



# **A Strategy for Carers 2013-2018**

## **Short Breaks Strategy**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **(i) Short breaks**

In the past, the terms “short break” and “respite” tended to be used interchangeably. Nowadays, as pointed out in “Caring Together, the Carers Strategy for Scotland” many service users and carers prefer the terms “short break” or “break from caring”, seeing the term “respite” as implying “relief from a burden” and associated with institutional support. The strategy states that “access to personalised, flexible short breaks provision is crucial. Short breaks help to recharge batteries and sustain carers in their caring role”. It proposes that local authorities and their partners “should use their combined resources and expertise in creative ways to plan for the development of more flexible, personalised short breaks provision”.

#### **(ii) Scope of this document**

This document is published as an appendix to the Strategy for Carers in North Lanarkshire, 2013-18. It builds on the first phase of the short breaks development programme described in section 2(iii) and follows on from the decision of the Health and Care Partnership that the Carers Strategy Implementation Group (CSIG) should develop and agree a short breaks strategy, incorporating a service design proposal and an implementation plan for the provision of flexible and responsive short breaks.

This is an ambitious undertaking and the CSIG sees this document as the first step towards evolving a far reaching and comprehensive short breaks strategy. At this stage, the scope

of the document is limited for the most part to setting out short and medium term aims and proposed actions arising from the first phase of the programme. The CSIG is aware that some partners are developing short break initiatives which may not be fully reflected here. However, one of the fundamental aims of the strategy is to bring about better co-ordination and more accurate information in the area of short breaks and annual updates of the document will become increasingly comprehensive.

## **2. Background**

### **(i) Strategy for Carers 2013 – 2018**

The Strategy for Carers in North Lanarkshire 2013-18 was developed by the Carers Strategy Implementation Group which has representation from individual carers, carer organisations, North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire. This group has a key role in developing and monitoring the strategic direction for carers in North Lanarkshire.

The new strategy draws on the three previous North Lanarkshire strategies as well as linking closely with the national strategies, “Caring Together; the Carers Strategy for Scotland, 2010-15” and “Getting it Right for Young Carers; the Young Carers Strategy for Scotland, 2010-15”.

The strategy highlights some issues which the strategic partners identified as priorities over the next five years, including the assessment of carers’ support needs and the development of a short breaks strategy.

### **(ii) The Carers Journey**

In North Lanarkshire, a carers’ assessment process was put in place by Social Work some time ago but uptake has been consistently low. We identified a number of issues contributing to the low uptake and, in consultation with carers and workers,

developed the “Carers’ Journey” to help identify and meet carers support needs as early as possible.

North Lanarkshire staff involved in assessment and care planning and staff from the (Princess Royal Trust) Lanarkshire Carers Centre are now being trained in the use of the carers journey methodology. The carers’ journey will address some of the issues associated with the carers’ assessment and, although it will not replace the carers’ assessment, it should reduce the number of carers needing a formal assessment.

There is a strong connection between the carers’ journey and the work to develop more flexible and responsive short breaks. As part of the carers journey people are asked “what would help?” their health and wellbeing, their ability to have a social life, their relationships and so on. Many carers emphasise the need for a short break as crucial in enabling them to carry on with their caring role.

### **(iii) The Short Breaks Development Programme**

In 2012, the partners agreed to carry out an analysis of current short break provision in North Lanarkshire to establish areas of good practice and address both gaps in service provision and barriers to access. The project’s remit was to:

- Scope out existing respite provision and map services that provide carers with short break opportunities and information on short breaks for carers
- Identify good practice nationally
- Carry out a wide ranging carer consultation to identify personal experiences of short breaks, gaps in provision and barriers
- Co-ordinate a range of stakeholder events to bring key professionals and carers together to discuss ways to make accessing short breaks more effective for carers

The report on the project's findings is available here:  
<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=13239&p=0>

### **3. What we want to achieve**

Carers are more able to cope in their caring role

Carers have a better quality of life

Carers do not feel isolated

Carers can access short breaks easily

Carers have a regular break

Carers are better informed

Carers are liked to a wide range of services which are personalised and needs-led

Short breaks are part of the norm

Short breaks are timely

Services are better evaluated and monitored

There is more effective inter-agency working

There is buy in from all involved in supporting carers e.g. local consortia, care managers

Those engaged with carers have short breaks in mind

Carers can recharge their batteries

Formal assessment/eligibility issues are addressed

#### **4. Our strategy**

In the following section, the term “partners” refers to the range of strategic partners, as represented in the North Lanarkshire Carers Strategy Implementation Group.

The strategy builds on a service proposal agreed by the partners which presents a range of ways in which short break services for carers can be improved. The focus is on capacity building both within the third and statutory sectors to improve the quality and accessibility to short breaks for carers building on existing structures and frameworks, carer support and information and signposting services. It also recognises the importance of the Carers Journey in the process.

The proposed service aligns to the priorities of the Council and NHS Carers Information Strategies and fits with the recommendations set out in the Joint Commissioning Plan for older people. It provides a framework for positive change in addressing the barriers that carers face when attempting to access short breaks and it encourages collaboration, partnership working and more effective networking. It also reflects the involvement of carers in the co-production of short break provision and encourages the participation of carers in the decision making process.

1. The partners will continue to operate through an advisory group, a sub-group of the North Lanarkshire Carers Strategy Implementation Group to oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of this strategy. The strategy will be integrated into the Strategy for Carers in North Lanarkshire by April 2014. (S)
2. The partners will establish a Short Break Information Service. The immediate steps for this will involve:
  - Agreeing clear outcomes and identifying objectives for the short term

- Developing a service specification and design, preparing an outline bid for funding by end November 2013
  - Having service in place by March 2014 (S)
3. The service will be based within the Princess Royal Trust Lanarkshire Carers Centre and will work in partnership with all key stakeholders (see note 1). In its initial stages, the service will provide an information service for carers of older people. Over the period of the strategy (2013-18), it will extend to all age groups and care groups and will expand the scope of its activities. (S/M).
  4. The service will work with carers groups and organisations to ensure that carers play an integral part in the design and delivery of services and their experiences influence strategic planning and resource allocation. The stakeholders will encourage and support underrepresented groups to become more involved in existing partnerships and local forums. (S/M)
  5. The service will develop and update the mapping information gathered as part of the short breaks development programme to inform carers and practitioners of short break opportunities for carers and other relevant resources and services. To assist with this it will link to Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire's (VANL) local consortia mapping of services. The service will also gather evidence of unmet need from a range of sources to inform future developments (S/M)
  6. The service will develop a communication plan which will include a publicity campaign to promote how carers can be supported to access a short break. This will aim to reach all carers and will develop links with local partnerships and cultural centres, including mosques/churches, as well as considering the range of languages used. (S/M)

7. The service will establish a range of carer networking workshops where carers can find out about different short break opportunities and be linked with support to plan/fund and prepare for a break. The aim will be that every carer attending these should come away with a plan for starting to think about a break. (S/M)
8. The service will explore the potential and benefits of an accessible website detailing short break provision that could link to the established Shared Care Scotland website and other partner websites. (S/M)
9. The service and all partners will promote the use of the Carers Journey in a range of sectors as a starting point for short break opportunities for carers. (S/M)
10. The partners, and the service, will identify appropriate funding and resources to allow the service to develop. In the early stages the partners will apply for funds from the Reshaping Care for Older People programme. By the second year, the partners will have in place a development plan with clearly identified resources for each element. This will include plans for the consolidation of existing or future funds. (S/M)
11. The service will develop a process in order to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of short break support identified in line with carer and RCOP monitoring and reporting. The partners will work within local planning structures to encourage and develop systems to enable more effective recording of carers needs and establish outcome focused monitoring processes. (M)
12. The service will develop and maintain strong links with the PRT Carer Support Workers, NHS Lanarkshire Carer Support Team and the Carer Development Officer for RCOP to ensure that short breaks for older people are being promoted within older people's services. (M)

13. As part of communication plan, the service and all partners will establish effective mechanisms to raise awareness of the needs of carers at a practice level. (M)
14. The service will collate and analyse the reach, suitability and quality of existing short break provision and work with key partners on an Improvement Plan. This will involve tackling questions and barriers raised by issues of “eligibility” and funding availability. (M/L)

Note 1:

Key stakeholders include:

- The North Lanarkshire CSIG and NHS Lanarkshire Carers Information Strategy Group (CISG)
- Carer organisations working in North Lanarkshire
- Local Consortia (LPDP) re connectivity to locality based services
- NL Wide Consortia with particular links to Carer Development Officer
- NLC – Care Managers

Note 2:

S = short term

S/M = short to medium term

M = medium term

M/L = medium to long term

## **5. Further information**

More detailed information on short breaks for carers in North Lanarkshire can be obtained from contacting the Senior Officer, Planning at North Lanarkshire Council, Housing and Social Work Services on 01698 332563 or by e-mail on:

**[hswplanning@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:hswplanning@northlan.gov.uk)**