

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol ar Gwella mynediad at gymorth i ofalwyr di-dâl](#)

This response was submitted to the [Health and Social Care Committee consultation on Improving access to support for unpaid carers.](#)

UC11 : Ymateb gan: Rhaglen Gogledd Cymru Gyda'n Gilydd | Response from: North Wales Together Programme

Evidence submitted by: Jeni Andrews, [REDACTED] on behalf of North Wales Together Programme.

I can confirm that I am over 18 years old. This information does not need to be treated as confidential

This submission is for information - to make the Committee aware that the North Wales Together (NWT) Programme is co-ordinating a review of Short Breaks (respite) provision for children and young people with learning disabilities and complex health needs (C&YPwLDs). The review, which has only recently commenced, will focus on Short Breaks (SB's) in North Wales. See below for further information.

Background:

Professionals have reported that some families of children and young people with learning disabilities (C&YPwLDs) who have complex health and social care needs find it difficult to access regular short breaks (previously known as respite). There is a risk that a lack of regular Short Breaks (SBs) can contribute to family crises. This can potentially impact on a parent / carers ability to continue caring

One of the priorities highlighted within Children's Services is the need to strengthen short breaks (SB) provision for Children and Young People (C&YP) at the key times they might need to access (SBs) and/or emergency accommodation at times of crisis. NWT has committed to supporting a regional review of SBs for C&YPwLDs, to include scoping the current SB provision across North Wales, sharing this information with partners and working towards investigating what can be done to improve SB provision for C&YPwLDs in North Wales.

Current situation:

- a. Although there is a range of SB provision in N Wales, overnight SB's can be high cost. Provision can be limited in some areas and for some ages.
- b. Access to funded SB provision is based on assessed need. Of the families known to statutory services often only a relatively small number might be eligible for overnight breaks.
- c. Arrangements can vary from area to area, so families experience of, & access to, SBs may vary

- d. Not all SBS are funded by the Local Authorities (LA's) or Health. Some SBS are funded by Welsh Government and some activities are funded through other sources (charities etc)
- e. There is increasing pressure on SBS provision, with requests often exceeding local supply.
- f. There is also a reported increase in the number of C&YP in 52-week placements (data TBC). It is not clear whether or not access to regular planned overnight breaks could have prevented demand for some of those 52-week placements - although SBS can be high cost, anecdotal evidence indicates that regular planned breaks can help families to continue caring.

Scope of the review:

In summary, the review will:

- a. Map the current range of short breaks (SB's) for C&YPwLD of different ages in each LA area across the region. To include out of county SB's commissioned locally
- b. Collect data (where possible) showing demand for SB's, including data on crisis needs, estimates on future demand & analyses of current provider charges / LA costs
- c. Look at how people access SBS and analyse variations across N Wales
- d. Engage with stakeholders (families and professionals) to get an understanding of how access to SBS can enable some C&YP to remain at home with their families and how/whether Direct Payments help
- e. Compare local provision and demand, with a view to highlighting areas of unmet need and gaps in provision, especially where these can lead to reliance on out of county provision
- f. Analyse the current provider market, identifying difficulties securing and funding SBS locally
- g. Consider research carried out locally, regionally & nationally, along with national policy and examples of engagement work
- h. Look at examples of good practice, and identify and analyse the suitability of potential SB models for the region in the areas where there are gaps
- i. Share the data and other information with partners and set out the options, with a view to engaging with partners on what can be done to improve provision where there are gaps

Progress to date:

A regional Task and Finish group has recently been established and is due to meet at the end of September. We have started on the mapping of current SB provision, analysis of research, engagement and policy, and the collation of examples of good practice.

Note:

The regional review is likely to take at least 6 months to complete and as such we are not in a position to submit evidence to the Committee prior to the imminent consultation closing date (19/09/25). It might however, be useful for the Committee to be aware of the regional review and to be kept up to date with progress. I'm happy to meet you and/or share further detail about the regional review if this would be helpful.