

Keeping Warm in Yorkshire and Humber: briefing document

Purpose: Information and clarification

Background

A number of organisations came together to secure funding from the Department of Health 'Warm Homes, Healthy People Fund for 2012 for a project to help staff to plan and prepare more effectively, in line with the Cold Weather Plan for England. The project funding is hosted by Rotherham MBC and NHS Rotherham, on behalf of all the partners.

What is the problem and why are we doing this work?

Last year across Yorkshire and the Humber 2754¹ people are estimated to have died from illness due to being too cold in their own homes (see below for local breakdowns). These were preventable deaths and by encouraging people to take simple actions and invest in future warmth, we believe we can reduce the impact of cold weather and improve the lives of some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Under the Cold Weather Plan² local organisations and individuals are expected to take certain actions at each of four levels:-

- 1 - long term planning and winter preparedness
- 2 - alert and readiness
- 3 - severe weather action
- 4 – Major incident & emergency response.

What are we trying to achieve?

To make sure that vulnerable older people receive correct, clear, consistent, useful and actionable advice and information from the local organisations they come into contact with, in line with the 'four stages of preparedness' in the cold weather plan.

Why 'older' people?

Many different groups within society can be considered 'vulnerable' to the adverse affects of cold weather. However, for this project we are targeting the people who we consider to be most at risk of serious illness or even death.

The person may be;	They may have health problems including;	Their circumstances may include;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over 75 years old• Elderly and living alone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frail• Pre-existing cardiovascular or respiratory illnesses and other chronic medical conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living in deprived circumstances• Living in a home with mould• Being fuel poor (needing to

¹ Three year average per Local Authority area. Source: Yorkshire and Humber Public Health Observatory 2011

² Cold Weather Plan for England: Protecting health and reducing harm from severe cold weather – The Department of Health November 2011

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe mental illness or Dementia 	spend 10% or more of household income on heating the home)
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How will we achieve this?

Working collaboratively to produce a package of tools and resources to help staff to plan, prepare and communicate with older people, their families and carers, about keeping warm in winter.

We will build on the latest insights from research into what older people believe and do and the most effective ways to help them. Developing and using a common set of tools should increase the impact and effectiveness of communication and help to build greater understanding within local organisations about how to work together on this aspect of their winter plans. It should also reduce duplicated effort, freeing up staff time and resources.

Who is involved?

The following organisations are involved;

- The NHS
- Local Authority
- Department for Work and Pensions
- AGE UK
- Sheffield Hallam University
- National Energy Action
- Department of Health
- The Yorkshire and Humber Public Health Observatory

Spread the word

Please pass this briefing on to anyone within your network who may benefit from the information within it.

Local breakdowns

Area	Excess Winter Deaths	Area	Excess Winter Deaths
Selby	59	East Riding	192
Craven	50	Hambleton	44
Rotherham	188	North East Lincs	93
Doncaster	215	Leeds	350
Richmondshire	27	Barnsley	122
Ryedale	34	Wakefield	163
York	101	Scarborough	66
Kingston upon Hull	144	Bradford	217
Sheffield	284	Kirklees	171
North Lincs	93	Calderdale	82
		Harrogate	61

Three year average 2006/07 to 2008/09 – Source Yorkshire and Humber Public Health Observatory 2011

Contact details

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