



Fact Sheet – Respite

What is respite?

Before we find out about what respite is, we need to define who a carer is. A **carer** is someone providing regular & sustained care for a relative or friend who has support needs, without payment other than Centre link benefit (for the purpose of this site people with disability with support needs). Carers often talk about just how rewarding caring is, however, caring for a relative or friend can also be stressful & exhausting, so carers need to look after themselves & take a break.

So what is respite?

Respite provides carers & the person they care for a short break. Having respite helps carers find a balance between caring for others & caring for themselves.

There are various types of respite to suit individual people & situations:

In home respite is provided by a support worker who comes into the home & performs tasks that the carer would usually E.g. Meal preparation, shopping, keeping the person company, while the carer attends appointments & or social activity.

Recreational respite is respite in the form of outings, camps, day centre, retreats, overnight or weekend breaks.

Facility based respite allows the person being cared for to have a short break in a supported environment by experienced staff.

There are different ways of organising respite depending on your situation:

Emergency respite is required when the carer is temporarily unable to perform their caring role, for example, if they are required to be admitted to hospital.

Planned respite is where regular & ongoing respite is provided to ensure the carer has a regular break from their caring role.

Benefits of respite to carer are:

- Restores life balance & overall wellbeing
- Time for rest & relaxation
- Enhances physical & mental health
- Encourages having a social life
- An opportunity to try residential support
- Time to do your own things

Benefits of respite to the person they care for:

- Promotes independence
- Opportunity for socialisation (different surrounds)
- Encouragement to engage in activities of interest

It is anticipated that this website can assist carers to access respite.

Prepared by Bendigo Health – Carer Support Services & Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre 2009