

Making a Statement

Developing your Short Breaks Services Statement
Guide and template for Local Authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships



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Thanks and acknowledgements

This guide was produced by a short life Think Tank, an action learning project hosted by Shared Care Scotland¹. The Think Tank met six times between December 2017 and May 2018, with participation from 11 Local Authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs):

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Note on language

For consistency and clarity, we have used the same terms as the Carers Act wherever possible. We acknowledge that the term 'cared-for' people is contested, and that although the Act refers to 'local authorities', implementation may be led by different partners within IJBs and HSCPs.

¹ Paragraph 6.2.18 of the Carers Act Guidance states that 'Local authorities are encouraged to consider the outcomes from this project as they emerge.'



Introduction

This guide has been written to help Local Authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships prepare a Short Break Services Statement (SBSS). It provides a template structure, with an overview of what should be included under each of eight headings, and sample wording that can be adapted for local use.

Section 35 of the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016² requires local authorities to prepare and publish a statement setting out information about short breaks services available for local carers and cared-for people.

The SBSS is more than 'just' a statement, it is the result of strategic choices and decisions about provision. Whether or not these are developed as part of a Carers Strategy³, you will need to make clear decisions about short breaks before you can develop an effective SBSS. This document therefore presents suggestions and questions to help when preparing a SBSS.

It does not replace but should be read in conjunction with the relevant [regulations](#)⁴ and [statutory guidance](#)⁵.

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/9/section/35>

³ The Carers Act (Section 31) requires each local authority and relevant health board to prepare a local carer strategy and provides for what that strategy must set out.

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/32/contents/made>

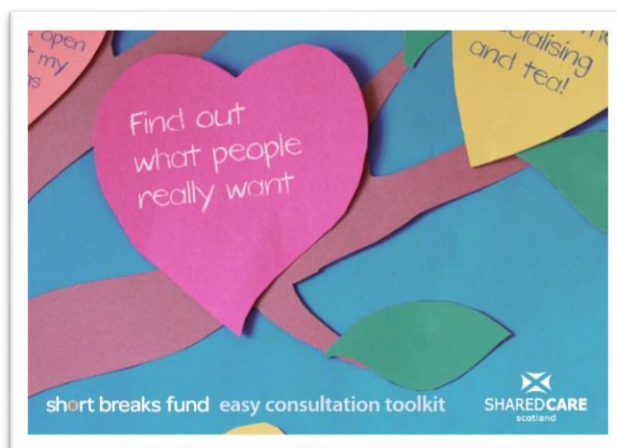
⁵ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/03/5082/downloads>

Who is the Short Break Services Statement for?

The Short Break Services Statement is primarily for carers and cared-for people. It can also be useful for people with support needs who don't have a carer, but who may still be looking for information on options for a short break. The legislation expects there to be involvement of carers and their representatives in preparing the SBSS⁶. It should therefore be co-produced in partnership with them and their representatives⁷. This takes time, so it is important to start early to make sure the SBSS is ready to publish by December 2018.



For ideas on consultation and involvement, download the [Easy Consultation Toolkit](#)¹.



The SBSS cannot remove all the barriers to carers getting a break, but it should help carers and cared-for people to understand their rights, options and opportunities for short breaks. It should be prepared in a way that observes and meets the responsibilities to eliminate discrimination and promote equality which are highlighted in the Act. The SBSS should therefore be accessible, straightforward and available in a range of formats. It should provide enough information (and signposting to further information) to enable informed decisions without being overwhelming.

It should also help practitioners identify short break outcomes and opportunities (this might include care support workers; link workers; service providers; GPs; HSCP staff etc.). But note, the SBSS should not be used as a means of explaining the limitations of Local Authority budgets and how they will be used.

To be meaningful and relevant, the SBSS should be dynamic. It should change, evolve and be updated in response to learning and feedback. See Part 8 below.

⁶ Paragraph 6.2.6. of the Statutory Guidance requires local authorities to 'consider the views of relevant carers and carer representatives in the preparation and review of the statement.'

⁷ The Regulations state that 'In preparing and reviewing a short breaks services statement, the local authority must have regard to...the views of relevant carers and such bodies representative of carers as the local authority considers appropriate.'

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/32/regulation/2/made>

Young carers

A young carer is a carer who is under 18 years old, or is 18 and still in school. But a young carer is more than just a young person who provides unpaid care⁸. They are children and young people first, with rights to live a full life and not miss out on childhood. Short breaks have a role to play in ensuring young carers can benefit from the same experiences and opportunities as their friends and peers, and SBSSs should reflect this.

Some local areas will prefer to produce one SBSS for both adult and young carers. Other areas will produce separate SBSSs for young carers, using appropriate language and presentation to make sure the SBSS is relevant and accessible. Whichever option is chosen⁹, SBSSs need to properly consider young carers. The best way to ensure this is to fully involve young carers in developing the SBSS.

⁸ For more information about Young Carers and the Carers Act, visit <https://young.scot/information/rights/carers-act/>

⁹ Paragraph 6.2.20 of the Statutory Guidance allows either approach to be considered.

Developing your Short Breaks Services Statement



Suggested structure, outline content and further questions

1. Background

Overview of what this section could contain:

A short definition of unpaid carers¹⁰, noting the number of carers locally and their needs, with links to any relevant carer strategies. Reference should be made to young carers (there may also be circumstances in which a Local Authority prefers to produce a separate Short Break Services Statement for young carers, see page 5).

A short, simple overview of the Carers Act and the requirement for the SBSS.

A jargon-busting guide could be included to clarify unavoidable technical terms. See Part 3 for some definitions of short breaks and the different ways they can be provided and described.

Language should be positive, focusing on the opportunities afforded by short breaks, rather than the burden and stresses of caring.

Example wording

Short Break Services Statement

This Statement is required by the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. It gives information about the short breaks services available locally and across Scotland for carers and the person or people they care for.

The aim of the statement is to help carers and people with support needs understand:

- What short breaks are*
- Who can access them*
- What short breaks are available in our area and Scotland*
- How they can access short breaks and find further information.*

The content of this statement has been informed by what carers have told us in our consultation around the Carers Strategy and other development work. The statement will continue to be reviewed in light of feedback.

The statement will also signpost you to information we expect to be available locally. This provides information on what services you and the cared for person can expect from a range of local agencies, including education, health and social care. Knowing what is out there gives you more choice and therefore more control over what support is right for you.

¹⁰ Section 1(1) of the Act defines a carer as an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another individual (the “cared-for person”).

2. Purpose

Overview of what this section could contain:

A statement of purpose. The Regulations require Local Authorities to have regard to the purpose of a Short Break Services Statement¹¹. It would therefore be good practice to state that purpose.

Remember that Section 25 of the Carers Act requires Local Authorities to ‘consider in particular’ whether their duty to support carers ‘should take the form of or include a break from caring’ and to ‘have regard to the desirability of breaks from caring being provided on a planned basis.’ The SBSS should help to support short break planning for those both eligible and not eligible under the ‘duty to support’ carers.

Describe your Local Authority’s rationale for and commitment to short breaks, and its approach to ensuring there is an appropriate ‘market’ and choice of provision¹². It might be helpful to give your SBSS a strapline that illustrates its purpose, for example ‘Short breaks - living a life alongside of caring’.

The purpose in relation to the cared-for person should also be explained. For many carers, how a short break will impact on the person they care for may be their first – or only - concern. This may include concerns about the level and quality of support available for the person they care for and this is worth acknowledging here.

Example wording

The purpose of this Short Break Services Statement is to provide information to carers and cared for people so that they;

- Know they can have a break in a range of ways
- Are informed about short breaks that are available
- Have choice in the support they access
- Can identify what a short break means for them, and how they can be supported to meet their needs and achieve their outcomes.

¹¹ In preparing and reviewing a short breaks services statement, the local authority must have regard to the purpose of a short breaks service statement.’

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/32/regulation/2/made>

¹² Section 25(5) of the Carers Act sets out that section 19(2) of the SDS Act, providing for the promotion of options for self-directed support, i.e., promoting variety in the market, applies to the Carers Act.

3. Definition

Overview of what this section could contain:

A short definition of short breaks and their purpose. The Act does not define short breaks, but Annex C of the Statutory Guidance¹³ encourages reference to a definition from Shared Care Scotland (see example wording below).

Important points to include in this section are that short breaks:

- Are not new. The Short Break Services Statement is not just being provided because of the Carers Act, it is a formal recognition of the importance of short breaks.
- Provide a break from a carer's normal caring *routine* or *role*.
- Enable carers to have a life outside or alongside the caring role. In the case of young carers, this includes the right to be a child first (rather than being a carer first with a life alongside caring).
- Can take any number of forms and can be for short or extended periods. They should be personalised to meet people's needs and be planned around what matters to them.

Local case studies and examples. Definitions and examples are counterproductive if they lead to restrictive thinking. Because breaks should be personalised for carers and cared-for people, they can be infinitely diverse and will mean different things to different people. Lists of options might be unhelpful or overwhelming, but local case studies and stories can help illustrate the range and variety that short breaks can take.

The relationship between planned short breaks and emergency breaks. It is important for people to have access to emergency support if they need replacement care at short notice. To minimise the stress that can be generated by emergencies, plans should be prepared in advance that include any options for emergency respite cover. This will be particularly important for any carers that are at increased risk due to their own health or caring circumstances.

Example definition 1

This example definition, provided by Shared Care Scotland, is taken from Annex C of the Statutory Guidance.

Definition

A short break is any form of service or assistance which enables the carer(s) to have periods away from their caring routines or responsibilities.

Purpose

The purpose is to support the caring relationship and promote the health and well-being of the carer, the supported person, and other family members affected by the caring situation.

¹³ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/03/5082>

Description

Your 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 in place, if required
- take the form of the carer and the person they care for having a break together, with assistance if necessary, to provide a break from the demands of their daily caring routines.

Example definition 2

This definition was developed by the authors of this guide, in response to the Carers Act.

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 can sustain the caring relationship.

4. Outcomes

Overview of what this section could contain:

The difference short breaks can make to carers, cared-for people and others affected by the caring role.

How carers will be supported through outcome-focused conversations to make informed choices about the need for and benefits of short breaks. It could also be useful to indicate how short break outcomes for the carer and cared-for person will be measured.

The language used to describe these points should be realistic but empowering, focusing on building carers' capacity, choice and control, and using resources and assets creatively to provide effective breaks from caring.

Example wording

Carers will be supported to identify the need for and potential benefit of their short break. The outcomes of a break will be personal to each carer and cared-for person, but may include:

- *Having more opportunities to enjoy a life outside/alongside the caring role*
- *Feeling better supported*
- *Improved confidence (for example, more confident as a carer)*
- *Increased ability to cope*
- *Reduced social isolation and loneliness, for example increasing social circles, connections and activities*
- *Increased ability to maintain the caring relationship - and sustain the caring role*
- *Improved health and wellbeing*
- *Improved quality of life*
- *Reduced likelihood of breakdown and crisis.*



These example outcomes are taken from the Short Break Fund [Easy Evaluation Toolkit](#)¹⁴.

At the time of writing, the Carers Act Monitoring and Evaluation Implementation Group are drafting a logic model of carers' outcomes which should also be a useful reference for developing your SBSS outcomes. SSSC are also issuing guidance on different personal outcomes approaches and person-centred conversations.



¹⁴ <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources/tools/evaluation-toolkit/>

5. Support available

Overview of what this section could contain:

Local short breaks services. Describe and provide contact details for key services locally. Short breaks can take any form, so it is almost impossible to list everything that could constitute a short break. However, there are likely to be recognisable (or specifically commissioned) short break providers in your area, and details of these should be provided.

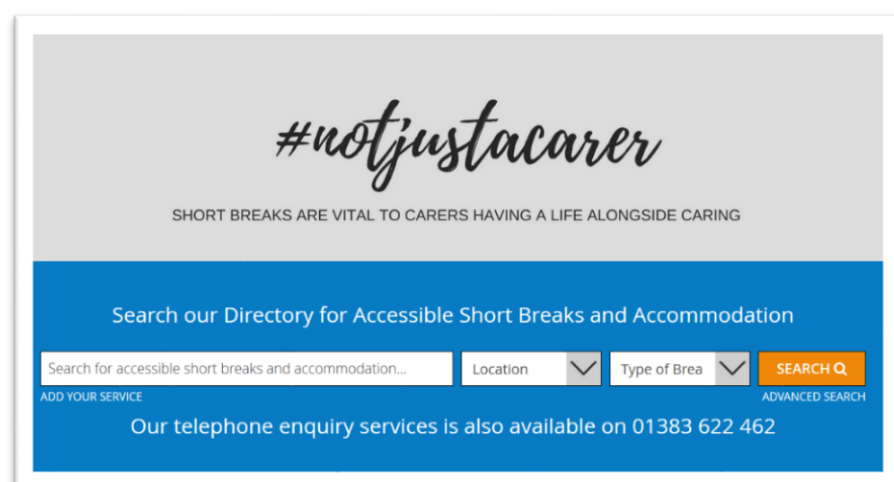
Links to local sources of information and directories, such as a Short Breaks Bureau, carers centres, carer support networks, brokerage services etc. Other agencies and information points, such as Third Sector Interfaces, may already maintain lists of services which could complement (or save time on producing) your own.

Links to national short break websites and databases, such as the ones in this list:

Shared Care Scotland <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/>

This website contains a searchable directory of short breaks. Anyone wishing to list a short break service can log in to do so.

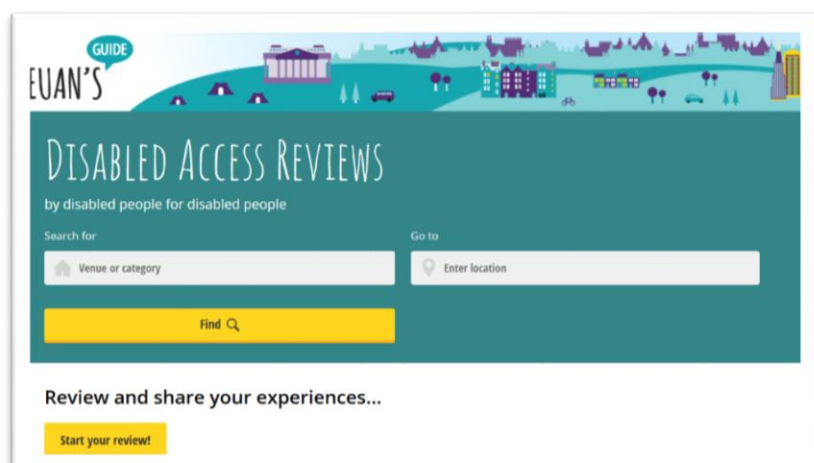
The website also provides information on '[Time to Live](https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/shortbreaksfund/timetolive/)'¹⁵, a programme of 12-month small grants available to carers in every Local Authority area, along with a [database of funding sources](https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/funding-your-break/)¹⁶ for short breaks, including the 'Take a Break' fund.



¹⁵ <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/shortbreaksfund/timetolive/>

¹⁶ <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/funding-your-break/>

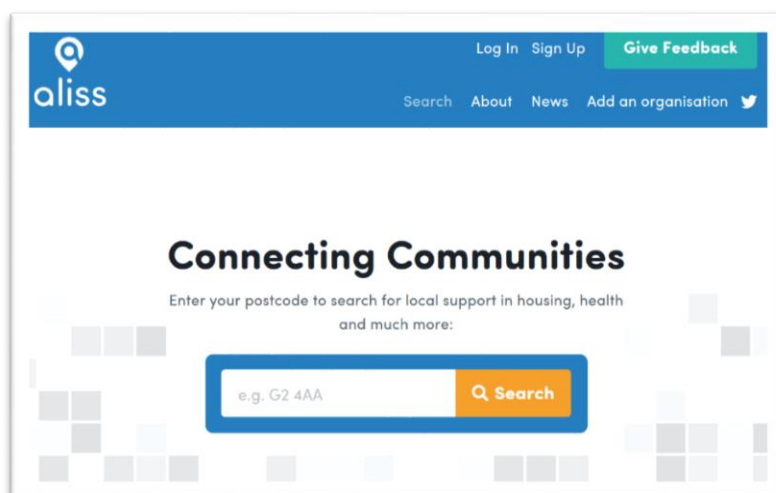
Euan's Guide <https://www.euansguide.com/>



Euan's Guide is the disabled access review website that aims to 'remove the fear of the unknown' and inspire people to try new places. The cornerstone of Euan's Guide is its community of independent reviewers, who share their photos and experiences of restaurants, hotels, train stations, attractions and anywhere else they may have visited.

ALISS <https://www.aliss.org/>

ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland) aims to increase the availability of health and wellbeing information for people living with long term conditions, disabled people and unpaid carers. It supports people, communities, professionals and organisations that have information to share.



These national links are important for signposting carers to short breaks within and beyond their own local area (e.g. if they live in a different Local Authority area to the cared-for person). Providing links to local and national information will help keep the SBSS current and concise. However, providing *information about available short breaks services* is a key requirement of the Carers Act, so it is not enough just to provide links to other sources of information.

The Local Authority's approach to replacement care should also be explained in this section. Statutory support may be subject to local eligibility criteria, and carers may be prevented from having a break if there is limited access to appropriate replacement care. So, it is important to promote different ways that statutory services can help carers to access a break from caring. In some cases a formal, funded break for the carer won't be needed, for example if care given to the cared-for person provides the carer with a break which means they are then able to access *universal services*. This could include services available locally such as local leisure centres or libraries. However, in other cases, especially where the carer has more significant needs, the Local Authority may have to provide both replacement care *and* funding to the carer to help them meet their personal outcomes.

The Guidance around replacement care is complex and requires careful interpretation. We cannot provide easy answers, but we believe that following the spirit and principles of the Act will provide the best chance of getting it right.

Example wording

The following list gives examples of the different ways that breaks can be provided. There may be eligibility criteria attached to these.

Breaks in specialist/dedicated accommodation

The accommodation, which is only used for short breaks, might be guest houses, community flats, purpose-built or adapted accommodation. Depending on the group catered for, facilities may be able to offer specialist care. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory.](#)

Breaks in care homes (with or without nursing care)

Some care homes may have a small number of places set aside specifically for short breaks. Rather than simply offering a 'spare bed' the home may provide activities for short-term guests to suit individual needs and interests. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory](#)

Breaks in the home of another individual or family

These involve overnight breaks provided by paid or volunteer carers in their own home. These are sometimes referred to as shared lives, family based or adult placement schemes. Families or individuals offering this support are carefully recruited and registered – normally by the local authority or through voluntary sector organisations. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory](#)

Breaks provided at home through a care attendant or sitting service

This includes individual support provided in the home of the cared-for person for periods of a few hours or overnight. The purpose may be to provide support while the carer is away, or to support the carer in other ways, e.g. by enabling the carer to have an undisturbed night's sleep. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory](#)

Supported access to clubs, interest or activity groups

These opportunities might focus on a particular activity (e.g. sports clubs, leisure activities) and may be based in a community building. These generally take place over a few hours perhaps once or twice a week or, in the case of disabled children, they may be planned over the school holidays. The availability of adapted equipment or trained workers can help people with support needs to enjoy these activities. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory](#)

Holiday breaks

These include opportunities for people to have a short break together, or independently. These breaks can be supported in different ways – through an agency specialising in breaks for people with particular needs; in adapted accommodation; or in ordinary hotels and guest houses, perhaps with additional equipment. More mainstream breaks may also be possible with the support of a paid carer or companion. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory](#)

Befriending schemes where volunteers provide short breaks

Befriending normally involves a paid worker or volunteer assisting someone with care and support needs to have access to activities, for example going to the cinema, meeting friends, shopping, swimming and other such leisure pursuits. Befriending can be on a one-to-one basis or as part of a group. [Click here for examples from the Shared Care Scotland Directory](#)

Day care

Day care is typically based in a community building and provided by a local authority or voluntary organisation. The degree of flexibility varies; most are characterised by fixed opening hours on particular days; some offer a drop-in service whereby people can attend for part of the day only. Day care is not generally provided for short break or respite purposes but services which offer more flexible arrangements, designed around the needs of both the client and carer, can achieve this purpose.

Hospital/hospice-based break

This type of break is for people who need medical supervision because of complex or intense health care needs. Some facilities are designed in such a way to create a more homely environment with guest bedrooms, lounges and activity programmes. Some short-term hospital-based care provides a break for the carer.

Alternative breaks

Increasingly, with the development of Self-directed Support, more people are finding creative ways to take a break that don't necessarily involve external services. For example, they might use leisure equipment, computers, gardens or anything else that provides a break from routine. [You can read some example 'Short Break Stories' by clicking here.](#)

6. Eligibility

Overview of what this section could contain:

Clear, simple and transparent explanation of any eligibility criteria, with links to separate documents and policies where appropriate (including information about Self-Directed Support). The Short Break Services Statement should give carers and cared-for people clarity about what they are *entitled* to as well as what they may or may not be *eligible* for.

Reference to the role of Adult Carer Support Plans and Young Carer Statements

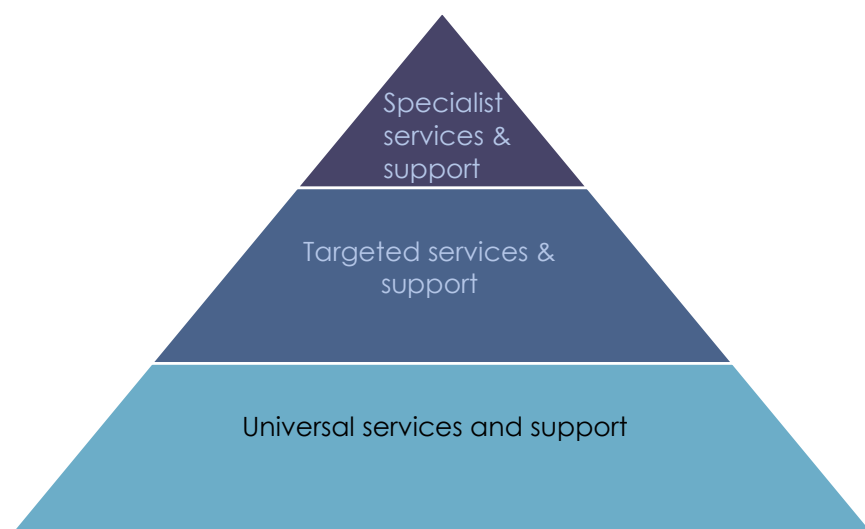
in planning short breaks. Short breaks should be planned after an outcome-focussed conversation, which may lead to an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statement being completed. (If, as a result of the ACSP or YCS, it appears that the cared-for person may have social care needs, then a referral for a separate assessment will need to be offered).

Links to other relevant local policies (e.g. Local Carers Strategy).

Links to supports for the cared-for person e.g. if they have a budget or if holistic support is available that could achieve outcomes for carers and cared-for people.

A statement covering the support available at all levels of need.

This might have parallels to the illustrative threshold for carers support set out in Annex 1 of the Statutory Guidance on Local Eligibility Criteria¹⁷.



¹⁷ <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00529331.docx>

For example:

Universal services and support: formal short breaks are only one part of the support available to carers and cared-for people. Universal services are those generally provided to the public at large (e.g. leisure and recreation facilities, support groups, neighbourhood networks), or support that is available to all carers without the need for assessment or test of eligibility. This might also include providing information on discount schemes ('carers go free', reduced rate memberships, etc.). Encourage carers and cared-for people to think creatively about their needs and how existing community resources can help to achieve these needs.

Targeted services and support are usually provided to more selected groups or individuals who may not easily be able to access universal short break services without additional assistance. They may be specially commissioned and designed to meet local need.

Specialist services and support would include the range of specialist short break services and support which can cater for cared-for people with more complex and/or multiple care requirements. These people might not be able to access the universal or targeted types of short breaks.

Example wording -

We cannot provide example wording for this and the following sections of the SBSS, because they will depend on local policy. But one thing that can be illustrated here is a statement showing the links between short breaks and Self-Directed Support. The SBSS should explain the principles and practicalities of using Self-Directed Support to fund a short break.

Short breaks should be planned as part of an outcome-focused conversation, which may result in an Adult Carers Support Plan or Young Carers Statement being produced.

We will work with you to identify:

- The impact of caring on your health, wellbeing, employment and ability to socialise*
- Your relationship with the person you care for (or the wider family) and if it is becoming difficult*
- The amount of time spent caring each week*
- How long it has been since you last had a break*
- If you are the only person caring and if you care for more than one person*
- Your ability to make arrangements for a short break with support.*

Some outcomes may be achieved through accessing universal services. Universal services are those which are provided to the public generally (e.g. leisure and recreation facilities, support groups, neighbourhood networks). Where this is not possible or appropriate, Self-Directed Support (SDS) funding may be offered to provide access to short breaks and/or replacement care.

If you are eligible, an individual budget will be allocated to you, based on your individual needs. You will be supported to identify your own skills and resources and to look at different ways to improve your life, using the resources identified and the individual budget. Once all this is agreed, you can choose from four options as to how much control and responsibility you want to take.

- A Direct Payment (a cash payment) where you choose how the budget is used and you manage the money.
- You direct how the budget is used, but the money is managed by someone else (sometimes called an Individual Service Fund).
- You ask the council to choose and arrange services for you.
- You can choose a mix of these options for different types of support.

7. Charging policy

Overview of what this section could contain:

A clear indication of charges (and waivers) and when they may be applicable. For example, charges are waived if a short break directly benefits the carer's assessed, eligible needs and outcomes as identified in the Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement. This is important because short breaks will often benefit carers and the cared-for person.

Charging and replacement care

Local policy, provision and practice will need time to develop in accordance with the [Regulations](#) on waiving of charges and replacement care¹⁸. Professional judgments will need to be made in response to real life cases. To help illustrate the ways decisions can be made, a Carers Act Short Life Working Group on the waiving of charges, (set up by the Scottish Government) is developing case studies during the mid to later part of 2018.

8. Feedback and further information

The Carers Act Regulations¹⁹ require Short Break Services Statements to contain contact details of the department or organisation responsible for the Statement.

Overview of what this section could contain:

How to get more information on the SBSS. You should make reference to the Local Carers Strategy and provide a link to it.

How and when the SBSS will be reviewed, and who by. You should include the process for involving carers and cared-for people in this. You should say who will be reviewing the Short Breaks Services Statement and when it will be reviewed. We suggest it should be reviewed at least annually to make sure information and links are kept up to date.

Who to contact for more information. We suggest there should be reference to specific teams rather than individuals (who may change), for example the team responsible for the Local Carers Strategy.

¹⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/31/contents/made>

¹⁹ As above



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