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Kia ora koutou

**Carer Support – funded by the Ministry of Health:**

This letter/email is to let you know that we are extending the flexibility for Carer Support until 28 February 2021 that was implemented as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

While we are engaging with District Health Boards (DHBs) about these changes; these rules only apply if you have been allocated Carer Support through the Ministry of Health, not your DHB. Please contact your DHB for information about other supports if you have any further questions.

If you receive Carer Support from the Ministry of Health:

 **you must work within your current funding allocation;**

 you can continue to spend your Carer Support on any disability support or service that helps you to live your life or makes your life better, and that gives you a break from caring for your family member with a disability or; to provide a break for the disabled person. You can use the funding if it is reasonable and cost-effective and not funded through other funding options such as a Disability Allowance. You can find out about what is reasonable for you to buy and you can find out more information here: [[www.health.govt.nz/publication/what-people-can-buy-disability-funding-ministry-health-purchasing-guidelines](http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/what-people-can-buy-disability-funding-ministry-health-purchasing-guidelines)](http://www.health.govt.nz/publication/what-people-can-buy-disability-funding-ministry-health-purchasing-guidelines).

 you cannot use your Carer Support for the following:

- paying family carers who are either a family member living with a disabled person or a parent or a spouse;

- illegal activities, gambling or alcohol; or

- to pay for things that are not disability supports like rent/mortgage, food, personal debt, gifts, power, regular household items etc.

As it is up to you to choose what support or services to buy, it is your responsibility to make sure the respite is of good quality and covers all your requirements.

You will need to keep a simple record of what you have spent the money on when you buy items and keep a record of the receipt so that you can discuss at your next NASC review.

Please note that the timeframe for claims processing is 10 working days.

If you have any further questions, please contact your local Needs Assessment and Service Coordination service (NASC).

Ngā manaakitanga

**Adri Isbister
Deputy Director General
Disability**