Your Way
Kia Roha

Understanding Carer Support

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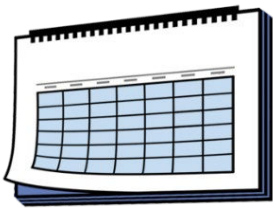

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What is Carer Support?

Carer Support is money used to give breaks to people who care for a disabled person. This person is called a **full-time carer**.

A **full-time carer** is someone who does more than 4 hours a day of care for a disabled person without being paid any money.

Carer Support is funded by the Disability Support Services.

Disability Support Services is part of the Ministry of Social Development.

In this Easy Read we will call Disability Support Services – **DSS**.

To get Carer Support you need to have a **Needs Assessment** first.

A **Needs Assessment** is when someone comes to meets with you to see if you need disability support from the government.

You can find out more about NASC in the Easy Read document called:

Information about Needs Assessment Service Coordination (NASC)

You can find this Easy Read document at:

https://bit.ly/4qsUNB8

How many Carer Support days do I have?

Carer support days are given to the disabled person.

You will be told the number of Carer Support days you will get from your **Needs Assessment Service Coordination organisation.**

In this document the **Needs Assessment Service Coordination organisation** will be called **NASC**.

A **Needs Assessment Service Coordination organisation** is the organisation you meet with to plan what support you need from DSS.

You can find out who your local NASC is by:

- visiting the NASC website at:

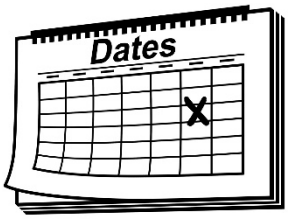
  https://bit.ly/3XoODVK

- Calling Disability Support Services on:

  0800 566 601

The amount for Carer Support is $85 a day.

You do not need to use the full $85 on only 1 day.

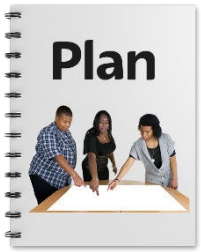


You can add all the days together to find out how much you can spend on Carer Support each year.

As long as you do not spend more than you are allowed each year you can use:

- more than $85 for 1 day

- less than $85 for 1 day.



It is best to plan how to use your Carer Support days.

You can ask someone you trust to support you to plan.

The number of carer support days you get is based on the needs of the:

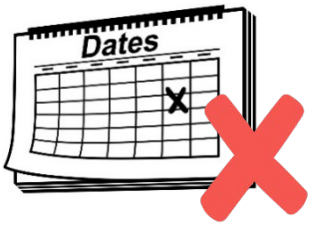
- disabled person
- full-time carer.

Different people will get different amounts of days.

This is because everyone has different needs.

How long do I have to use my Carer Support days?

You have 1 year to use your Carer Support days from the day you get them.



If you do not use all your Carer Support days in 1 year they cannot be used next year.

You can find out how many Carer Support days you have left by contacting the Carer Support team by:

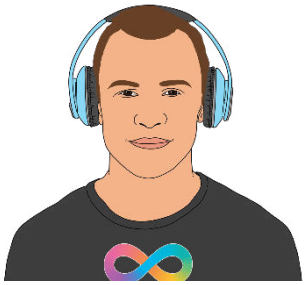
- phone on:

  0800 855 066

- email at:

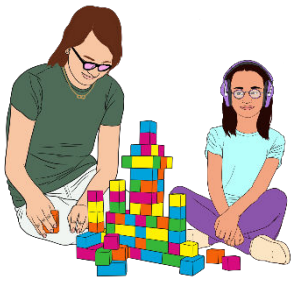
  carer_support@health.govt.nz

What can I use Carer Support for?



Carer Support days can be used to:

- pay a **support carer**
- pay for some activities while the full-time carer is taking a break
- buy things that make it easier for the disabled person to manage while their carer takes a break.



A **support carer** is someone who cares for the disabled person while their full-time carer takes a break.

The support carer could be:

- a babysitter
- a whānau / family member
- a friend.

Costs that can be paid for with carer support must:

- allow the full-time carer to have a break
- be good for the disabled person.

Carer Support can be used for things like:

- Riding for the Disabled which is supported horse riding for disabled people

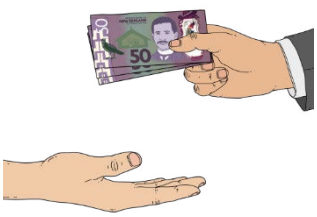
- respite community programmes which are programmes that give carers a break

- Equipment that means a carer can take a break

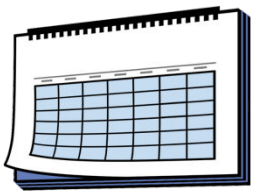
Carer support can also be used for things like:

- after school programmes

- holiday programmes
- youth programmes
- costs to cover things like **entry fees** for:
    - support workers
    - family carers.

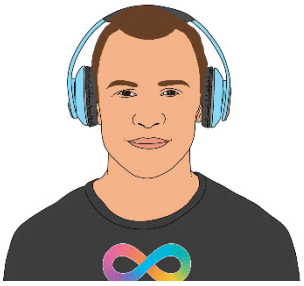


Entry fees means the money paid for people to go somewhere like the pool.



Things that can also be bought 1 time each year are:

- tablet devices like iPads



- disability apps for a tablet that supports the needs of the disabled person

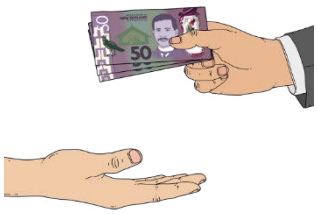
- noise cancelling headphones which are headphones that block other sounds out.

- weighted blankets.

If you are going to claim for something make sure to keep the:

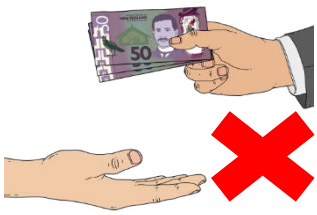
- **invoices**

- **receipts.**



Invoices / receipts are documents that say how much you paid for something.

You must ask the NASC first before buying items that cost over $1,500.



DSS will only pay you back what you are allowed to spend for the year.

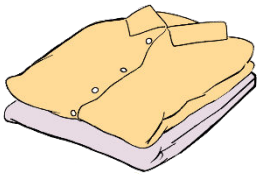
If you are not sure DSS will pay for the item you want to buy you can:

- read the Purchasing Guidance on the DSS website at: **https://bit.ly/42ajPuO**

- call the Carer Support team on: **0800 855 066**

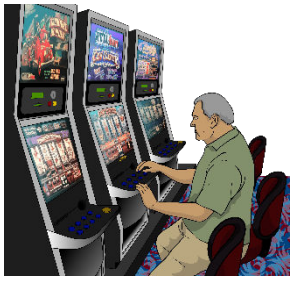
What can I not use Carer Support for?

Carer Support days cannot be used to pay for **everyday expenses**.



Everyday expenses are things everyone needs to pay for like:

- rent
- clothing
- food
- bills.



Carer Support also cannot be used for:

- things that are against the law
- buying alcohol
- **gambling.**

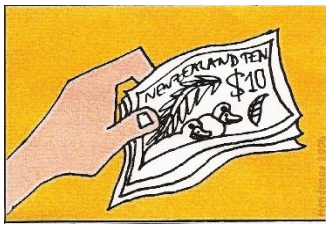
Gambling is when you pay money to try and win prizes like:

- raffle tickets
- scratch cards
- lotto tickets
- pokie machines.

Paying a support carer

There are 2 ways to pay a support carer:

- DSS can pay the support carer directly



- DSS can pay you back if you have already paid the support carer.

You can find out more about paying support carers in the Easy Read document called:

Make a Carer Support claim

You can find this document at:

https://bit.ly/47wQwnT

This information has been written by Your Way | Kia Roha.

This document was created and translated by Your Way | Kia Roha with advice from the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.

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