



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Adult Services Respite Allocation Policy

November 2019

Building Safe and Resilient Communities

1. Introduction

Neath Port Talbot Council ('the Council') is committed to ensuring that all people with an assessed eligible care and support need receive high quality, sustainable and personalised responses to meet that need and help them to achieve their agreed personal outcomes.

The Council recognises the important role of carers and the need to support their well-being through a range of interventions as identified by a Carer's Assessment.

This policy has been developed to provide a strategic approach to delivering respite that is consistent, transparent and clearly outlines the framework through which the Council provides respite services. The policy applies to all adults aged 18 years and above who are currently or become eligible for respite provided directly or commissioned by the Council. There is separate provision for meeting the needs of Young Carers who are, therefore, not covered by this policy.

2. What is Respite?

Respite means a carer and the person they care for being supported to have a valuable break from the normal routine and demands of their caring situation.

The need for respite may be identified via a Carer's Assessment as part of a person's eligible need to support them to care for a family member, partner or friend. Respite should deliver positive outcomes for all those involved in the caring relationship. Outcomes might include:

- A break from day-to-day routines
- Time to rest and recharge the batteries
- Improved well-being
- Strengthened relationships and opportunities to maintain friendships
- Time to pursue personal interests, leisure or cultural activities
- Greater independence and self-confidence
- Carers will feel better supported to sustain their caring role
- Carers who are less likely to ask for support will feel better supported and more aware of sources of help

3. Aims of the Policy

The policy aims to provide clear, fair and equitable eligibility criteria for unpaid carers to access respite services. For the purposes of this document, unpaid carers are people who support a family member, partner or friend, but are not employed to do so. The person cared for and/or the unpaid carer may be in receipt of welfare benefits such as Attendance Allowance or Carer's Allowance; however, such benefits are excluded from the consideration of eligibility for respite.

4. Legal Framework

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 ('the Act'), together with Regulations made and Codes of Practice and Guidance issued under it, is the legislative framework that sets out the Council's duties in meeting an individual's need for care and support, or support in the case of a carer, following an assessment. The Council will have a duty to meet that need if the need meets statutory eligibility criteria and cannot be met by the person's own resources or community resources.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 outlines principles and ways of working which include the responsibility for ensuring sustainable developments for individuals to connect with their local communities and the needs of the present being met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This links directly to the well-being principles underpinning this policy.

5. Policy Statement

This policy outlines how the Council will ensure a consistent and equitable way of supporting carers through the provision of respite by setting out the criteria that will be used to assess how adults access respite services identified in a Carers Assessment or review.

6. Types of Short Break

Respite services have changed. They no longer have to mean a bed in a care home for the person cared for. They can take many forms and be used for many things, such as shopping, socialising or enjoying a hobby.

A break could be, for example:

- A one-off occasion to recharge your batteries
- A regular hour to yourself
- Daytime or overnight respite

7. Principles of Providing a Service

The following principles will apply:

- The receipt of social care and support services is based on eligibility. All adults over the age of 18 years have the right to request an assessment of their need either as a potential service user or as a carer of someone who needs care and support. Once an assessment has been completed a decision will be made as to which needs someone has that are eligible to be met according to prevailing Welsh Government legislation.
- The Act, and the Regulations, Guidance and Codes of Practice issued under it, stress the importance of supporting a wide range of social enterprises and third party organisations to provide care and support in the local community. Wherever possible, the Council will look and see whether identified eligible needs can be met in a less formal way by family, friends, neighbours and the wider community. This does not mean that the Council will only meet needs which cannot be met in these other ways, but we will look at the full range of possibilities.
- When commissioning services, the Council will make a determination as to what interventions can best meet the person's identified assessed needs and agreed desired outcomes in a way that is equitable and sustainable, whilst offering maximum choice and control in regards to the care and support they receive.
- That people are expected to pay what they can afford for the services that they receive, taking full account of any income, savings and assets that they have in accordance with the Charging and Assessment regulations.
- The provision of respite should make a difference to the lives of both carers and those cared for, improving the quality of life and well-being of both, and supporting the caring relationship to allow carers to continue to care.
- Carers, and those they care for, are at the centre of planning the respite which should be personalised as far as possible to their individual needs.

8. Eligibility Criteria

Under the Act, a carer is a person who provides or intends to provide unpaid care for an adult or a disabled child.

All carers aged 18+ years providing care within Neath Port Talbot are eligible for a Carers Assessment (or review) and, if required, an outcome based support plan which reflects how the proposed support meets identified outcomes.

All assessments and reviews will be conducted in accordance with the 2014 Act, Regulations and Codes of Practice and should reflect the realities and needs of the individual situation. When assessing the need for, and amount of, respite the following matters are likely to be relevant (though this is not an exhaustive list):

- Time spent caring each week
- Whether the health, well-being and quality of life of the carer or the person receiving care is under strain and is likely to be improved by the provision of respite
- The carer's age in so far as relevant to their capacity to provide care
- Whether they are a sole carer
- Whether the carer cares for more than one person
- Whether the caring role involves broken sleep
- Impact of caring on the carer's employment and social engagement (or prospects of these)

Exceptional circumstances should be explored during the Carer's Assessment or review and the cared for person's Care and Support Plan assessment or review.

A carer will generally be eligible for respite services if the assessment (or review) identifies outcomes that can only be met through the provision of respite commissioned or provided directly by the Council.

9. Allocation

As a starting point, the amount of respite allocated will be based on an assessment undertaken by an appointed Care Manager using the Council's Respite Allocation Tool (Appendix 1).

Allocations of respite provision as above will then be ‘reality checked’ against a carer’s specific circumstances to ensure that what is proposed is likely to meet the assessed need and agreed desired outcomes.

Whilst there is no implied upper limit to the number of respite nights available to an individual, it is worth highlighting that an amount greater than 56 nights per year can adversely affect certain benefits such as Carer’s Allowance.

All staff need to remind carers that if they cancel their planned respite, they need to give as much notice as possible. This is to ensure that scarce respite resources are not left vacant when, with sufficient notice, they might have been made available to someone else in need. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that requests for specific dates within residential respite units can always be met.

10. Preference for Particular Accommodation

The 2014 Act recognises the importance of persons in need of care and support being able to express an element of choice around the meeting of need. Where a person receives ongoing care and support, or long term residential care provided or facilitated by the Council, we do our best to ensure that element of choice. The short term and intermittent nature of respite care, coupled with the need to ensure the continued availability of respite provision by guaranteeing funding levels to providers, prevents the Council from commissioning a range of providers, so we cannot offer the same level of choice of commissioned services. An element of preference/choice is, however, maintained through the offer of Direct Payments (see Section 12 below).

Currently, the Council’s designated provider of:

- Overnight respite for older people is Plas Bryn Rhosyn.
- Overnight nursing respite is Gnoll Nursing Home.
- Overnight respite for people with complex needs, including learning disabilities, is Trem Y Mor.

11. Principles of Charging for Services

The maximum amount which a person may be charged as a contribution towards the cost of non-residential care and support, which by definition includes respite care, is set by the Welsh Government by regulation. Individual

liability to contribute to the cost of respite, up to the maximum figure from time to time, will be calculated in accordance with Regulations.

12. Direct Payments

Direct Payments will be offered to promote, where possible, flexibility in the provision of respite.

A carer can choose a Direct Payment from the Council to commission care and support from providers of their choice. This can give the carer more choice, control and flexibility over how they receive respite.

When the Direct Payment for respite services is used to fund residential care, Shared Lives or community based services, the person will be charged according to the Council's 'Residential and Non-Residential Care Charging Policy' at the time when the respite is taken.

The Council will be concerned to see that the care and support services purchased meet the assessed need and achieve agreed personal outcomes but, beyond that, it is entirely a matter for the person to decide whether they wish, and are able, to purchase more costly care and support at their own expense.

The need for the Council to ensure availability for respite placements through the block funding of places, as explained in Section 10 above, means that it is not possible, save in exceptional circumstances, for Direct Payments to be used to purchase respite care at the properties named in Section 10.

13. Transition Period

It is anticipated that most carers will be moved onto the new allocation immediately following review.

However, it is recognised that for people who are allocated a significantly lower allocation of nights than they currently receive and who would find it particularly difficult to cope with an immediate full reduction it may be reasonable to maintain a higher, but steadily reducing, level of respite support during a transition period, particularly when the current level of provision has been in place for a long time. In these exceptional circumstances, which will be considered on an individual basis, a phased approach may be taken.

People who have had an assessment will be able to book up to 14 days respite for the next year whilst awaiting their reassessment.

14. Review of Service

All care and support packages which include respite services will be subject to a minimum of an annual review to ensure they remain the most appropriate option for meeting the carer's assessed needs. This will include, where applicable, taking into consideration the previous year's allocation and take up.

15. Complaints / Appeals Procedure

Should a person who accesses services or their carer wish to challenge any decisions made, (s)he should refer to the Council's appeals procedure. This process has a clear route of appeal and timescale for handling appeals.

Individuals and/or their carers should be provided with information explaining how to complain about Social Services in Neath Port Talbot, which is available in accessible formats and different languages. The leaflet and details of the complaints procedure can also be accessed online via the Council's website www.npt.gov.uk. The dedicated Adult Services Complaints telephone number is (01639) 763445, or via email: complaints@npt.gov.uk

16. Review of the Policy

The policy reflects the Council's current position and will be reviewed annually.

17. Resources

Paying for Residential and Community Care: <https://www.npt.gov.uk/1290>