



EVALUATION OF ROUND 1 PROJECTS - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Short Breaks Fund:
Funded by Scottish Government and managed on behalf of the
National Carer Organisations by



Copies of the full Evaluation Report including case studies can be downloaded at Shared Care Scotland's new Learning Exchange website:

<http://www.lx.iriss.org.uk/content/short-break-fund-evaluation-round-1-projects>



The Short Breaks Fund is overseen by the National Carer Organisations with secretariat through Shared Care Scotland.

The National Carer Organisations are:

- Carers Scotland
- Coalition of Carers in Scotland
- Crossroads Caring Scotland
- MECOPP
- Princess Royal Trust for Carers
- Scottish Young Carers Services Alliance
- Shared Care Scotland



Foreword

This Government is fully committed to the provision of suitable, accessible, and personalised short breaks meeting the needs of both adult carers and young carers and those they care for. I have heard from carers and young carers directly about the tremendous value of short breaks and have visited some excellent short breaks services. There is no doubt that short breaks can provide carers and young carers with a much needed break from caring which helps sustain them in their caring role.

As part of our Carers and Young Carers Strategy published with COSLA in 2010, this Government was pleased to invest nearly £1 million in short breaks provided by the Third Sector during 2011. As the report says, over 2,500 carers and young carers and over 1,700 people being cared for benefitted from this investment. Also, as the photos in the report show, everyone – whether carers or the people being cared for - had fun, relaxation, enjoyment or rest.

Given that this was the first round of funding, applicants did not have much time to put together their applications. But they did very well indeed. The wide range of organisation supported and the type of short break provided, are fantastic.

The short breaks provided by the Third Sector have extended choice, have shown mutuality of benefit for both the carers and cared-for person and have complemented statutory provision. But investment of nearly £1 million will only achieve so much. I am very aware that the short breaks have been time-limited and that there are issues of sustainability, geographical spread, and reaching out to BME and other communities.

We have since provided a further £1 million for the Short Breaks Fund and £2 million for short breaks for disabled children and their carers. Furthermore, we will be providing £3 million for short breaks in 2012-13 and further funding beyond that to 2015. This level of investment will support more short breaks provision by the Third Sector. It should not take the place of funding for short breaks provided by local authorities, Health Boards and others, including through the Change Fund. Working together, we will succeed in meeting the needs of carers and young carers for short breaks.

Michael Matheson MSP

Minister for Public Health

Acknowledgements

The report that follows demonstrates clearly the positive impact of flexible, personalised breaks on both carers and the people they care for. The case studies and quotes contained in the report illustrate some creative approaches to providing breaks which perhaps challenge more traditional thinking on what constitutes respite care.

The organisations who received funding in Round 1 had six weeks to make an application for funding. In this time they had to gather evidence of need and produce a robust project plan. It is testament to the resourcefulness and resilience of the voluntary sector in Scotland that so many strong applications were received. In addition, those funded then worked tirelessly to deliver.

This evaluation was made easier through their commitment to both delivering effective short breaks and recording the difference this made.

Particular thanks go to the organisations and individuals who gave the time to participate in follow up telephone calls:

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Dr Eleanor Logan

Evaluation Consultant, Logan PM Ltd.

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“From our experience over many years it’s hard to put a monetary value on the short breaks we have provided for disabled children but we know that for many young people the memories they have from such breaks will last a lifetime, that they are overwhelmingly positive experiences for children and young people and for their families the first step on the road to independence.”

Barnardo’s Dundee Family Support Team

Executive Summary

The Context

The Short Breaks Fund was launched in November 2010 and has been made available through funding from the Scottish Government in recognition of the important contribution which carers make in caring for a loved one, and the vital role breaks play in sustaining carers and those they care for.

The Short Breaks Fund aims to increase the accessibility, availability and range of short break and respite opportunities for carers living across Scotland to help carers to sustain their caring role, live a life outside caring and have improved physical, mental and emotional well being. The Fund also aspires to enable the testing out of new approaches to short break provision – leading to an increased understanding of the role of short breaks and how to deliver personalised solutions to all carers no matter where they live, or their cultural or social background.

Round 1 of the Short Breaks Fund awarded grants in March 2011 for short term projects which would run from April until October 2011. This evaluation review has been commissioned in order to capture the initial impact of Round 1 - to consider what these projects have achieved, to capture their challenges and from this to consider what learning can be taken forward into future funding allocations. The evaluation review involved reading and analysing the End of Grant Reports, the original applications and grant assessments, and 10 interviews with funded projects. A meeting with the National Carer Organisation (NCO) Short Breaks Fund Oversight Group was also held to review the findings and consider the forward implications.

The Achievements

126 applications were received for Round 1 with a total value of **£3,227,797**. The Short Breaks Fund established a Grants Advisory Panel (GAP) whom reviewed all applications, their assessments and from this made final recommendations to fund **60** projects totalling **£979,179**. The smallest grant was for **£3,450** and the largest **£45,489**. The average grants size in the Round 1 portfolio was **£16,320**.

In Round 1, the GAP wished to fund projects which not only met the criteria of the Short Breaks Fund but would also be deliverable within the six month timescale of the funding round. The 60 projects in Round 1 did rise to the challenge of a short timescale for delivery and did increase the availability, accessibility and range of short breaks for carers living across Scotland. **80,840** hours of short breaks were provided. Of these **2,292** were overnight stays. These were previously unavailable short break opportunities for carers and those they care for.

In total 2,599 carers benefitted of which **695** were young carers. In addition to the carers benefitting **1,792** people they cared for benefitted. This gives an overall figure of **4,391** benefitting. The average amount allocated to each carer-cared for relationship

benefitting was **£376** which demonstrates excellent value for money given the significant impact on carers and those they care for, and the extent of support they received.

Of 60 funded projects **43** were for time-limited pieces of work, mostly based around enabling provision of specific short break activities, holidays and respite opportunities. It is inevitable that the funding portfolio for Round 1 was dominated by these kinds of project. Projects had to be easily achievable and organisations had to have the capacity to deliver in the short timescale. It also reflects that Round 1 projects were active over the summer period.

The remaining **17** projects were service based interventions such as delivery of respite in the home, or individual support to children and young people. Of these 17 projects, **nine** were existing services which were able to expand or develop their provision whilst **eight** were new services or responses.

A wide range of breaks were delivered and included:

- carers accessing funds to organise their own short break (self directed support through direct grant funding);
- carers going on residential weekends with other carers where mutual support could be built as well as a break being taken;
- carers attending weekly group activities;
- carers and the person they care for having breaks together;
- young carers going on activity breaks or trips;
- young carers accessing weekly support groups;
- group or individual activities for the cared for person organised around the interests and wishes of the cared for person which gave carers and families a natural break.

The Impact



The funded projects returned much evidence to support that the outcomes of the Short Breaks Fund were being delivered and most importantly that carers were benefitting from improved physical and mental health, more able to live a life outside caring and more able to sustain their caring role.

The funded projects also reported back on the benefits to and the impact on the person being cared for. This **mutuality of benefit** helped to extend the reach of the short break and future sustainability of the caring role.

Whilst many of the short break interventions were one off there was still a high degree of impact from these. The support in considering the need for a break and being confident enough to take one, the planning of the break and the expectation this provides, the

taking of the break, the building of support networks during this or increased independence of the cared for person, all helped to build **enduring impact** which gave ongoing benefits once people had returned to daily routines.

The funded projects worked to support the delivery of **personalisation, choice and relevance**. The breaks were designed around the needs of the carer and the person they care for. This mutuality was essential in delivery of successful breaks.

Whilst some breaks were “holidays” and had no therapeutic or peer support aligned to them, these were not trivial and delivered considerable benefit to carers and those they cared for. Three themes arose in relation to carers accessing a holiday-based break (with or without the person they care for):

- The carer needed the break, and in taking this felt not just rested but valued and supported;
- Going on holiday, seeing new places, getting away from it, having a good time are part of ordinary life and an expectation for most people. We all appreciate the need to recharge and have time out. Carers need this more than most of us but have significant barriers to face in accessing this. Funded projects were able to break down these barriers;
- Respite is on offer to some caring relationships but the cared for person often does not enjoy the experience or finds it stigmatising. Offering the cared for person a more personalised solution which they will enjoy enables carers to have a break which they can truly benefit from. These solutions ranged from holidays for the cared for, to weekly activity or group sessions.

A small tranche of funded projects were able to demonstrate **new approaches or innovation** in service delivery. Two were able to test out how to deliver emergency respite which could provide personalised and easily accessible support when carers needed it. One project looked at the role of short breaks in supporting young carers in their transition from being a young carer to being an adult carer, and one project looked at how to redesign the provision of residential respite and in doing so provide a more personalised and appropriate short break support to the families they were working with. All generated learning which will be useful in stimulating thinking and service design across Scotland.

Recommendations for the Future

Whilst the projects did achieve a lot of short break delivery and individual and collective outcomes for carers, there were areas which would merit further consideration going forward in order that the Short Breaks Fund delivers its ambitions. These can be summarised as follows:

- Organisations need to be encouraged to not just work with their existing client groups but to reach out to those in their communities who need support, and from this prioritise those most in need of a short break. This Fund has benefitted a lot

of carers, but there are many more out there who are not accessing or benefitting from short breaks;

- In a similar vein, the Short Breaks Fund needs to consider how to stimulate projects which access hard to reach carers and be more prescriptive regarding what the Fund constitutes 'hard to reach' in their guidance and monitoring. In Round 1 BME carers and carers in remote and rural areas were deemed as hard to reach;
- The Short Breaks Fund should continue to encourage and stimulate delivery of personalised short breaks based on the needs of carers and those they care for and with the continuing strong ethos of mutuality of benefit;
- A limited amount of projects funded through Round 1 went on to get other funding to continue the work. With majority being for one off pieces of work this does not impact on organisational sustainability but it demonstrates that short break provision can be ad hoc and patchy. The Short Breaks Fund should consider funding projects which can demonstrate ongoing financial viability in order to ensure the Fund creates a legacy of short break provision for carers across Scotland;
- Continue to provide and develop the Learning Exchange for funded projects which helps to build capacity to monitor and evaluate, and to share learning between projects. The Learning Exchange could also develop opportunities to share learning across sectors and to showcase good practice;
- The monitoring and evaluation procedures within the Short Breaks Fund could be developed in order to capture more consistently hard information and also encourage organisations to feed back their achievements and learning;
- There was reasonable geographic spread achieved across funded projects in Round 1 but still some gaps across Scotland. Future funding rounds can help to address and monitor this.

Finally, the Short Breaks Fund is an opportunity to innovate, to test new approaches and to showcase learning. Round 1 took a pragmatic approach to funding projects which could deliver. Future funding rounds should encourage organisations to come forward with projects which push boundaries, shape thinking and develop new service approaches around short breaks.



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