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Health New Zealand Carer Support Subsidy Purchasing Guidelines

This document provides detailed advice and information to help people understand how to use their Health NZ funded, needs assessed Carer Support Subsidy.

The funding can be used to support the wellbeing of full-time carers (defined as those providing 4 or more hours of unfunded care per day), whānau and the person in need of care through the purchase of respite options– which gives the full-time carer the ability to take much needed breaks.

The Subsidy funding can be used all at once, or through the year – Sector Operations will approve all respite item claims under \$2,075 (25 days) in value per claim that meets the purchasing guidelines.

Allocators of Carer Support will be responsible for making sure carers are fully informed of the purchasing guidelines and guidance around the use of carer support. Any claims over \$2,075, or identified as not meeting the purchasing guidelines, will be sent to the relevant Health NZ District representative for approval.

Carer Support Subsidy can be used to provide support under two main categories:

- a) Purchase Goods and Equipment to enable the full-time carer to have a break.
 - To provide the main carer giver with respite.
 - A person should first access Equipment and Modification Services (eg. Enable NZ) for support, before using Carer Support to buy equipment or house/vehicle modifications. Please engage your NASC or GP regarding accessing Equipment and Modification Services
- b) Purchase services to enable the full-time carer to have a break including:
 - Formal care i.e. day programmes, residential respite or;
 - Informal care to pay a whānau member or another person to provide respite. **Please note that this form of respite can only be claimed at a maximum daily rate of \$83 per day.**

There are three principles that must be considered when using a Carer Support Subsidy to purchase respite support:

1. Does this purchase demonstrate respite for the full-time carer?

The support should be clearly linked to a break for the full-time carer. Each case is considered according to circumstances.

2. Is this cost effective?

Support must be reasonable and cost effective and at a market related price. It is recognised that in some cases the support might cost more than another service but:

- This is the best way to fund this purchase.
- This purchase makes good use of the allocation on something that will make a lasting or notable impact.
- It will last longer.
- Means less is spent in the future.

For example:

- It may be more cost effective to buy monitoring equipment instead of overnight support.
- It might remind a person to perform activities of daily living using technology, rather than having a to the full-time carer assist them.

3. Is it funded elsewhere?

- Is the purchase affordable under the allocated funding?
- Is this the best way to fund the purchase?
- Have you explored other funding options first e.g. Grants or Work and Income, equipment funded by the Ministry of Health (MoH) or the Ministry of Education (MoE), Charitable Trusts, public health system funded therapies etc?

Carer Support cannot be used:

- To pay the nominated full-time carer for providing care.
- For illegal activities or activities such as gambling, cigarettes or alcohol and this includes vaping and vaping-related supplies.
- To pay for things that do not demonstrate obvious respite support for the full-time carer such as, rent, mortgage, food, personal debt, gifts, beauty treatments, power, regular household items, etc.
- To purchase assessed health services that are provided by the public health system.

PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of the full-time carer to ensure that the support or service meets the Purchasing Guidelines and that they retain proof of purchase (eg receipts). Receipts for all purchases must be kept for a minimum of 7 years after purchase of an item. The receipts must be provided when requested for audit purposes.

If you are granted an advanced payment of a proposed respite item purchase based on quotes, no further claims will be paid until the proof of purchase or receipt for any previous advanced payment is provided to confirm the use of the advance funding. A copy of the receipt must be attached to the next carer support claim submitted and will be checked by Sector Operations when processing the next claim. Disputes regarding this will be escalated to the relevant Health NZ district representative to resolve to ensure carers can be adequately supported in making claims.

Where to go for help?

The full-time carer can contact NASC or the person who allocated the Carer Support Subsidy if there are any queries relating to these purchasing guidelines, and how they apply to the individual's circumstances.

You can also email info@health.govt.nz

Examples of Carer Support claims

Sometimes it's helpful to see how other people have used their Carer Support Subsidy. These examples have been based on real life claims.

Example one: Penny is the fulltime carer for her uncle Mike. Although Mike receives home support services through an agency, Penny still provides him with care outside of these visits. Penny sometimes uses her allocation of her Carer Support Subsidy to pay for Mike to go to day activity programmes for older people with dementia. This gives her time to recharge her own batteries. She also purchased technology to allow her to remotely set Mike's heating so she doesn't have to check in on him as frequently.

Example two: Josie is the full-time carer of her son Mitch who suffers from anxiety. Josie wants to use 2 days of her 28 Carer Support allocation to purchase a weighted blanket for Mitch. The weighted blanket will help Mitch feel safe and secure in his own bed at night which enables Josie to get a good night's sleep.

Other helpful links

Carers New Zealand can also answer questions about the Carer Support Subsidy.

- Website: <https://carers.net.nz/>
- Phone: 0800 777 797