Your Way | Kia Roha

Understanding Carer Support

Carer Support is a subsidy that can be used to provide a full-time carer a break from their caring role. It contributes to the costs of care and support for a disabled person.

You are considered a full-time carer if you provide more than 4 hours a day of unpaid care to a disabled person. For example, you may be the parent of a disabled person.

A Needs Assessment Service Coordination agency (NASC) will decide how many days of carer support can be provided to the disabled child, or adult, after an assessment. This is often referred to as an 'allocation' of support. Although the Carer Support days are part of a disabled child or person's support, it is used by the full-time carer.

Contact details for your local NASC can be found at Needs assessment services | Disability Support Services

Information about Carer Support

Information about how Carer Support and the ways it can be used is available at: Carers | Disability Support Services , or you can use this guide. For general enquiries or help with forms, contact the Carer Support team that administers this service: Freephone 0800 855 066, email Carer_support@health.govt.nz.

Key Facts

- The Carer Support rate is currently set at $82 per day.
- The disabled child/person is provided a set number of Carer Support days to use in a 12-month period. This is after the NASC assessment.
- If the days are not used before the year ends, they expire.
- You cannot spend more money than the approved amount.
- You can use your Carer Support as a total budget. For example, Lisa is allocated 28 days at a rate of $82 per day. Lisa's total Carer Support budget is therefore 28 x $82 = $2,296 for the year.

What Can the Money Be Used For?

- Paying someone to help care for the disabled person.
- Community activities or day programmes.
- Any purchases that give a full-time carer a break from their responsibilities and are consistent with the Purchasing Operational Policy.

Who Can Help?

- A support person can be a whānau/family member, friend, or support organisation.
- They help care for the disabled child or person while the full-time carer takes a break.

What Can't You Buy?

- Alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, gambling or illegal activities.
- Things not related to disability support.
- Long-term residential care unless it is residential respite and not continuous or ongoing.
- Purchases that need prior approval but have not been approved in advance.
- Items or services that can reasonably be provided in time by another government agency before using Carer Support funding.

When Do You Need Prior Approval First?

- **Any one-off purchase over $1,500 must be approval by your local NASC first.**
- Overseas travel, equipment, and therapies also need approval from your local NASC before buying them.
- If you are unsure, ask your local NASC.

Helpful Tips

- Keep all receipts and invoices.
- Stay within your budget.
- Make sure purchases allow the full-time carer a break.

Claim forms

Carer Support claim form to Health New Zealand – Te Whatu Ora.

Care Support forms can be downloaded from: How to access Carer support | Disability Support Services. Once completed, they can be posted to the address on the form or emailed to: csclaims@health.govt.nz.