

Allocation of Short Breaks- Adult with a Learning Disability

This document outlines proposals for a new system of banding from which short breaks for adults with learning disability and their families can be allocated. The purpose of the new system is to ensure that short breaks are allocated in an equitable and transparent way so that all existing users of short breaks and new referrals for short breaks are assessed and allocated according to the needs of the adult with a learning disability and that of their carers.

Shared Care

This system does not apply to a small number of families who require shared care, where it has been assessed that it is in the best interests of the service user to spend regular weekly periods of time away from the family home in order to maintain the family unit.

Access to Short Breaks, People with a Learning Disability

Eligibility

Short break services for adults with a learning disability funded by Wakefield Family Services are focussed on meeting the needs of people who are eligible for services under the local Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) criteria.

In Wakefield eligibility is currently set at the critical and substantial levels of need to ensure effective targeting of care for those with the greatest need.

It is proposed that there is no additional eligibility procedure specifically for short break services. People who are eligible for services under FACS and are living with family carers (or adult placement carers) will be able to access short breaks according to their individual needs and circumstances and those of their carers. There will be a single pathway to co-ordinated health and social care provision.

To be eligible for a short break service the individual must –

- Be ordinarily resident with Wakefield Metropolitan District, or registered with a Wakefield GP
- Be aged between 18-65
- Have a significant learning disability
- Fall within the critical or substantial priority levels of the Fair Access to Care Services Policy
- Be living with a family member/carer or in a full time Adult Placement.

Allocation

The level of care allocated will be allocated according to the needs of the individual with a learning disability and their carers following the completion of a Community Care Assessment in tandem with a Carer's Assessment.

The guiding principles for the allocation of nights are equity, fairness and transparency, so resources can be shared out with those in the greatest need receiving the highest allocation. Families will be advised of their allocation at the end of the assessment process, which will enable them to negotiate with the appropriate service provider for specific dates and patterns of usage.

Short break services experience a far higher demand for certain times of the week (ie weekends). In order to ensure equity of access to the short breaks facilities at these times, the demand for certain nights will be recognised in the allocation of short stay nights. Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights experience the highest demand, and have therefore been designated 'premium nights'. The number of nights in each band, will include a maximum number of 'premium nights' to which the service user is entitled. This has been calculated on 3/7 of the entitlement (reflecting the number of premium nights in week).

It is proposed that there are three bands against which the allocated service provision is determined.

Band One

24 Nights (to include a maximum of 11 premium nights)

Band Two

36 Nights (to include a maximum of 16 premium nights)

Band Three

56 Nights (to include a maximum of 24 premium nights)

Exceptional Circumstances

It is accepted that all needs are different and that some family situations may require support over and above the current banding system, either in the short or longer-term. These situations might include:

- Severe and immediate risk of the home situation breaking down, or:
- An emergency for the Carer, which necessitates leaving the family home.
- Ongoing need for regular and very frequent short breaks spread evenly throughout the year because of complex and/or challenging needs.

Monitoring and Review

- Short break arrangements are to be monitored by the appropriate Care Manager.
- Reviews must be undertaken at least annually, to ensure the service continues to meet assessed need of the Service User and their carer
- Significant changes in need will be referred to the Short Break Panel for consideration.
- Service Users and their Carers must be advised of their right to have access to the Council's Complaints and Representations Procedure.

Emergency provision

Services to support families in emergency situations will be provided in addition to the above allocation and in accordance with the families emergency support plan.

Banding Criteria

Following a Community Care Assessment and Carer's Assessment – the number of nights available to eligible Service Users is calculated by meeting the following criteria:

A premium night means a Friday, Saturday or Sunday night.

Band One: Up to 24 nights short break per year (of which 11 may be 'premium nights')

It must be intended to achieve at least one of the following outcomes through the provision of short breaks:

- To provide a Service User with a break from a difficult environment/strained relationship.
- To enable Carers to take a holiday or participate in a family event.
- To enable Carers to have quality time with other siblings/Family members.
- To maintain Carers working lives.

Band Two: Up to 36 nights short breaks per year (of which 16 may be 'premium nights')

Additional nights are available if the service user or carer, in addition to meeting the criteria for band one, also meets at least one of the following criteria:

- Service user requires active assistance from their carer to undertake the majority of their personal care tasks
- Service user requires assistance with mobility or transfers.
- Service user requires close supervision in order to manage everyday risks
- Service user displays unpredictable behaviour which requires close monitoring and supervision
- Service user has a medical condition which requires careful monitoring to prevent complications and deterioration
- Service user has complex health care needs, for example enteral feeding, colostomy care

- Carer is under stress due to individual or family circumstances
- Carer has physical health or mental health difficulties
- Carer has no family or friends to provide support in their caring role.

Band 3 up to 56 nights short breaks per year (of which 24 may be premium nights)

Additional nights are available if the service user or carer, in addition to meeting the criteria for band two, also meets one of the following criteria:

- Service user requires frequent active assistance as a result of complex, challenging and /or disruptive behaviour
- Service user requires frequent active assistance as a result of complex health care needs
- Carer under extreme stress due to age and health condition, deterioration in health
- Service user regularly has disrupted sleep patterns, or needs interventions during the night
- Risk of the home situation breaking down imminently without the opportunity for regular and frequent breaks being available

Exceptional circumstances:

The maximum number of nights can only be increased upon agreement by the Service Manager, in cases where there are exceptional circumstances. An example of this might be an emergency for the carer which necessitates leaving the family home.

3rd November 2008