



# Adult Short Break Policy Statement

September 2023



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## 1. Introduction

This policy statement sets out how Lancashire County Council, under Section 2 of the Care Act 2014, will arrange short breaks for an adult being cared for which will also support the informal (unpaid) carer in their caring role.

Caring for someone living in the community can be a full-time commitment, often in conjunction with paid employment and other domestic responsibilities. This policy statement applies to a person with care and support needs who may be supported by an informal (unpaid) carer who either lives with them, or who lives elsewhere, but who needs regular visits, support and companionship from the unpaid carer.

It can be difficult for carers to prioritise their own needs but breaks are vital to the carer's own wellbeing and to prevent, reduce or delay onset of their own health needs. It can give the adult who is being cared for an opportunity to enjoy new experiences, have a change of scene and routine and mix with other people.

In accordance with Social Care Institute for Excellence ([Providing carers' adult carers' breaks | SCIE](#)), we want to improve how we offer short breaks and work towards *What Good Looks Like*

- **Clear information** – about the range and variety of services and support. For each service, provide information about the type of setting and support, the duration and the cost.
- **Breaks need to be easy to arrange** – carers want to know times, costs, eligibility, availability, skills of staff, how to book and contact details.
- **Ensure quality** – comply with Care Quality Commission (CQC) fundamental standards and the family and friends test. Involve carers and community members in checking your services.
- **Co-production** – involve carers in shaping services. What would people like? Be flexible about how you do this and really listen to what they say.
- **Flexibility and variety** – overnight breaks are valued, but so are regular breaks during the day. Carers often want to take a break with the person they care for, but not have to do all the caring tasks. Are your services inclusive?
- **Business planning for continuity** – have in place good plans in response to gaps in the care market. Ensure contingency plans are in place for people who are supported by unpaid carers.
- **Build on what works and do more of what you are good at** – for example, good day services might be trusted and understand people well, some services may have skills supporting people with particular needs.
- **'Get to know me and the person I care for – get to know our family'** – if a carer is experiencing support for the first time, they will need a period to adjust while they get a feel for what works.
- **Skilled staff** – carers don't want to 'pick up the pieces' after a break that did not work well for the person they care for.
- **Get the basics right around reliability and communication** – keep carers in touch and informed.
- **Measure impact** – how do you know your service makes a difference?

- **Be part of the community.** Breaks can help people to stay connected to the things they enjoy, reducing loneliness and can help build new links both for the carer and the person they care for.
- **Make the break enjoyable.**
- **Use technology to compliment support:** Technology can offer peace of mind, but be aware that carers may not feel like they are having a break if they are in constant contact with the person they care for.

## 2. Policy Statement aim

### This policy statement aims to:

- provide short breaks that meet the needs of carers and adults with social care and support needs
- support adults with care and support needs, who are supported by carers, to develop their independence, learn new skills, make friends and reduce isolation
- provide short breaks which supports carers with their caring responsibilities
- ensure that our short breaks offer are offered across three levels –
  - ✓ we provide information, advice and guidance about accessing universal support;
  - ✓ and/ or we offer short breaks up to 6 weeks as part of our prevent, reduce, delay duty to regain skills, confidence and avoid the need for long-term care and support
  - ✓ and/or we offer long-term support which is assessed for both the person with care and support needs and their carer
- involve adults with care and support needs and their families with decisions

We want unpaid carers to be able to say:

- I am supported to provide care as I wish and do so in a way that takes into account my own access to education, employment, health and wellbeing.
- I have a life outside caring and I am able to remain connected to the people who matter to me.
- I know my needs are equally recognised and my goals and aspirations are respected and fulfilled.
- I have the right information and advice to be able to make informed decisions.
- I have access to appropriate support, that suits my needs including respite care and carers' breaks.

## 3. Principles and Definitions

### 3.1 What is a Short Break

Short breaks should be designed to maximise independence for the person with care and support needs and wherever possible should be provided close to where they live in a community setting to maintain their usual networks of support.

A short break can include day, evening, overnight or weekend support which can take place in the person with care and support needs' home, in the home of an approved carer, in a community setting or in a residential home.



Short breaks will give a carer a break from their caring role. It should not subsidise a service the person and carer would normally purchase for themselves on a regular basis or a service commissioned on an ongoing basis to the cared for person.

Where care and support is needed in an emergency situation due to the usual carer being unavailable because of ill health or because something has happened which has led to carer breakdown, the cared for person should have contingency arrangements already in their care and support plan which outlines their views and wishes about how their care and support needs will be met. Depending on the circumstance, this would be classed as a short or long-term care arrangement based on the cared for person's care act eligible needs.

#### **4. How can I access short breaks?**

##### **4.1 The short breaks offer**

Lancashire County Council will support people with care and support needs and their carers to access to short breaks in three ways.

1. We will provide information, advice and guidance about accessing universal support in the community they live which could include activities in leisure centres, community group, faith groups etc.
2. Where there is an opportunity to regain skills, confidence and prevent, reduce and delay the need for long-term support or for carer breakdown we will offer support up to 6 weeks
3. For access to long-term short breaks, Care Act eligibility will be assessed

##### **4.2 Advocacy**

Care and support should always be person-centred where we listen to the views and wishes of the person/ people involved. Under the Care Act, Lancashire County Council can arrange for an independent advocate to facilitate the involvement of the person with care and support needs in their assessment, if two conditions are met:

- The person has **substantial difficulty** in being involved in these processes
- There is not an **appropriate individual** willing to support them

Further information is available in the [Care Act Advocacy PPG](#). Please be aware that further duties to arrange an advocate also apply under the Mental Health Act and Mental Capacity Act.

#### **5. Safeguarding**

The county council will follow its obligation under the Care Act to safeguard adults with care and support needs (whether or not the council is meeting any of those needs) and ensure that its obligations are carried out in partnership with all agencies and organisations who may come into contact with those people.



## 6. How will I know I am eligible for a short breaks?

Eligibility for long-term short breaks is determined by the cared for person's social care assessment.

The level of a short break offered, with overnight short breaks offered at the more complex end of care needs, will reflect the impact of the caring responsibility on the carer and the cared for person's wellbeing. A range of factors will be taken into account including:

- If care provided is physically demanding
- The level of support someone requires when they are awake
- If the carer is required to wake at night to provide care during the night
- Extent of sleep disruption and ability or otherwise to manage this
- Level of complexity and behaviours e.g. someone who cannot be left alone
- Whether the carer has sole responsibility and little support from others
- The potential impact on the wider family
- What other support the family may receive

Accessing long-term short breaks, can look different and below are some examples:

- day care – where the adult attends a service or participates in activities away from home, enabling the carer to have a break (this excludes the use of direct payments to access LCC services).
- day-sitting service – which enables the carer to go shopping, meet friends or have time to do other things they want to do.
- night-sitting service – to care for the adult during the night, to enable the carer to rest and sleep throughout the night.
- residential or nursing homes
- Shared Lives
- holidays – help and support for the carer and / or adult whilst on holiday either together or separately.

It is the responsibility of the NHS to organise short breaks for those who are continuing health care (CHC) funded so that the NHS are assured that the care being given is of an appropriate standard. The council still has a duty to assist carers by assessing and supporting them when they are having a break. The council should not provide care as a substitute for anything that the carer provides when he/she is taking a break.

In order to be eligible for long-term short breaks, Lancashire County Council will conduct assessments with both the adult and the carer, to ensure they are Care Act eligible (see Assessment of Needs policy).



During this process, Lancashire County Council will:

- carry out an assessment of anyone who appears to have needs for care and support, regardless of whether those needs are likely to be eligible
- focus the assessment on the person's needs and how they impact on their wellbeing, and the outcomes they want to achieve
- involve the person in the assessment and, where appropriate, their carer and/or someone else they nominate
- provide access to an independent advocate to support the person's involvement in the assessment, if required
- consider other things besides care services that can contribute to the desired outcomes (e.g. preventive services, community support)

A carer's assessment should consider the impact of the caring role on their wellbeing across the following areas:

- how caring affects their work and personal life
- physical, mental and emotional health.
- how they feel about their caring role, including their choice about being a carer.
- work, study, training and leisure commitments and goals.
- personal relationships.
- housing situation.
- contingency planning / planning for emergencies.
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### **Annual Review of short breaks**

In accordance with responsibilities under the Care Act, people with long-term care and support needs who receive short breaks will be reviewed every 12 months from the date of their assessment or review to ensure the support is still meeting eligible needs.

### **7. How are Short Breaks charged for?**

Adult social care in Lancashire has two charging policies, the Non-Residential Charging Policy for support offered in the community e.g. day care and the Residential Charging Policy where a person's care and support needs require 24/7 or overnight support.

Care and support provided directly to the cared for person on a regular and ongoing basis to complement the role of the informal (unpaid carer) are chargeable.

The person being cared for will be financially assessed in accordance with the above policies to understand whether they will need to pay a contribution towards their short breaks.

Lancashire County Council is required to offer short breaks that meet Care Act eligible needs in a way that also delivers affordability and value for money for the



Council. If the person chooses for a different and more expensive option, an additional 'top up fee' will be charged.

The 'top-up' fee is calculated by subtracting the cost of the option identified by the Council, minus your care contribution identified in the financial assessment, from the cost of your preferred placement. For more details please refer to the charging policies referenced above.

## 8. Complaints

The county council will follow the Care Act and other relevant legislation, policies and guidance to ensure our practice is of high quality and legally compliant. Where our residents or those we come into contact with wish to challenge or raise concerns about our decisions regarding eligibility [the county council's complaints procedures will be made available](#).

## 9. Equalities

The Equality Act, 2010 requires Lancashire County Council to have "due regard" to the needs of groups with protected characteristics when carrying out all its functions, as a service provider and an employer. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender identity/gender reassignment, sex/gender, race/ethnicity/nationality, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation and marriage or civil partnership status.

The main aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of a person because of protected characteristics.
- To advance equality of opportunity between groups who share protected characteristics and those who do not share them. This includes encouraging participation in public life of those with protected characteristics and taking steps to ensure that disabled people can participate in activities/processes.
- Fostering good relations between groups who share protected characteristics and those who do not share them/community cohesion.

It is anticipated that the Adult Short Breaks Policy Statement will support the County Council in meeting the above aims when applied in a person-centred, objective and fair way which includes, where appropriate, ensuring that relevant factors relating to a person's protected characteristics are included as part of the process.

More information can be found on the Equality and Cohesion intranet site on <http://lccintranet2/corporate/web/?siteid=5580&pageid=30516>





## 10. Policy, Legislation and Regulations

<b>POLICY DOCUMENTS</b>	<a href="#">Mental Capacity Act</a>
<b>LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Care Act 2014</a> (HM Government, 2014)</li><li>• <a href="#">Care and support statutory guidance</a> (Department of Health and Social Care, 2018)</li></ul>



## 11. POLICY VERSION CONTROL

<b>POLICY NAME</b>	<b>Adult Short Breaks</b>		
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