



Keep Warm and Healthy 2013/14 - *Make every contact count*

Cold weather is arriving so here is the ES check list for everyone who is in contact with vulnerable families, individuals and couples - specially those in the PRS or privately owned homes.

Keeping the home warm

Whatever the reason for your visit or telephone contact with a resident, establish if they are having problems paying their energy bills, or keeping their homes warm.

The World Health Organisation states that in the UK the ideal temperature for main living rooms - including lounge, kitchen, hallway is 21 degrees Centigrade, and for bedrooms 18 degrees Centigrade.

But remember, for some elderly or sick people, or families with small children, they may need bedrooms to be warmer at 21 degrees.

This puts pressure on elderly people and families with small children, as energy consumption could be as much as 35,000 kilowatt hours a year, which depending on the level of insulation and energy efficiency of their home could cost between £1500 and £2250 a year.

You'll probably come across some households that won't spend the money - even if they have it in the bank. A recent case revealed that an elderly gentleman with COPD, cancer and other mobility issues, was only spending £800 a year on heat! This could easily affect his condition and put him at real risk of an acute, non elective hospital admission if the temperature in the house fell consistently below 16 degrees. So a little gentle persuasion is advised to make sure the issues are clear.

- Temperatures that are lower than 16 degrees appear to impair respiratory functions.
- Temperatures below 12 degrees place strain on the cardiovascular system.
- Temperatures below 6 degrees place people at risk of hypothermia.

Where families, especially when there are children under 5 are at risk of severe cold please use our on-line referral form <http://keepwarmandhealthy.org.uk/partner-referral> and we'll arrange a home visit to see what we can do to help them.

Our response to your referral

Once we get your referral we will call your resident and ask a few questions about their immediate situation. Then we'll arrange a home visit to assess whole picture.

Firstly we'll deal with any debt issues, immediately relieving stress. Then we'll check benefits, sort out ongoing energy payments, check the heating system condition and whether the home is insulated, and explain everyday ways to save energy.

If there are qualifying benefits, we can help them access heating system repairs and upgrades, and get their homes adequately insulated.

Emergency Heaters

We have a limited stock of oil filled radiators which can be delivered to homes where the heating system has broken down, simply use our referral form <http://keepwarmandhealthy.org.uk/partner-referral> or call our freephone number **0800 169 5693**.

Fuel Debt

If you speak to residents who have large debts to the energy companies ask if they'd mind being referred directly to Energy Solutions home visiting team and use this weblink <http://keepwarmandhealthy.org.uk/partner-referral>. Just fill in the main contact details and any specific details you think we should know about.



Simple ways to keep warm at home

Set the timer to come on earlier in cold weather and go off later rather than raising the temperature on the thermostat

Wear layers of clothing, and if it's very cold indoors keep hands and feet warm with thermal socks and gloves

Keep moving

Use rolled up newspapers to block draughts around windows and doors or DIY 'sausage dog' draught excluders

Make sure the area in front of the radiators are kept clear to allow the warm air to circulate, armchairs and settees in front of radiators simply absorb the heat with no benefit to you

Allow sunlight into the home to warm up the rooms during daylight, and close the curtains at dusk

Keep the body 'topped up' with warm and nourishing food - porridge, soups, bread, stews, rice and pasta dishes

Discounts and Payments

Ensure that benefit qualifying households are getting all the heat discounts and allowances that are available these include:

Warm Home Discount.

Pensioners qualify for £135.00 electricity credit to their bill or pre-payment meter, if on the 'qualifying day' (20 July 2013) the supplier was part of the scheme, the name (or partner's) was on the bill and were either:

- 75 or over and getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Saving Credit)
- under 75 and only getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (you won't qualify if you also get Savings Credit)

Customers who get a letter from the Warm Home Discount Team should carefully read the instructions and follow them. If they don't get the letter they should phone their energy supplier and ask about it.

Winter Fuel Payment

Pensioners could get between **£100 and £300** tax-free to help pay heating bills if they were born on or before 5 January 1952. This is known as a 'Winter Fuel Payment'. Most payments are made automatically between November and February.

Winter Fuel Payment is paid automatically if the resident gets the State Pension or another social security benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction or Child Benefit). If they have only just turned sixty it's advisable to chase up the Department of Work and Pensions.

If they [qualify](#) but don't get paid automatically, they'll need to [make a claim](#).

Payments won't affect other benefits.

Cold weather payment

Cold Weather Payment may be made if claimants are getting [certain benefits](#).

Payments are made when the local temperature is either recorded as, or forecast to be, an average of zero degrees Celsius or below over 7 consecutive days.

The payment is £25 for each 7 day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March.



Pension Credit

Cold Weather Payments are usually paid if the claimant gets [Pension Credit](#).

Income Support and income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

Cold Weather Payments are usually paid if the person gets [Income Support](#) or income-based [Jobseeker's Allowance](#) and have any of the following:

- a disability or pensioner premium
- a child who is disabled
- [Child Tax Credit](#) that includes a disability or severe disability element
- a child under 5 living with them

Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

You'll usually get Cold Weather Payments if you get [income-related ESA](#) and have any of the following:

- the support or work-related component of ESA
- a severe or enhanced disability premium
- a pensioner premium
- a child who is disabled
- [Child Tax Credit](#) that includes a disability or severe disability element
- a child under 5 living with them

Universal Credit

Cold Weather Payments is paid if the claimant gets [Universal Credit](#), is not employed or is self employed and one of the following apply:

- the limited capability for work element (with or without a work-related activity element)
- they get the disabled child element in their claim
- they have a child under 5 living with them

They'll also be eligible if they have a disabled child element in their claim, whether they are employed or not.

Queries? contact David Rose: david@energysolutions.org.uk Tel: 0208 201 4364 / 07971590240