

# Short Breaks Development Programme

## Final Report and Recommendations

### 2013



The voice of the Independent Care Sector in Scotland



## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Section 1: Overview**

North Lanarkshire Carers Strategy Implementation Group (GSIG) supported by NHS Lanarkshire Carer Information Strategy Group (CISG) agreed in August 2012 to carry out an analysis of current short break provision in North Lanarkshire to establish areas of good practice and address both gaps in service provision and barriers to access. To this end, a joint bid was made to the Reshaping Care for Older People (RCOP) Community Capacity Group and the NHS Lanarkshire CISG to fund a Short Breaks Development Officer (SBDO) within North Lanarkshire. There is evidence from consultations with unpaid carers, through work linked to the CSIG and the CISG, that highlight the need for a flexible, personalised and creative approach to the provision of short breaks for carers. Further work being carried out within local consortia as part of the Locality Partnership Development Programme (LPDP) linked to RCOP also highlight, as part of their mapping work, that short breaks particularly for older carers, was a major issue and would only increase with the proposed shift in the balance of care.

The bid was approved in October 2012 and it was agreed to fund the post for a 9 month period with the host organisation being North Lanarkshire Carers Together (NLCT). The SBDO came into post on the 7th of January 2013 with a remit to:

- Scope out existing respite provision within North Lanarkshire and produce a mapping of services that provide carers with short break opportunities as well as information on short breaks for carers
- Identify good practice nationally by gathering intelligence from Scottish Government, national carer organisations and from short break initiatives in other local authorities.
- Carry out a wide ranging carer consultation to identify personal experiences of short breaks, gaps in provision and barriers.
- Co-ordinate a range of stakeholder events to bring key professionals and carers together to discuss ways to make accessing short breaks more effective for carers
- Compile a report on the work of the programme which makes recommendations for the way forward in relation to short breaks for carers.

(The Short Break Implementation Programme is included as Appendix 1)

## Section 2: National Context

The development of 'Caring Together' The Carers Strategy for Scotland 2010-2015, and 'Getting it Right for Young Carers' The Young Carers Strategy for Scotland 2010-2015 refers to short breaks in section 13 and states;

*'The break might be during the day time or overnight. The break might be for a couple of hours or for much longer. It might involve the cared-for person having a break away from home, thus benefitting the carer in that they have time for themselves. Or the carer might have a break away, with services being put in place to support the cared-for person. Some people want to have a break together, with services being put in place for the cared for. Some people want to have a break together, with additional support to make this happen. Sometimes the service is provided in the home for the cared-for person, with the carer having time to do something themselves for a couple of hours during the day'.*

These strategies along with the associated guidance developed by the Scottish Government, all provide useful and practical suggestions on improving short break provision in Scotland encouraging all partners to consider how best they can support carers to have time out from caring, and develop innovative solutions based on a better understanding of people's different needs and circumstances. The Strategies offer a clear framework for Local Authorities and their key partners to explore at a local level current service provision and how it meets the needs of carers and those they provide care for. This mapping of current provision is completed in North Lanarkshire and is part of the overall scope of the Short Breaks Development Programme.

The NHS Carer Information Strategy Group (CISG) has been in place since 2007 and funding has been provided by the Scottish Government to local NHS Boards to support the needs of carers. The funding has made a considerable difference to the outcomes achieved for carers and young carers, with a strong emphasis on continuing to support initiatives that evidence good outcomes for carers. The NHS CISG funding includes particular reference to short break support during periods of transition. National reporting on NHS CISG projects indicates that most NHS Boards are funding short breaks or respite provision through partnership arrangements with carer's centres and other voluntary organisations.

In 2010-11 the Scottish Government allocated £1m to National Carer Organisations (NCO's) for short breaks provision and put in place a clear monitoring process in order to establish progress in areas such as innovation, personalisation and flexible support. The Scottish Government has been working with Shared Care Scotland (SCS) and other partners in taking forward the findings of research into short break support and is considering further actions in light of the findings. SCS has been working with a number of local authorities to assist them with their strategic plans and the commissioning of short break services. The Scottish Government has committed to work with SCS and other partners to promote more effective ways of developing short break support throughout the life of the Carers Strategy.

## **2.1 - Shared Care Scotland (SCS)**

SCS is a national charity that works to improve the quality, choice and availability of short break provision across Scotland and works to improve policy and practice at all levels through research, learning exchange and development projects. SCS has advanced short break provision in Scotland through the Better Breaks Programme with large numbers of carer organisations benefiting from small grants made available by the Scottish Government to enhance short break opportunities.

Extensive evaluations of the projects who received funding provided detailed evidence of the many opportunities that carers experienced with a wide range of outcomes achieved. Information on some of these projects can be found on the SCS website [www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk).

SCS have also worked in partnership with IRISS (Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services), the Coalition of Carers in Scotland (Coalition of Carers in Scotland) and MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project) to produce 'Rest Assured?', a national piece of research which reports on carers experiences of short breaks and respite care and more recently the paper 'Rest Assured? Questions to guide local discussions on how to improve short break (respite care provision)', this discussion guide has been used to guide the stakeholder consultation events which are highlighted later on in this report.

### **Section 3: A Strategy for Carers in North Lanarkshire 2013-2018**

The previously separate Strategy for Carers in North Lanarkshire and the NHS Lanarkshire Carers Information Strategy have now been linked to produce a more integrated and cohesive approach to supporting carers. The new joint strategy covers many of the key action areas within the national strategy and identifies specific areas that need to be addressed.

The strategy seeks to provide support to carers, by developing in partnership with third sector providers, a range of services that meet the needs of carer's living in the Authority. The development of the joint strategy has significantly increased the level of understanding of carers needs and the support they require to help them continue caring. The continued funding over the past number of years, made available by North Lanarkshire Council and NHS Lanarkshire has increased resources, enabling existing and new providers to expand and develop the range of services that support the needs of carers. Carers themselves have played an integral role in ensuring that services are needs led and reflect the wishes and views of those who use them. The joint strategy is a positive example of effective partnership working involving carers at all levels within resource planning and allocation. These developments have clear monitoring and evaluation processes in place to determine outcomes.

## **Section 4: Key Area of Short Breaks Development Programme**

### **4.1 Mapping of Services within North Lanarkshire**

The mapping document provides detailed information on the range of services available within North Lanarkshire to carers and the people they care for. The document will remain open in order to update and include new or expanding services that may in some way benefit carers, however, it is recognised that this task will need to be aligned to a key organisation and resourced in order to provide good quality information.

North Lanarkshire Council continues to meet Scottish Government targets for the provision of respite care and currently provides almost 11,500 weeks of respite per year, some of which is funded directly from the Carers' strategy budget. However, the mapping identified that in relation to short break support for carers there is limited services, with the majority of existing support targeted to people with care needs. Indirect support to carers is a by-product of the support and services provided to people with care needs, although there is an obvious lack of reporting in the achievement of outcomes for carers, despite them accessing resources and support. A summary of findings is noted below:

#### **4.1.1 Younger Adult Services**

Services provided to enable younger adults with support needs to live independently within their own homes are commissioned by the Local Authority, by the use of a preferred providers list. The majority of the organisations that are contracted to provide support are linked to national charities with strong values and experience in supporting people. Most of the services work only with younger adults with a small number supporting children through transition into adult services. Self-Directed Support (SDS) is now being used to determine the levels of care and support that individuals require, with a strong emphasis on individual choice and control as the catalyst in achieving better outcomes. More information on SDS can be found on North Lanarkshire Council's website [www.northlan.gov.uk](http://www.northlan.gov.uk). This new way of working provides challenges as well as opportunities for both those with support needs and the organisations that seek to support them. It also presents the same challenges and opportunities for carers, when decisions need to be reached in relation to short breaks and respite. There are very small numbers of younger adults supported in this way who live with carers, however those that do, need to be involved in the development of support plans, with appropriate short breaks, being integral, in achieving shared outcomes.

#### **4.1.2 Older Adult Services**

Older adult services are by in large provided by the council, with a small number of private providers contracted to provide home support. Integrated day care services and short stay care homes provide a valuable service to older people with care needs within their own community and promote the inclusion of older people in mainstream services. Carers benefit indirectly by the services on offer to their family member by getting access to regular short breaks. Carers are informed of the resources that are available to them, by staff working in older people services, with carers often accessing short break funding available within localities. The services play a vital role in ensuring

that carers are kept informed through review processes and information sessions. Staff can also access the respite at home budget held within social work localities to support the needs of the cared for person and as a result carers benefit from a short break. This service is very effective in supporting carers who look after a family member with Alzheimer's or Dementia, due to the familiar surroundings of the person's home. Alzheimer's Scotland is commissioned by the Local Authority to deliver this service in 5 of the 6 locality areas, with Beild Housing and Care providing this support in the other.

#### 4.1.3 Children and Young People Services

Children and young people with support needs are supported by a number of national and local children's charities who are mostly commissioned by the Local Authority, with a small number dependent on a range of small grants. The services that are directly supported through the NHS CISG and the CSIG are able to evidence and demonstrate the clear benefits to carers of the short breaks services that they deliver. Partners in Play (PIP) have carried out a number of activity weekends with disabled children with parents accessing effective weekend breaks. The Action for Children North Lanarkshire Young Carers Project (AFC) is funded on an annual basis to provide residential short breaks to young carers with positive evaluations highlighting the achieved outcomes. The Haven Centre and The Scottish Spina Bifida Association are all actively involved in providing a range of short breaks with active participation and involvement of carers, in the decision making process. Carers of disabled children are also accessing short breaks as a result of their children utilizing social work resources; however this group appear to be underrepresented within strategic partnerships.

#### 4.1.4 Indirect Carer Support

There are a small number of groups that benefit from funding made available by the CSIG and the NHS CISG. For example, Watch us Grow in Cumbernauld provides a vital support network to carers of young adults with support needs, with carers accessing an annual short break. The Parkinson's Self Help groups in Motherwell and Airdrie support carers in a variety of ways, with short break activities on offer to large numbers of carers. The service in Airdrie is a good example of how community capacity can be developed, with ex-carers becoming volunteers to support older people with care needs.

#### 4.1.5 Direct Carer Support

Direct support to carers is delivered primarily by the Princess Royal Trust Lanarkshire Carers Centre (PRTLCC), Carers Liaison and Support Project (CLASP), AFC and the NHS Lanarkshire Carer Support Team. The range of support offered to carers includes:

- Information
- Black & Minority Ethnic bi-lingual support
- Carer Registration Cards
- Care Talk
- Carers Journey
- Carers Training
- Short Break information and funding sources
- Group and one to one support
- Outings and activities

- Income maximisations and access to grants
- Relaxation Therapies
- Access to statutory supports (i.e. carers assessment, community care assessment)
- GP Carers Register, providing access to flu vaccinations and annual health checks
- Access to 3<sup>rd</sup> sector supports within local community.

NLCT works in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council, NHS Lanarkshire and all carer organisations to influence policy development and service provision which affect both carers and the cared for person. The aims of NLCT are:

- To raise the profile of carers' issues and needs
- To influence policy development and service provision at the planning stage
- To form active links between carers and professionals
- To establish innovative and productive consultation processes with service providers
- To promote the inclusion of all carers
- To represent the views of all carers, including the many young carers, in North Lanarkshire.

Service visits have enabled the SBDO to gather up to date information on how carers are being supported in relation to short breaks. The mapping highlights that services that actively involve carers in meaningful engagement and focus on carer outcomes, are those aligned to the carer development plans of both the NHS CIS and the CSIG. The mapping document is available as a supplementary document.

## **4.2 Identifying Good Practice Nationally**

### **4.2.1 Short Break Bureaux:** The SBDO visited 2 contrasting models of Short Break Bureaux provision:

The Falkirk Short Break Bureau is operated and managed by Falkirk Council's Social Work Department who manage all respite beds within the authority linking effectively with care managers and carers providing them with relevant information and advice on the availability of respite resources. Although a Community Care Assessment is required to access a respite place the bureau will provide a range of information on short breaks to carers where no assessment has been carried out. This model was well received by both practitioners and families alike and although it was not a dedicated 'carer' service there was a clear commitment to meeting both the needs of the carer and the cared for person. This service has been in existence for over 10 years and is staffed by two part time social work staff who are integral to the Adult Community Care Teams. Workers reported that the service provided by the Bureau was welcomed and supported by care managers as this assisted greatly in the co-ordination of short breaks both in terms of managing respite beds and facilitating holidays which including making bookings and arranging care within other local authority areas.

The Mid-Lothian Short Breaks Bureau is managed by VOCAL (Voice of Carers across Lothian) a voluntary organisation that provides a wide range of support to carers. The bureau works closely with health and social work staff in order to develop and build capacity within their respective fields increasing the level of awareness of the needs of carers and the benefits in relation to accessing short break services. They provide on-going training to ensure that carers are recognised within the assessment process resulting in outcomes identified to meet their particular needs. This is a new initiative and has a strong focus on capacity building and partnership working. In contrast to the Falkirk Bureau, this service is closely linked with carer support and does not manage or co-ordinate any respite budgets but reinforces the need to support carers in terms of overall care planning.

There are other examples of short break and Respite support being developed in other local Authorities. The Renfrewshire Carers Centre provides a respite sitting service with trained committed and reliable workers going into people's homes to enable carers to have a break. The Dundee Carers Centre 'Time for you' voucher scheme provides a range of support to the cared for person with the carer receiving vouchers to purchase up to 3hrs of replacement care per week with no formal assessment required allowing them to access flexible and regular short breaks.

## **4.3 Carer Consultations**

### **4.3.1 Sample Group**

The carer consultation is a key element of the SBDP and the Best Practice Standards for Carer Engagement as developed by the COCIS were applied.

The services that were visited as a result of the mapping exercise were encouraged to identify carers known to their service and inform them of the purpose of the consultation and invite them to take part. In total there were 26 consultation sessions delivered with up to 260 carers participating. As well as the face to face consultations, the views of NHS Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire Council staff were obtained via a survey questionnaire of which there were 46 responses. In addition to the above, 160 carers who attended the NLCT AGM were also given the opportunity to participate in the process via the electronic option finder. The total number of carers involved in the short breaks consultations totalled 466. (See Appendix 2)

### **4.3.2 Questions**

#### **1) What does the term ‘short break’ mean?**

Carers have expressed their understanding of what the term ‘short break’ means to them and there was a wide range of examples given of individual carers own understanding of the term. Some carer comments include:-

- ‘Time out to access support for myself’
- ‘A few hours to myself to look after my own needs’
- ‘A day away on a bus trip and be normal like everyone else’
- ‘I need the break to be short and regular, not long and irregular’
- ‘Time to spend with other family and friends and have a night out’
- ‘A couple of days or a week away and escape from someone’s world would be wonderful’
- ‘I need a bit of breathing space and time away in order to recharge the batteries’

These comments were consistent with all of the care groups that were visited and reflect a level of need that for most would appear to be the norm.

The most common responses have been around the need to have time out, a break away from their caring role and a holiday. A recurring view expressed by parent carers, was for the break to be short and regular as opposed to long and irregular which was in reference to traditional residential respite.

#### **2) How many carers have accessed a short break?**

Of the 446 carers who took part in the consultation only 18% reported that they had accessed a short break. This figure is somewhat surprising given that most of the carers who attended the consultations were in touch with either a service or organisation. One of the reasons for this may be linked to carers perception as to what defines a short break, however it is clear from the consultations that carers feel that

they are not benefiting from regular, quality breaks from caring. (See appendix 3)

3) What are the benefits of having a short break for carers who have accessed them?

Those carers who did state that they had accessed a short break have reported a wide range of positive outcomes as a result of having the opportunity to do some of the normal things. The majority of carers who accessed a short break have expressed their appreciation at being able to get a short break from their caring role, responses include:-

- ‘catch up with friends and other family members’
- ‘good not to have to worry all the time’
- ‘being able to attend a wedding which was great’
- ‘good to relax and have some stress free time’
- ‘I felt that my overall health improved which helped me in my caring role’
- ‘had time to make plans and felt refreshed, stopped me going off my head’
- ‘It gave my husband and I a break away from the everyday strains of life and our complex caring role. It enabled us to get quality time together to get away for a meal knowing that both our sons were well taken care of. Whilst staying at the hospice we could decide the level of care that we wanted to provide to our son, a little or a lot. Not having to do the dishes or cleaning or care tasks was such a welcome break’.

4) Who has supported you to have short break?

Many of the services that were visited as part of the mapping exercise have been central in the provision of short breaks to carers either directly or as a result of the support they provide to people with care needs. Carers who have reported positive experiences of short breaks have been complimentary of the support provided by individual organisations who they feel have enabled them to access appropriate support.

The Family Fund has supported large numbers of parent carers living in North Lanarkshire through the ‘Take a Break Fund’ with 162 applications received (second highest Local Authority- Glasgow being the highest). NLCT and the PRTLCC have supported large numbers of carers in accessing this fund. Many families have benefited directly from support provided by the Family Fund grants with other families in North Lanarkshire accessing small grants from the Chest Heart & Stroke fund. Initiatives like the Better Breaks Fund supported and managed by SCS and allocated to the PRTLCC enabled 107 carers access a short break. The range of breaks included family holidays and a group break to London for young carers attending AFC. The Family Fund, Take a Break Fund and SCS’s Better Breaks Scheme have produced good evaluations of short break programmes evidencing a wide range of positive outcomes demonstrating their value and

effectiveness to the overall support provided to carers. For more information on these initiatives please visit [www.sharedcarescotland](http://www.sharedcarescotland) and [www.familyfund](http://www.familyfund).

There were significant numbers of carers who were supported in accessing the carer break fund managed within each of the 6 social work localities in North Lanarkshire. The budget is administered locally and carers are supported to access the fund by the PRTLCC carer support workers and CLASP, as well as referrals made by NLCT. There was a general consensus that while this fund was beneficial and met a range of needs it was very limited both in terms of frequency and the amount of finance available. Through discussions with carers it was also apparent that there is differing criteria depending on locality.

Carer support has developed significantly over the past 10 years as a result of the establishment of the CSIG with carer support enhanced a number of years later by the setting up of the NHS Carer's Information Strategy Group. These strategic groups have nurtured and supported effective partnerships in order to drive forward national and local priorities by delivering a wide range of services with carers and carer organisations central to the design and specification of resource allocation. The involvement of carers within these Strategic groups has been instrumental to the development of needs led services with a clear focus on outcomes. Many of the organisations funded by these partnerships deliver on the recommendations set out within the plans of the Strategy with a strong emphasis on the participation of carers in the decision making process. Central to the work of all of these services is to enable and support carers to access a short break through the delivery of effective and needs led activities. Many of the carers who have accessed support from these services have reported very positive and effective interventions as a result of participating in activities that achieved a wide range of outcomes. There is clear evidence that demonstrates the impact that these short breaks have had however issues in terms of both human and financial resources as well as an increase in demand means that access is limited in terms of duration and frequency of support.

5) Why have you not accessed a short break?

Lack of information was by far the biggest reason given by carers as to why they have not accessed a short break with many carers expressing the view that this also extended to front line staff being unaware of current resources that could support a short break. There were a number of carers who felt that information was being withheld by staff undertaking different forms of assessment, as progressing assessed need would not lead to support, due to increasing demands on a particular resource.

Eligibility criteria being used to assess the need for a short break was a recurring theme throughout the consultations with carers being unclear as to how it was applied and when it was applied, it was seen to be too rigid. There were a number of examples given by parent carers in relation to the application of the criteria with very different outcomes for

families with similar issues with no explanation as to why that was the case. It was also highlighted that the criteria was not being applied consistently with very little feedback on decisions made by the use of the criteria when support has been refused.

Carers commented on an apparent lack of choices available in addressing their short break needs with the lack of flexible support cited as a reason why some carers do not use traditional types of respite currently available. Many parent carers were consistent in their view that traditional forms of respite did not meet their needs or the needs of their children and expressed the need for respite to be provided at home which was the child's natural environment although they were informed by front line staff that this service does not exist however is recognised as a valued service that is provided to other care groups. It is also very important to note there were equal numbers of parent carers who were complimentary of residential respite support which they felt did meet their needs in relation to accessing quality short breaks. A small number of carers reported a reduction in respite support as a result of the implementation of SDS which was causing a degree of stress and anxiety.

Relationship Conflicts - A small number of carers reported being unable to pursue a short break as a result of the refusal of the person they cared for accepting any form of support, putting strain on the relationship and increasing the level of need for the carer to have a break. Many carers expressed feelings of emotional distress at having to leave the person they care for with someone else and constantly worrying about them when they are away. Carers also discussed issues around being un-deserving of support, stating that other families with greater levels of need should be a priority. Discussions took place in most of the groups about waiting lists for particular services, with some reducing the support they provide due to financial pressures. Carers see these factors as major barriers when considering the need for a short break and feel a sense of frustration of being unable to get relief from their caring role.

Carers from BME communities have added issues around language and have reported the lack of sensitivity and understanding in relation to the differences in culture and tradition. The apparent lack of shared identity prohibits many forms of support resulting in poor or little access to a short break for carers from ethnic minority backgrounds. There was a suggestion made by a carer who attends the Monklands' Elderly Asian Women's Group that befriending training could be offered to members of the Asian community to develop capacity within their community to support older people.

- 6) How many carers were informed of their entitlement to a Carers Assessment?

NL CSIG has for some time known about the low uptake of carer's assessment and the reasons preventing their effective use and to this end carried out an extensive consultation in order to establish a more outcomes based approach to meet the needs of carers. The result of

the consultation has seen the development of a more appropriate tool which does not replace the assessment but acts rather as a conduit to establishing carer needs in a less complex way with a strong focus on outcomes.

Following a pilot of the Carers Journey (See page 17 for more information) in the summer of 2011, approval has been given to roll out this process across North Lanarkshire. The results of the pilot were positive. Carers were more willing to engage with the Carers Journey than they had been with previous assessments and staff found the process more manageable, less intrusive and more positive than previous assessments.

It is hoped that the Carers Journey will increase the number of carers who are engaging with front line health, social work and voluntary agency staff in order to intervene early in their journey, provide timely support and relevant information that will assist them in their caring role. (See Appendix 3)

7) Was a short break discussed as part of the Carers Assessment?

Those carers who reported that they had had a Carers Assessment expressed negative views of the process and only a small number indicated that short breaks were discussed. Comments from carers include:

- 'I was told I did not require a short break'
- 'I was coping well without one'
- 'I have been assessed as needing one'
- 'I am still waiting after 6 months'
- 'I was told there was not a budget for a short break or respite'

There were a number of parent carers who asked, as part of the assessment process, for some home respite support but were informed that this service was not available. Carers expressed little confidence in the assessment process with a number stating that they had been waiting for a long period on both the assessment and the notification of the outcome. There were a very small number of carers who reported positively on the assessment process in relation to gaining access to a short break.

#### **4.4 Stakeholder Events and Recommendations**

The programme for the stakeholder events was developed in order to inform of local and national developments in relation to short break provision as well as providing participants with an overview of the SBDP.

Duncan MacKay Head of Social Work Development NLC delivered a comprehensive presentation which focussed on the strategic developments that exist within the Council and the extent to which carers are supported as a result of funding initiatives aligned to the strategic priorities. Duncan talked about the introduction of the 'Carers Journey' within social work and the expectation that this new, less formal, assessment tool would enable frontline social work staff to engage more effectively with carers and identify early timely support. The Carers Journey it is hoped will address some of the long standing issues associated with Carers Assessment. Although the Carers Journey will not replace the Carers Assessment, it should if applied and used the way it is intended, reduce the number of carers who would need a formal Carers Assessment.

Don Williamson Chief Executive of SCS provided the stakeholders with up to date information on short break developments across Scotland. Don discussed the importance of short breaks to carers and highlighted some of the initiatives made possible as a result of the Better Breaks and Creative Breaks programmes funded by the Scottish Government. Don presented a number of findings from the Rest Assured report highlighting some of the barriers that carers face when attempting to access a short break and ways in which these barriers can be overcome. Don gave some excellent examples of how short breaks are defined and argued about the need to move away from traditional methods of respite support to more inclusive ways of providing services.

Sean Harkin, SBDO with NLCT updated the stakeholders on the work he has carried out as part of the SBDP. Sean discussed the mapping of current resources, carer consultations and some of the findings as well as the next stages of the programme.

Involving key stakeholders in the consultation process was an essential milestone of the SBDP and provided 150 participants with the opportunity to discuss current short break provision and develop in partnership a set of actions to address the identified gaps. There was a willingness from a wide range of agencies to be involved in the planned stakeholder events and the large numbers that attended both events demonstrated a real commitment from social work, the voluntary sector, carer organisations and Community Learning and Development.

In addition to the large numbers of professional staff who attended, all carer groups who participated in the consultation process were invited as key stakeholders with excellent representation of carers at both events. The SBAG agreed to use elements of the SCS Rest Assured template mentioned earlier in the report to help guide the discussion groups (See Appendix 4). The themes listed below are reflective of the issues identified by carers highlighted as part of the carer consultation process and where used to guide the discussion workshops.

- **Information**
- **Extending the Reach**
- **Particular Groups**
- **Families and Communities**

The 2 stakeholder events as referred to previously attracted 150 participants who were divided into 15 different groups in order to discuss barriers, identify areas of good practice and develop key actions for improvement. The formations of each group give careful consideration to the range of attendees ensuring they included a balance of inter-agency participants and carers. All feedback from the discussions were collated and the responses listed below;

#### 4.4.1 Improving Information

- There needs to be a multi-agency approach to information for carers and it should always talk about 'do you get a break from caring' - 'would you like a break from caring' - 'can I/we help you to achieve that'.
- Carers don't know where to start with a short break as there is a difference in how carers define a short break. There needs to be clarity around what this can mean.
- A publicity campaign on how carers can be supported to access a short break would be beneficial. This should be available in a range of languages with local partnerships with local cultural centres included.
- There is a need to be imaginative about publicity. Any campaigns should be co-ordinated and all stakeholders should be involved. A media campaign should include the Carers Journey, however there needs to be resources to support the implementation as this can be resource intensive.
- Information needs to be targeted in public. There was recognition of the excellent work taking place within GP practices to identify carers and provide them with a range of information however more targeting in local supermarkets, post offices and bus stops would reach many hidden carers.
- An accessible and publicised website detailing short break information should be developed.

#### 4.4.2 Extending the Reach

- Raise awareness of the Carers Journey across all agencies. The effective implementation of the Carers Journey was seen to be crucial in identifying the need for a short break. There needs to be comprehensive training provided to frontline staff and organisations that come into contact with carers.
- Provide carer networking seminars where carers can find out about different short break opportunities which can link to support to plan and prepare for a short break.
- The mapping information gathered as part of the short breaks programme should be used to inform carers and practitioners of available resources and services and added to and updated with new and relevant information. The RCOP Mapping information could also be used as a local resource and

should be used by professional staff to sign post older carers to appropriate support.

#### 4.4.3 Particular Groups

Parent carers and older Carers were highlighted as particular groups experiencing added difficulties with services failing to meet their needs in relation to short break support. Other groups which were identified as 'hard to reach' included, ethnic minority carers, carers of people with mental ill health, younger carers between 18 and 30 and carers from the travelling community. There was a real need to ensure that services are reaching out in every possible way to enable and encourage better access to support. Some of the stakeholder recommendations include:

- Health and Education need to be more proactive at the point of diagnosis with relevant information on the range of services provided to carers and appropriate referrals made for support.
- Training on the Carers Journey needs to be mandatory in order for all carers to be identified at the earliest opportunity with preventative support seen as the key in addressing crisis management. The Carers Journey needs to be a proactive tool as well as a preventative one.
- Self-Directed Support was seen as a good way of providing choice and flexibility although there requires to be, better guidance and support in how parents could use this resource.
- The RCOP work stream and the identified priorities provide a significant opportunity to develop support for older carers to enable them to have regular time out. The structures that currently exist within the RCOP programme are designed to reflect the needs of carers and could be further developed to explore short break opportunities.
- Carers from the Asian Community have discussed befriending training being offered in order to provide more culturally sensitive support, as well as removing language barriers, to elderly Asian people within their own communities.
- More effective planning needs to be put in place at transitional stages for people with complex care needs as accessing appropriate support at these stages is proving to be very difficult.
- Consideration needs to be given when services are being designed so they reflect the needs of younger adult carers.

#### 4.4.4 Families and Communities

There was a great deal of feedback in relation to how families and communities could unlock community resources and combine and augment existing services and support. Some of the stakeholder recommendations include:

- Inter-agency training on the Carers Journey was seen as critical to ensure that community support was co-ordinated and offered as a preventative measure encouraging the effective use of existing resources to meet the needs of carers and those they care for.
- Utilising the experience of ex-carers to support current carers was seen as a real development opportunity. Training ex- carers as volunteers and

befrienders would be a major asset and could assist with a wide range of tasks enabling carers to have a regular break. Volunteer development was a common theme that emerged from most of the stakeholder discussion groups with many highlighting befriending as equally important in terms of community capacity building.

- There was generous recognition given to the work currently taking place across the authority by both the statutory and voluntary sectors in relation to people with care needs and the benefits carers have experienced as a result. There was however a general consensus in respect of the lack of reporting on carer outcomes with little evidence of how they were supported. There was a strong view that services need to improve their ability to monitor and evaluate outcomes for carers.
- A number of groups felt that a specialist short break service or one stop shop should be the starting point in recognising and acknowledging that access to a short break is critical to carers. It would act as a first port of call to carers and professionals and would have expert information and knowledge on what is available as well as being clear on the criteria applied.
- The need to strengthen existing partnerships was a key message at the stakeholder events. While it was acknowledged that effective partnership working has achieved a great deal there was still scope to strengthen links between the voluntary and statutory sectors by extending the membership of inter-agency working groups and strategic partnerships.
- Carers should be integral to the design and delivery of carer services with their experiences shaping the carer agenda at all levels and while it was acknowledged that there are good examples of this it was noted that some carer groups are not represented in particular, parent carers.

## **Section 5: Conclusion**

The work of the Short Breaks Development Programme, as well as future development recommendations have been presented to the Health and Social Care Partnership and include the development of a Short Breaks Strategy incorporating a service design proposal and implementation plan. The short breaks programme is a key strand of the Councils Carers' Strategy framework and the GSIG will work towards the development of a Short Break Strategy in order to progress agreed recommendations.

At this stage the recommendations are set out with short medium and long term aims and actions. The CSIG is aware that some partners are developing short break initiatives which may not be fully reflected here, however, one of the fundamental aims of a Short Breaks Strategy is to bring about better co-ordination and more accurate information in the area of short breaks and annual updates will reflect progress.

The Short Breaks Strategy will align to the priorities of the North Lanarkshire Carers Strategies as well as the Community Capacity and Carers Support Strategy, and fit with the recommendations set out in the Joint Commissioning Plan for older people. The strategy will provide a framework for positive change in addressing the barriers that carers face when attempting to access short breaks and will encourage collaboration, partnership working and more effective networking. They also reflect the involvement of carers in the co-production of short break provision and encourages the participation of carers in the decision making process.

The proposed development for a Short Break Information Service is encouraging and will be welcomed by all of the stakeholders and carers who were involved in the SBDP. The developments will represent ways in which short breaks for carers can be improved and the Advisory Group are currently working on a service design and implementation plan which will reflect the priorities of the Short Breaks Strategy. The Strategy will build on a service proposal agreed by the partners which presents a range of ways in which short break services for carers can be improved. The focus is on capacity building both within the third and statutory sectors to improve the quality and accessibility to short breaks for carers building on existing structures and frameworks, carer support and information and signposting services. It also recognises the importance of the Carers Journey in the process.

## **Section 6: Glossary of Terms**

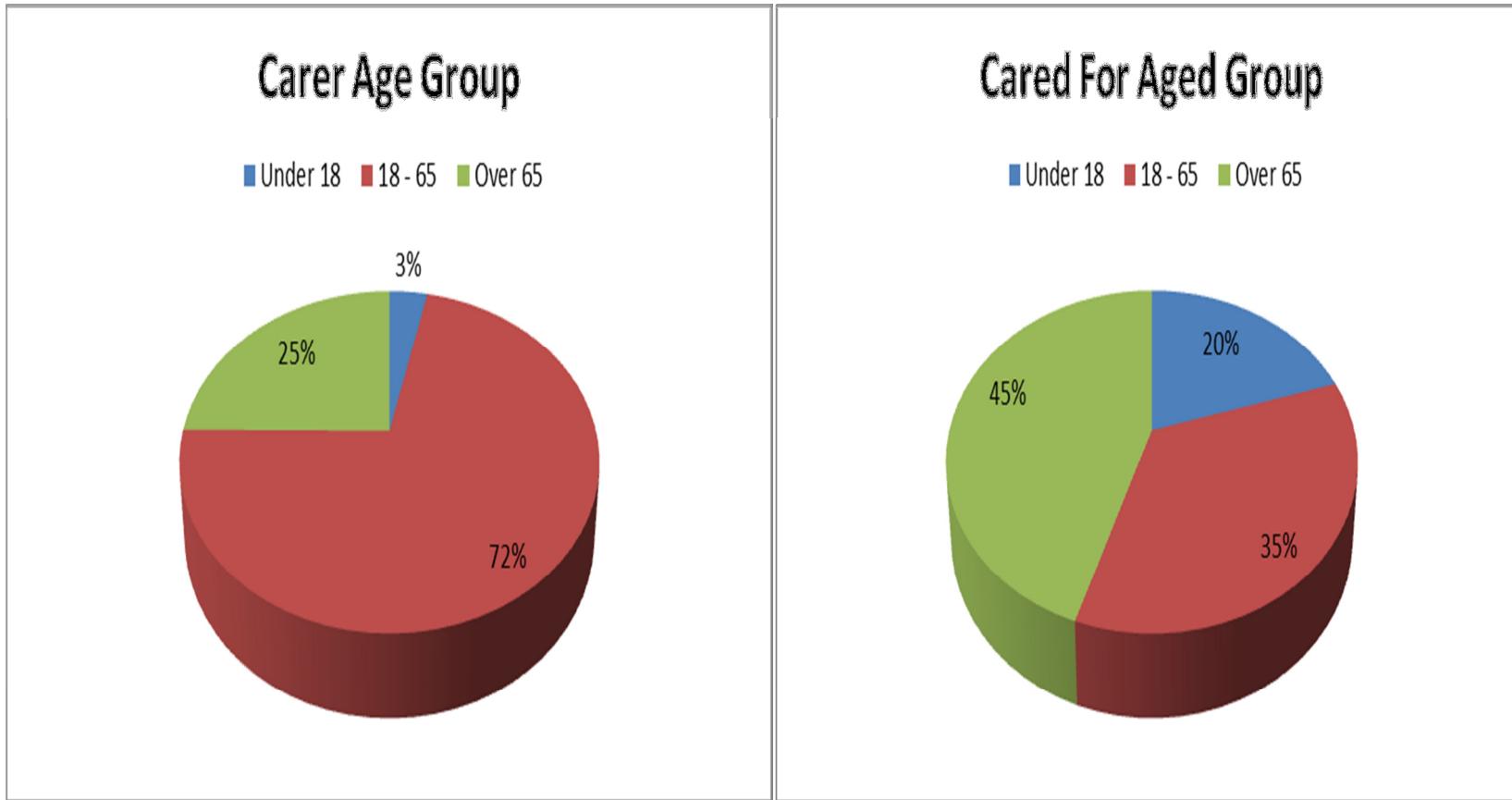
<b>AFC</b>	Action for Children North Lanarkshire Young Carers Project
<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>BME</b>	Black and Minority Ethnic
<b>CCG</b>	Community Capacity Group)
<b>CLASP</b>	Carers Liaison and Support Project
<b>CJ</b>	Carers Journey
<b>GP</b>	General Practitioner
<b>IRISS</b>	Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services
<b>LPDP</b>	Locality Partnership Development Programme
<b>NHSL</b>	National Health Service Lanarkshire Carer Information Strategy Group
<b>CISG</b>	
<b>NLC CSIG</b>	North Lanarkshire Council Carers Strategy Implementation Group
<b>NLC</b>	North Lanarkshire Council
<b>NLCT</b>	North Lanarkshire Carers Together
<b>PIP</b>	Partners in Play
<b>PRTLCC</b>	Princess Royal Trust Lanarkshire Carers Centre
<b>RCOP</b>	Reshaping Care for Older People
<b>SBDO</b>	Short Break Development Officer
<b>SCS</b>	Shared Care Scotland
<b>SDS</b>	Self-Directed Support
<b>SBB</b>	Short Breaks Bureau
<b>VOCAL</b>	Voice of Carers across Lothian

## Section 7: Appendices

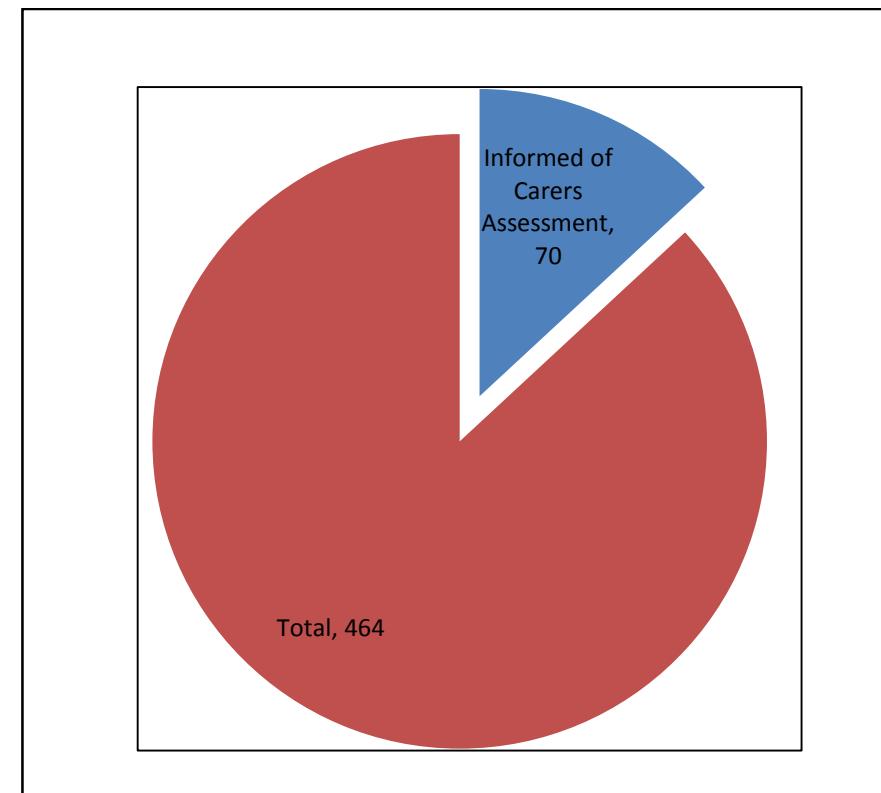
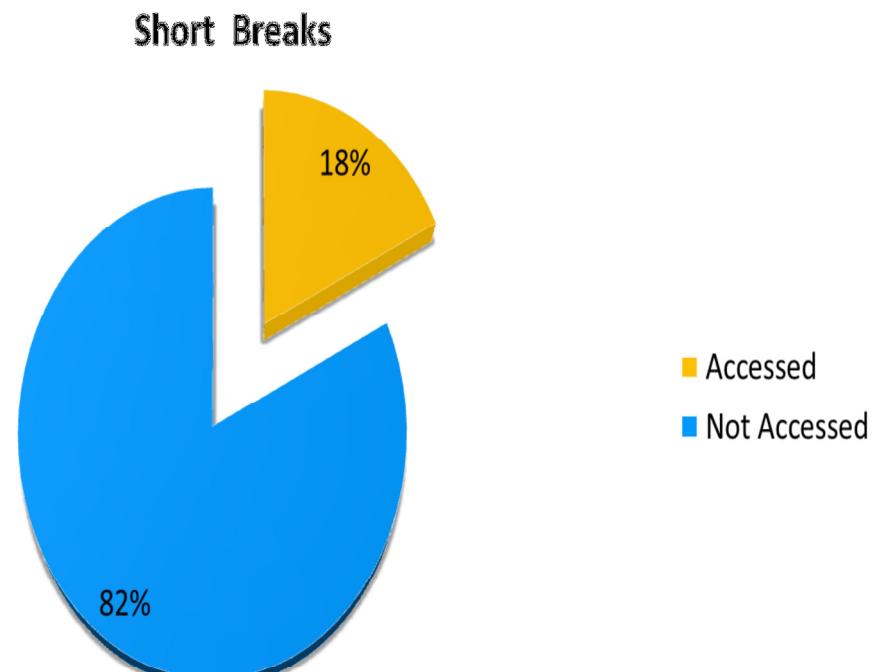
Appendix 1: Carers Strategy Implementation Group – Respite Development Post, work plan

Month	Key Outputs/ Management	Scope existing provision in North Lanarkshire	Identify good practice nationally	Consult with carers and develop carer involvement	Design and resource services and supports
1	Induction Planning Agreement on detailed plan from CSIG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify contacts</li> <li>Set up appointments</li> <li>Desktop research</li> <li>Gather Information</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider approach to carer involvement and agree with CSIG</li> <li>Plan consultation, identify key supports and contacts</li> </ul> <p>Undertake consultation with carers</p>	
2	Make links with other developments				
3	Report/feedback to CSIG	Preliminary findings Write up findings and inform event			
4 & 5	Report/feedback CSIG			Write up findings	
6	Report/feedback to CSIG	Identify any further research and undertake event Planning		<p>Prepare feedback for carers Involve carers in service design</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>Event to agree way forward with stakeholders</b> </div>	
7					<p>Outline service design Agree with Stakeholders Identify resources Link with other developments</p>
8	Report/feedback to CSIG	Develop information gathered to produce briefings on findings, resources to share with relevant staff and carers e.g. Concise information on existing provision.		Develop involvement of carers in future service provision e.g. reference group.	<p>Detail service design Funding requirements, application to secure resources Develop policy, procedures/systems Planning, monitoring and evaluation framework</p>
9	Concluding report	Direct relevant findings appropriately e.g. research identifies other gaps in provision/issues not relating to respite.			Implementation Plan

Appendix 2: Carer age group graph/Cared for age group graph



Appendix 3: Short breaks graph/Carer assessment graph



## Appendix 4: Workshop Questions

The first workshop will cover 2 topics which are linked, these are 'Information and Extending the Reach'. The second workshop will cover Particular Groups and Families and Communities. Please identify 2/3 key priorities for each section.

### **Part 1: Information.**

"Coping with caring responsibilities leaves little spare energy to search for information"

Discussion Points:

- How do carers find out about short breaks in North Lanarkshire?
- Is information about services readily available?
- Is there clear information available to help carers understand how levels of support are determined, and the process involved? Is the eligibility criteria clear?
- What steps can be taken to improve the information that is available and how it is provided?
- Who needs to be involved in taking this forward?

### **Part 2: Extending the reach.**

"Many carers have difficulty in taking the initial step in asking for help".

Discussion Points:

- What approaches would make a difference for our area?
- What other developments might be beneficial to raise awareness of the needs of carers and the importance of short break support?
- What needs to happen to ensure more carers have access to information and support?

### **Part 3: Particular Groups**

Discussion Points:

- Are there particular groups in our area we think experience added difficulties in being able to access suitable short break provision?
- What information do we need to collect from these groups to better understand the difficulties they face in accessing suitable short breaks?
- How can this be taken forward and who needs to be involved?

### **Part 4 - Families and Communities**

With pressure on public funding we need to explore what other resources are to be found in our communities to support families with caring responsibility. What role can neighbours, friends and community-led organisations play for example? Perhaps by combining and augmenting publicly funded resources with these other community supports there is greater scope to reach more families in need of a break.

Discussion Points:

- What scope is there in our area for such initiatives?
- What else could be done to 'unlock' other community resources?
- What could be our starting point?