

# Disability Support Services



## Carer Support Services

February 2013

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### What is Carer Support?

Carer Support is a subsidy funded by the Ministry of Health. It is designed to assist the unpaid full-time carer of a disabled person to take a break from caring for that person. Carer support provides reimbursement of some of the costs of using a support person to care and support the disabled person. This means the full-time carer can take some time out for themselves. The number of hours or days that carer support is funded for is determined by the needs of the carer and the disabled person.

### Who is a full-time carer?

A full time carer is the person who provides more than 4 hours per day unpaid care to a disabled person, for example, the parent of a disabled child.

### How do I get Carer Support?

You can be assessed by a Needs Assessment Service Co-ordination (NASC) organisation or, in some circumstances, by a doctor. They will then allocate your Carer Support days and undertake a review with you, usually after a year.

### How can I use my Carer Support?

Carer Support is designed to be flexible and can be paid to friends, some family members or neighbours who provide relief care or to people who provide relief care in a formal setting, for example a rest home.

Carer Support cannot be used:

- while the full-time carer is at work
- by the parent or partner of the disabled person
- to convalesce after discharge from hospital
- if the support carer lives at the same address as the full-time carer.

### **What are Carer Support payments regarded as?**

Carer Support payments may be subject to income tax. This will depend on your individual circumstances. You may wish to seek advice regarding tax issues from the Inland Revenue Department, or if you receive a benefit, you should contact Work and Income New Zealand.

### **Where can I get more information?**

You can contact your local NASC. Contact details can be found online at [www.health.govt.nz/disability](http://www.health.govt.nz/disability) under 'contact'. Your doctor or health professional should also be able to refer you to your local NASC.

A disability information service will also be able to help you find your local NASC and give you information. The New Zealand Federation of Disability Information Centres (NZFDIC) has several member organisations throughout New Zealand. You can contact them on free phone 0800 NZFDIC (0800 693 342) or online at [www.nzfdic.org.nz](http://www.nzfdic.org.nz) under members.

### **Did you know?**

The Ministry of Health has factsheets and information pamphlets that tell you about the disability support services it funds.

You can find these online at [www.health.govt.nz/disability](http://www.health.govt.nz/disability), by emailing [disability@moh.govt.nz](mailto:disability@moh.govt.nz) or by calling 0800 DSD MOH (0800 373 664), choose option 1.

