

## 7. GETTING A BREAK

Everyone needs a break! Saying you can't be there, all day every day, is not saying you don't care. Having a break (often called respite) may also help you to carry on caring for longer and with less strain. Arranging alternative care to give you time to relax or to go away to visit family for a holiday is not always easy. But do try and do keep on asking!

Respite is often thought to mean residential care, but there are a number of alternatives that may be possible. Here are some examples of the services:

### Care at home

- Sitting services providing a 'watchful' eye
- Relief care schemes which provide trained personal care
- Night services

### Care away from home

- Day care for adults - lunch clubs, day centres, day hospitals,
- Day care for children and young people with special needs
- Respite care for all ages in residential or nursing homes, hostels, short stays with another family
- Hospices

### Carers' Direct Payments

These Direct Payments (not means tested) enable carers to make their own decisions about buying the respite/break of their choice that best suit their needs. A relaxing massage; watch a football match; have a weekend away? You will need to have had a Carers' Assessment, identifying your need for a break. Contact your social worker.

### Holidays

Whether you would like to go on holiday with the person you care for or whether you or they might like to go alone, there are a number of organisations that can give you helpful information and advice. The **Holiday Care Service**, **DIAL** and **RADAR** publish information sheets. The **AA** has a holiday guide for people who have a disability.

**Vitalise** and **Livability** have holiday brochures. Some organisations run holidays for people with specific disabilities or illnesses, e.g. **Action for Blind People**, **Mencap** and **Rethink**. **The Kiloran Trust** offers low cost breaks in London for carers.

Local **Tourist Information Offices** can usually provide information on hotels and B&Bs offering disabled access and facilities in their local area.

Holidays can be expensive, but there are some charitable trusts that can help with costs for people on low incomes, including carers. **DIAL** and the **Worcestershire Association of Carers** have more details.

**It is not always easy to get respite for a break. But it is most important to mention your needs during your Carers' Assessment. Ask your Social Worker about funding from the Carers Grant.**