

Common Myths about Respite Care

In this section we dispel some common myths about respite care.

Myth - “Respite / short breaks must be taken within my own local authority area.”

Fact - This is most certainly not the case. Whilst in most cases your short break will still be purchased and arranged by your local authority you do not have to take your respite / short break provision within your local authority boundaries.

Myth - “Respite / short breaks mean you have to spend time apart.”

Fact - Whilst many breaks do give you the chance to enjoy time apart, you may choose to take it accompanied by your carer(s), friends or other loved ones. The break could give you the opportunity to enjoy quality time together away from your normal routine with additional support.

Myth - “Respite / short breaks mean you have to go away overnight somewhere.”

Fact - Whilst many breaks do involve staying away from your home overnight, this need not be the case. It all depends on individual circumstances. One break could mean you getting additional support in your home while your carer goes out. Or it could involve someone helping you to attend or access public facilities etc. The list of possibilities is endless.

Myth - “If I receive Direct Payments to purchase respite / short breaks then I can only purchase this from a service provider who is approved by the local authority and is registered with the Care Commission.”

Fact - In many instances individuals who get Direct Payments, which includes funding respite / short breaks, do choose providers approved by their own local authority who are registered with the Care Commission. However local authorities cannot insist choice is restricted to such providers. The individual is free to purchase services that meet their needs in innovative ways. The local authority’s role is to satisfy itself that your assessed needs are being met by your chosen provider and that the funding made available via Direct Payments is being spent appropriately and cost effectively.

For examples of different types of break, see the Case Studies section

To see the different types of service available in Scotland, see OSBIS - our Online Short Break Information Service – www.carebreaksscotland.org