), For example, Providers noted some older carers don’t feel they need or are eligible for the grant.
- Most young Carers can only take their breaks throughout the school holidays – this will need more planning around ensuring the funding is allocated in a timely way to support this.
- Possible incentives for completion of the feedback/surveys for a sample of carers, given providers report difficulties in ensuring feedback is always sent through from carers. For example a draw which pulls out 2-3 carers who provided feedback forms to win £30, £40, £50 etc

Carers Partnership Board have agreed that the roll out and implementation of the grant scheme for 24-25 will be co-produced with carers, providers and partners in order to ensure a much more targeted and phased approach. This could include initially targeting carers through social workers, local area co-ordinators, virtual wards, BAME groups and hold off communicating the grant scheme wider. Consideration to be given to open the grant for short period of time throughout the year and phase the allocation, though it was noted it may be prudent to allocate more in Summer and Winter period.

We will also look to adapt the way these grant schemes are administered to ensure we are capturing all the feedback from carers and improving these schemes and the experience for all carers. Surveys are not mandatory, although both providers have heavily encouraged their completion. It has been agreed to review the approach of the feedback mechanism for future short break schemes, potentially through an incentive scheme, given this has worked well in the past.

We also want to ensure people are fully aware of their entitlement to the scheme and may have additional benefits of supporting ‘newly identified’ carers with other services to support themselves and their cared for person.

Another development planned in terms of communication of the short break provision is development of a mapping tool whereby carers can filter in terms of type of provision and location. The plan is that this will include all of the short break provision in the region, regardless of how it is funded. This will need to tie into the short break website that the Carers Trust has developed for the schemes funded by this source of funding.

Financial

Please outline:

A breakdown of how Short Breaks funding was utilised including amount to delivery partners, average cost per short break/type of short break etc.

Project Name	Host Organisation	Regional/Local Scheme	Total Funding
Adult Carer Short Break Grant Fund	NPT Carers Swansea Carers	Local – NPT	£ 45,524.40
Adult Carer Short Break Grant Fund	Centre	Local – Swansea	£ 71,286.60
Young Carers Short Breaks Grant Scheme	YMCA Swansea	Regional	£ 35,559.00
Carers Post NPT (50% funded)	NPT Council	Local – NPT	£ 8,000.00
Carers post Swansea (50% funded)	Swansea Council	Local – Swansea	£ 8,000.00
		TOTAL	£ 168,370.00

Full year end spend reported for 23-24.
The maximum grant that carers could apply for was £300.