

# Diversity impact assessment

## TITLE

*Name/description of the issue being assessed*

Short breaks strategy

## DATE

*Date the DIA is completed*

22 August 2014

## LEAD OFFICER

*Name of person responsible for carrying out the DIA.*

Donna Mills

## 1 Summary description of the proposed change

- *What is the change to policy/service/new project that is being proposed?*
- *How does it compare with the current situation?*

In line with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reforms within the Children and Families Act 2014, it is proposed that families with a disabled child aged 0 – 25 years will in future be offered an outcomes-based assessment of needs and a personal budget from which to directly purchase short break services to meet the outcomes agreed. Currently families can access any number of universal short breaks by self-referral. Under the new system, all families will be assessed and services will be more equally and fairly distributed. The impact of the change is that families currently accessing services may no longer receive them. However, families reaching statutory assessment thresholds will continue to receive services. Families not eligible for a personal budget may still be able to access universal services at a rate determined by the provider. We expect this change to begin to shape the provider market as families choose certain services above others and thereby increase provision. Workshops will be delivered to potential providers of short break services by commissioners and services to prepare them for this change.

A number of services are currently commissioned or funded by Medway Council to provide short breaks in Medway until March 2015. It is proposed that a preferred provider framework is put in place.

## 2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

- *Eg: Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user records etc.*
- *Eg: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile*

A range of information has been used to inform this development:

- SEND reforms under the Children and Families Act 2014
- Analysis of performance reviews and data with service providers
- Consultation with parents and carers
- Consultation with young people
- Consultation with stakeholder Heads of Services
- Benchmarking with other local authorities

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The 2012 school census showed that there were 10,274 pupils with SEND in Medway. This is 24 % of the school population, higher than the England and South East averages. Numbers are predicted to rise significantly by 5.5%.

SEND reforms require families with SEND children to be allocated a personal budget from which to support their needs from 1 September 2014. Not all children with a disability are SEN.

Accessibility for most short breaks is by self-referral. Evidence shows that many families are unaware of short break services and access none while other families access the full range.

Performance reviews with existing short break providers has identified strengths and weaknesses in provision:

Five consultation events have taken place during which 40 parents and carers have indicated which short break services they would like to access and how:

- Activities in the school holidays and after school ranging from providing skills/independence to doing sports and having fun
- More activities for the under 8's and for young people aged 17- 25
- Sibling and family based activities and holidays
- Day breaks, weekend and week respite to give families a break
- Specialist activities for specific conditions eg ADHD;schizophrenia
- Activities for children with physical or behavioural disability/wheelchair
- Activities for high functioning children and young people
- Specialist child care or babysitting opportunities
- Transport to access activities and respite
- Information, guidance and support about how to access short breaks
- Opportunities to build trust and relationships with providers
- Support with educational opportunities and expectations
- Information pack for families given out by health visitors and in children's wards
- Information on the range of funding and benefits available
- Funding to enable access to universal activities eg trampolining
- A card to show disability living allowance to avoid retelling story
- Knowing how and where to complain
- A network of families with similar circumstances

Parents/carers also advised us that they preferred to receive information by:

- Information pack given out by health visitors and on children's ward;

16 Young people advised us about services that were not currently working:

- Buses – too expensive or passes cannot be used at peak times

Also whether they would like to take up the offer of a short break if available:

- Responses yes 50%; maybe 25%; no 25%

How they would like to be involved or give ideas and comments in future:

- Information by emails; social media; through schools; letters; groups; presentations; attend board meetings; discussion groups; questionnaires; student unions

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And what the Local Offer website should look like and how they should be informed:

- Eye catching; consistent; easy to navigate; by emails; basic booklets/leaflets in key high street places; phone help; posters; website; adverts on You tube

Benchmarking with other local authorities has identified that robust outcomes based assessment of needs with the allocation of personal budgets reduced the need for overnight respite and developed the local market for increased and varied universal and targeted day, evening and weekend short breaks.

The options for the commissioning of future core short break services will be determined in a subsequent Gateway 1 paper in September.

### 3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to :

- Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups?
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't?

(insert ✓ in one or more boxes)

Protected characteristic groups	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	✓	✓	
Disability	✓	✓	
Gender reassignment			
Marriage/civil partnership			
Pregnancy/maternity			
Race			
Religion/belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation			
Other (eg low income groups)			

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## 4 Summary of the likely impacts

- *Who will be affected?*
- *How will they be affected?*

Families with disabled children will be assessed for services. Some (it is too early to know how many at this stage) families may not reach thresholds to receive a personal budget and to access targeted short breaks. Universal services may take time to become fully inclusive. Local services will respond to the diverse needs of families. Ultimately families will have control of their budgets and will shape the local market for short breaks. At this stage the other protected characteristics are not affected however this will be reviewed once the Gateway 1 and 0-25 service develops.

Advance equality by enabling more choice for families, may give access to families who previously would not have had the opportunity. Shaping the local market will ultimately enable better provision as providers react to consumer demand.

## 5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

- *Are there alternative providers?*
- *What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?*
- *Can demand for services be managed differently?*

Action below shows action that will be taken. In addition:

Key worker staff will be trained to manage the changes. Providers will be advised of the proposed changes and will be supported to develop thresholds and accessibility criteria and how to support the families that they work with. Some providers may decide to continue to deliver short breaks without Medway Council funding since not all short break provision is currently funded by Medway Council. Families will be advised about the proposed changes in their reviews with their social worker. The local offer new website (due March 2015) will publish clear and concise information for families about short break services and how to access these. It will also allow families to book services using their personal budget allocations and review services received.

Families will be consulted on their needs and the options available as part of the assessment process and in advance of the website going live.

## 6 Action plan

- *Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence*

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Analyse new outcomes based assessments of children to inform commissioning needs	Donna Mills	Sept 2014
Identify core short break needs to be commissioned	Donna Mills	Oct 2014

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Identify services to be de-commissioned	Donna Mills	Nov 2014
Develop and publish a framework tender in readiness for new short break needs	Donna Mills	Dec 2014
Commission holiday overnight stays for the individual/family	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Increase in sitting and befriending services including overnight sitting service	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Increase in holiday play scheme and after school clubs for disabled children	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Increase the participation in universal activities	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Provide support for young people leaving school – such as network clubs; accessible learning and employment opportunities post 19	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Commission short breaks for children with palliative care needs	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Commission family based overnight stays	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Identify services likely to be accessed by personal budgets	Donna Mills	Sept 2014
Work with Local Offer team to promote opportunities to parents/carers for personal budgets	Donna Mills	Sept 2014
Work with Local Offer/SDS team to provide support to parents/carers to understand and manage SDS	Donna Mills	Oct 2014
Increase available resource for Direct Payments/personal budgets	Donna Mills	Sept 2014
Liase with Local Offer team to better promote short break services	Donna Mills	Sept 2015
Short break specifications to include requirement for engagement mechanisms	Donna Mills	Oct 2014

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## 7 Recommendation

*The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be:*

- *to proceed with the change implementing action plan if appropriate*
- *consider alternatives*
- *gather further evidence*

*If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.*

To approve the mitigating actions outlined above and to authorise the new way of working

## 8 Authorisation

*The authorising officer is consenting that:*

- *the recommendation can be implemented*
- *sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned*
- *the Action Plan will be incorporated into service plan and monitored*

**Assistant Director**

Helen Jones

**Date**

Contact your Performance and Intelligence hub for advice on completing this assessment

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Send completed assessment to the Corporate Performance & Intelligence Hub (CPI) for web publication