

# SHORT BREAK CHECKLIST – PLANNING FOR THE BEST OUTCOMES

Date: June 2010

Here are some tips from carers and service users which will help you get the best from your Short Break service. This has been written from the service user point of view although your carer may be helping you with the arrangements. If you're arranging a break through your local authority then you should still feel able to ask questions and be involved. It's in everyone's interests to make sure you get the break that meets your needs.

## **Things to check:**

- ✔ Get to know the prospective provider as well as possible before committing to the service
- ✔ Ask for and check references. Speak to other people who have used the service and refer to any inspection reports where these may apply
- ✔ Meet the people providing the service, and arrange to visit their facilities if you're using day or residential provision

## **Things to ask:**

- ✔ Are the people involved knowledgeable and trained to meet your care needs or condition?
- ✔ Are they able to provide suitable, stimulating and fun activities? Can they meet any religious or cultural needs that are important to you?
- ✔ What opportunities are there for you to exercise your preferences and bring your talents and interests into play?
- ✔ If staying away, is the accommodation comfortable for you and will you have all the things you need?
- ✔ What are the choices of meals and do they cater for special dietary needs?
- ✔ Are there any additional costs you should know about, for activities or outings for example?

## **Things to do:**

- ✔ Write down and then share your needs and expectations with the service provider so that everyone is clear about what must happen for the break to be a success  
*(Shared Care Scotland has developed a Planner template than you can use:  
[www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources))*

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- ✔ Make sure the people providing the service have all the information they need to ensure they can provide the level of care expected. Ask them how they would like you to provide this
- ✔ Put everything in writing so there can be no room for misunderstanding. Very often providers will have forms for you to fill in but don't be afraid to add to this if you think something hasn't been covered. (*Again the Short Break Planner may be able to help you here.*)
- ✔ Following the break make sure you give the provider some feedback about what went well and what could be improved. If you have serious concerns then of course you should share these with your social worker or care manager, if the break has been arranged through your local authority

## Other information leaflets in this series

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- What is meant by short break (respite) care?
- Arranging Short Breaks

## About Shared Care Scotland

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Shared Care Scotland is a national charity which exists to support the development and improvement of short break services for carers and the people they care. Our services include:

- An online and telephone enquiry service to help put carers and service users in touch with short break services that best match their needs
- General information and advice on all matters relating to short break services
- Events, networks, publications and learning resources to share knowledge, experience and successful practice.

Please contact us if you require further information or advice.

w [www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk)  
t: 01383 622462