7th June 2019

Dear Customers, Parents and Carers

During the last 12 months Take-a-Break has continued to experience increases in running costs that are beyond the control of the organisation. To ensure we continue to provide a quality and sustainable service we will be making the following changes:

**Changes will be effective from Monday 8th July 2019.**

**Rate Increase**

Take-a-Break Warwickshire Limited will be increasing the hourly rate for all services to £15.90.

**1:1 Individual Community Based Service**

To access a session outside of the customer’s home, staff will support customers with the use of public transport or meet the customer at the agreed activity venue. Additional transport requests will be considered on an individual basis and will be subject to staff availability and an additional charge of 50p per mile. Customer and staff activity costs, including the costs of public transport remain payable by the customer.

**Adult Day Service - TABLO**

A number of key changes have been made to the Adult TABLO Day Service. We have located all daytime sessions to Hatters Space Community Centre, Nuneaton to provide a more consistent service based in one setting. Alongside this we have introduced a number of new activities to the existing programme, further increasing the number and range of activities available each day to provide more activities and choice. Customers accessing the TABLO day opportunity group sessions will only be offered transport where customers are attending a full day. Customers can continue to attend a half day without Take-a-Break transport.

**Group Services**

Across the organisation we have made changes to our existing groups and have relocated a number of groups to different venues to offer more choice and to increase the number and range of activities. Please see enclosed your updated Service Planner for the remainder of 2019-2020. This provides full details of the groups and activities taking place in each area and how to access them.

**Group Transport Changes and Charges**

The provision of a transport service is not part of our main service delivery, however, this has been historically provided by Take-a-Break to offer additional support to our customers and families. Our current transport model has become financially unsustainable to operate, this is due to both the increased direct costs of staff time and mileage and the ongoing management time involved in operating a complex transport service alongside our main service delivery. To address this, group transport will no longer be available to new referrals or for existing customers who are not already in receipt of transport. We would encourage all existing customers and parents and carers to manage their own transport needs to access Take-a-Break group services.

We will continue to offer a more controlled and costed transport service to our existing customers, however all transport will be dependent on staff capacity and availability. We recognise that due to limited staffing in some areas, transport has already been reduced and a number of our customers have already been through this process.

As Take-a-Break does not have access to specialist vehicles and all transport is provided by staff using their own private vehicles (this is subject to business insurance and required checks).

**The following transport charges will now apply:**

* A full service hour will be chargeable for transport to and from a group activity, this is based on a 30 minute charge either side of the group session for customers living within 8 miles of the venue
* We will consider transport requests for customers living more than 8 miles from the venue, this will be dependent on staff availability. A charge of 2 service hours will be applied for this transport, based on a 60 minute charge either side of the group session
* Charges will apply regardless of the actual time taken to travel to and from the group activity within the allocated 30/60 minutes either side of the group session
* Charges will apply per customer regardless of the number of customers in the vehicle

**We are no longer be able to support with the following:**

* Transport customer’s large specialist mobility equipment, as we are unable to guarantee the size make or model of staff vehicles
* Provide staff escorts
* Support with taking customers to, or collect from, respite stays and alternative addresses

The above measures were agreed by the Board of Trustees on 25th March 2019. We fully understand the impact this may have on some of our customers, parents and carers and would like to reassure you that changes we have made are necessary to ensure the future of Take-a-Break.

One of our Care Co-ordinators will contact you to arrange a review to discuss any changes and plan your service for the remainder of 2019-2020. If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact you the office on 02476 644909.

Yours faithfully

Samantha Tysoe

Director