



Carer Support Subsidy - Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Carer Support Subsidy?

Carer Support Subsidy is a service funded by the Ministry of Health Disability Services, designed to assist the unpaid full-time carer of a person with a disability to take a break from caring for a disabled person. A full time carer is someone who provides more than 4 hours a day of unpaid care to a disabled person.

2. What Is the Carer Support Subsidy Payment?

Carer Support is a subsidy payment intended as a reimbursement towards the costs of providing relief support. Carer Support is not expected to cover the full costs associated with taking a break. Carer Support is not a salary, nor is it a wage.

3. How do I Get Carer Support Subsidy?

The unpaid carer may self refer or be referred to Needs Assessment Service Coordination (NASC) Agency. Assessment of the carer's need for support will be considered in conjunction with the needs assessment of the disabled person they support. There is no entitlement to a specific number of carer support subsidy days that can be allocated to the full-time carer.

There is an annual allowance that if exceeded, can only be allocated with the written approval of the DSD Service Manager for the area. Carer Support Subsidy allocation is reviewed annually. Carer Support Subsidy days must be used within the 12 month period for which they were allocated. The allocated days cannot be carried over from one year to the next.

4. How can I use Carer Support Subsidy?

Use of carer support subsidy days is subject to Carer Support Subsidy Guidelines.

It is the full-time carer's right to choose and co-ordinate their relief support. Carer support subsidy can be used in half day, daily, weekly and/or a bulk block or any combination of these as long as the person does not exceed their annual allocation. A half day is defined as over 4 hours and up to 8 hours. A full day is 8 hours up to 24 hours.

Informal Carers provide relief care in an informal setting e.g. a family home. People who provide care are typically friends, neighbors, other people or some family members such as grandparent, grandchild, daughter, son, extended family members.

Formal Providers provide support in a formal/commercial setting and/or via an organization. These providers include organizations such as rest homes, private and public hospitals, professional home workers, voluntary organizations, day care centers etc.

From November 2007 the rates are:

- ✚ Informal Carers \$76 per day (GST exclusive) for a 24 hour period
- ✚ Formal Providers \$85.50 per day (GST inclusive) for a 24 hour period

5. When Can Carer Support Not be Used?

Relief must be provided to the full-time carer. It is not usually expected that relief is achieved where the full time carer remains in the presence of the disabled person while the relief takes place. However, the full-time carer may wish to stay in their home doing other things while the relief support is being provided.

Carer Support can not be used:

- ✚ When the full time carer is at work
- ✚ If the support carer lives at the same address as the full-time carer
- ✚ If the support carer lives at the same address as the disabled person
- ✚ By the spouse, partners, parents and other full time carers, even if they do not live at the same address as the disabled person.
- ✚ To convalesce after discharge from hospital
- ✚ For any disabled person living full-time in MoH funded residential care services
- ✚ As part payment to attend parent retreat weekends
- ✚ By people who are entitled to payment covered by ACC
- ✚ Personal Health and Mental Health clients

6. Where Can I get More Information about Carer Support?

- ✚ www.moh.govt.nz/disability
- ✚ www.taikura.org.nz
- ✚ HealthPAC freephone 0800 281 222 (Carer Support Subsidy)