



# Carersnet Newsletter

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**News about new services for  
Carers of Adults**

## NEW BREAKS FOR CARERS

Carers' input to last year's "Best Value Review" for Carers of Adults has helped secure a much needed increase in funding for Carers Breaks.

The review highlighted a need to increase funding for breaks, and County Councillors have allocated £500,000 a year new money for this. Additional money is also available from the National Carers Grant—an extra £224,000 in the current financial year 2003/4.

This is enabling Surrey County Council to introduce new breaks services in the form of Direct Payments for breaks and a new Carer Breaks Voucher Scheme. Both are assessed through Carers Assessments.

## DIRECT PAYMENTS FOR CARER BREAKS

£450,000 will be available in the form of direct payments for short breaks for Carers of Adults agreed **through Carers Assessments**. Provided eligibility criteria are met, the payment could be for a break in a residential home or substitute care in the home with the direct payment being made to the service user. It could also be for a holiday for the user or for the carer (as a "carers service"). This has already enabled one care manager to fund a couple going to Spain for a week instead of using a more expensive residential home.

Where the direct payment is for a carers service, it will be paid to the carer.



The money available should enable Adult Services to provide up to 250 extra breaks benefiting around 400 carers.

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## CARER BREAKS VOUCHERS



A new Carer Breaks Voucher Scheme is also being piloted in Adult Services funded by the National Carers Grant. The scheme has been developed after consultation with carers. Vouchers worth £287,000 will be allocated **through Carers Assessments**. The vouchers will have a face value of £10, £20 and £50 and will be able to be redeemed at any service on an approved list. New providers can easily be added and already several providers identified by carers themselves have been added to the list. This list includes services both in Surrey and other parts.

### ***How to Access the Services***

These new services are both accessed **through Carers Assessments** and you can ask your local Social Care Team for an assessment. If you have had an assessment in the past you can ask for a simple reassessment.

If you are not sure which team will be able to help you, ask your local Carers Support Scheme or telephone Surrey County Council's Contact Centre on 08456 009009.

## CARER BREAKS DATABASE



Schemes willing to accept vouchers will be shown on the Carers Breaks database which can be accessed online on **[www.carersnet.org.uk](http://www.carersnet.org.uk)**. The Breaks Database will also help carers in using direct payments or accessing free voluntary sector breaks services.

**[www.carersnet.org.uk](http://www.carersnet.org.uk)**