

Please read the information in this document carefully before completing the application form

What is the 'Carer's Wellbeing Fund'?

It is funding which enables eligible unpaid carers to access a break from their caring role. A carer is defined as someone who is 18 years of age or above, and who is caring for a person with a disability, complex need, chronic health, a long term health condition or is a substance misuser. The award of a 'Carer Wellbeing Fund' grant should lead to at least one of the following outcomes for carers;

1. An improved feeling of wellbeing
2. A reduction in feelings of stress
3. A reduction in feeling isolated
4. An improved sense of calm and being in control
5. An improved relationship with family/friends
6. An improved feeling of managing the caring role

The 'Carer Wellbeing Fund' is limited; hence not all applications will be successful. The grant will not pay for anything bought or paid for before the grant was awarded.

Who can apply to the 'Carer Wellbeing Fund' grant?

You can apply for funding if you can answer yes to each of the following:

1. I am over 18 years.
2. I am an unpaid carer who cares for a friend or relative a disability, complex need, chronic health, a long term health condition or a substance misuser.
3. I provide unpaid care for a minimum of 15 Hrs per week to the person I care for.
4. The person I care for lives in Gateshead.
5. I have not received a grant from Gateshead Carers 'Time for Me' grant or the 'Carers Trust Tyne & Wear 'Take a Break' grant in the last 12 months.
6. I have a bank account or I can nominate another person who does have a bank account to receive the grant on my behalf. (Grant payments can only be made by cheque or a Bank transfer).

How much can I apply for?

The maximum grant award is £200 although some restrictions do apply (more details about what the grant can be used for is given below).

What sort of things can I apply for?

A grant from the Carers Wellbeing Fund can be used for something that clearly gives you a break, supports you in your caring role, and/or maintains or improves your own health and wellbeing. For example:

- A holiday or weekend break in the UK
- Therapies/relaxation or wellbeing sessions, including spa days
- College course fees, books or equipment
- Gym membership, exercise classes, swimming sessions etc.
- An adult education class or training course
- Day trips to places of interest or a general day trip.
- Social events e.g. to attend a concert, the theatre or the cinema
- Driving Lessons
- Purchase of items for an activity or hobby e.g. a tent or a bicycle
- A laptop/tablet/mobile phone
- Household items e.g. a washing machine, a cooker or a fridge
- Decorating costs
- Essential goods for the carer 's wellbeing i.e. TV for bedroom
- Gardening or gardening equipment costs

What sort of things can I not apply for?

A 'Carer Wellbeing Fund' grant cannot be used for any of the following:

- To pay for residential care in a care home
- To pay for respite or a sitting service
- To pay for the person you are caring for or any other person to accompany you on a break/holiday. *You can take a break with someone else but they must pay their own costs.*
- To pay for petrol/travel expenses that are not part of a holiday/break
- Flights/holidays/breaks outside the UK
- To pay for food or drinks, except where included in the cost of a break (e.g. bed and breakfast).
- To pay the cost of things that should be provided by the local authority or the NHS
- Cosmetic procedures e.g. tattoos, piercings, hair extensions
- To buy tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
- To pay off debts
- To gamble, including Bingo
- To do anything which is against the law
- To pay household bills such as rent, gas or electricity
- To pay for the ordinary costs of daily living such as food shopping, hairdressing or clothes
- To pay for anything you have already done, bought or paid for

What else do I need to know?

1. Only one application can be made in a 12 month period.
2. The grant must be used within 3 months from the date that it is sent to you.
3. All receipts must be returned within one month of the grant being spent or you will not be eligible to apply for the grant again.
4. The grant must be used for the item/items you applied for.
5. The Carer Wellbeing Fund is only for unpaid carers (this includes Kinship Carers who care for a child with a disability). If you are a paid care worker or a Foster Carer you cannot apply.

How can I apply?

You can call us on 0191 4900121 your details will be taken and a Carer Wellbeing Facilitator will call you back to discuss your caring role. or email us at enquiries@gatesheadcarers.com stating that you are interested in the grant and giving us a phone number. A Carer Wellbeing facilitator will call you to discuss your caring role.

What is the process?

The grant panel will consider the applications received. The decision of the panel will be given to you by the Carer Wellbeing Facilitator you have worked with.

The decision of the panel is final.

What happens next?

If your application is approved, a cheque in your name or the name of the person you have nominated (if you do not have a bank account), will be posted to your home address.

You are required to spend the amount on what the grant has been awarded for, within a period of 3 months.

You are required to submit receipts / photocopies of receipts within one month of having made a purchase.

Use of the money for a purpose other than what it was granted will be treated as fraud.

If you do not give us receipts within the required time, you will be asked to repay the money back to the fund.

Non-compliance of these requirements will deny you access to any other carer related funds.

Frequently asked questions

When will I know if I've been successful?

Carers applying to the fund will be informed by the Carer Wellbeing Facilitator whether they have been successful or not. The decision made is final.

If your application is successful you will receive payment within 4 weeks of the decision being made by the panel.

What if I don't have a bank account?

You may nominate another person who does have a bank account to receive the grant on your behalf. This choice is available on the application form.

Please explain about receipts

It is a condition of the Carer Wellbeing Fund Grant that receipts for the money spent are returned. You must return your receipts/copies of receipts to Gateshead Carers within one month of the money being spent.

Gateshead Carers does not send out reminder letters for submission of receipts

If you do not return your receipts, then you will not be able to make future applications to the any other carer related fund. We therefore suggest you ask for proof of postage when returning receipts by post. There is no charge for this.

What sorts of receipts are acceptable?

Receipts or an invoice from where you bought the item e.g. shop, hotel. Receipts submitted must be for your expenses only.

What should I do if I've lost my receipt?

If possible, get duplicate receipts. If these cannot be obtained, please contact Gateshead Carers to explain the situation.

I can only take a break if the person I care for comes too. Please explain how the grant can be used in such a case.

If anyone including the person you care for accompanies you, they must pay for themselves

What if I don't spend all the money on what I've applied for?

You must return any unspent money.

What if the cost of what I want is more than the grant amount of £200?

If the cost is more than the grant you will have to pay the balance yourself. You will still have to give us the receipt / copy of receipt to show how the grant was spent.

What should I do if after 3 months I haven't spent my grant?

If you haven't spent your grant within 3 months of receiving it, you must return the money to Gateshead Carers.

If you do not return unspent money or do not return receipts, you will be not be able to apply for another grant in the future.

What if the fund runs out of money?

The funding for this grant is provided by Gateshead Council and is limited, hence once the fund runs out no further grants will be awarded.

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PLEASE KEEP THESE NOTES FOR FUTURE REFERENCE