



Flexible Respite Consultation Feedback

What this consultation was about

The Flexible Respite project was set up by the Department for Child Protection (DCP) to explore alternative respite options for foster and kinship carers that provide a 'respite-like' effect.

This follows a recommendation in Dr Fiona Arney's [Report of the Independent Inquiry into Foster and Kinship Care](#) that carers be offered flexible funding packages that can be used to pay for respite care placements, and other arrangements that support them in their crucial roles.

Who we spoke to

To understand a range of perspectives, we spoke to:

- Foster carers
- Kinship carers
- Children and young people with a care experience (The Mount Barker Young Person Council and [No Capes for Change](#) youth advocacy group)
- Non-governmental organisations that support family based carers
- Aboriginal community controlled organisations that support family based carers
- Peak representative body for carers ([Connecting Foster and Kinship Carers SA](#))
- Relevant DCP staff (including the Carer Payments team and the Aboriginal Practice Directorate)

What we asked

The consultation was focused on answering the following questions:

- What additional supports or services should be included in flexible respite packages for carers?
- What is the preferred method for carers to receive a flexible respite support payment?
 - Option A: The kinship care worker or support worker to assist the carer in choosing, managing, and organising services and supports
 - Option B: The carer to choose, manage, and organise services and supports themselves
 - Option C: Other method

Our approach

Between 9 July 2023 and 20 August 2023, DCP used the following approaches to hear from relevant communities:



5 in-person forums were held (with the option to join virtually)

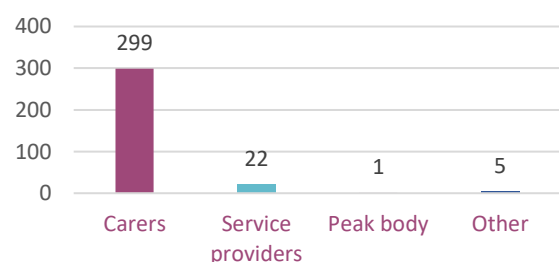


1 online forum was held



An online survey was available

Survey Respondents



What you told us

Additional supports and services

The most frequently requested types of ‘respite like’ options were:



Transport of children and young people



Babysitting and after school care



Car maintenance



Disability support services



Gardening



Supporting carers, children and young people with Sorry Business



Provision of ready-made meals



Cleaning



Extracurricular activities (for example, outings, concerts, or camps)

In-home respite was consistently reported as the best option for children and young people in care:

- Children and young people prefer to stay in their current home and with their primary carer wherever possible.
- If their primary carer is unavailable, they prefer to be cared for by people they already know or who are known to their primary carer.
- If their primary carer is unavailable, children and young people prefer for an additional carer to come into their home rather than going elsewhere for respite.

Method of payment

The majority of you who took part in consultations said that you would prefer carers to choose, manage, and organise services and supports themselves (Option B).

What happens next?

We are currently considering the feedback we have received and designing a flexible respite support solution that enables carers more flexibility to access the types of supports and services they said they need.



DCP sincerely thanks all who took the time to participate in these consultations and provide feedback.

We appreciate you.

We hear you.

We're working on improvements.