

Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes

Brighton & Hove City Council Action Plan in Response to NICE Guidelines

Proposed schedule of meetings

- 1st June 2015 - Health Protection Forum
- 7th July 2015 & 9th November 2015 - Strategic Housing Partnership
- 23rd September 2015 & 13th January 2016 - Housing Committee
- 20th October 2015 & 2nd February 2016 – Health & Wellbeing Board

Recommendation	Who should take action	What we are doing	Further action
<p>1. Develop a strategy</p> <p>Include the health consequences of living in a cold home in the joint strategic needs assessment process.</p> <p>Develop a strategy to address the health consequences of cold homes.</p> <p>Ensure planning includes identifying relevant local interventions and providers from all sectors (such as relevant local authority departments, the health sector, utilities, housing organisations and organisations in the voluntary sector).</p>	<p>Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB)</p>	<p>Risks and challenges are reflected in the following key documents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold Weather Plan (CWP) • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) • Housing Strategy • Housing Revenue 	<p>1.1 Pull together relevant work streams, existing policy and sections of relevant existing strategy to develop an overarching Fuel Poverty & Affordable Warmth Strategy for B&H</p> <p>1.2 Set into HWB annual reporting timetable</p> <p>1.3 Establish cross sector Fuel Poverty & Affordable Warmth working group to</p>

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<p>Consider how the issues and actions identified are reflected in health and wellbeing and other relevant local strategies or plans and ensure actions take account of other local and national strategies.</p> <p>Ensure the strategy includes monitoring and evaluation. Also ensure any evaluation is used to improve the strategy and is made publicly available</p>		<p>Account (HRA) capital programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Public Health Annual Report • One Planet Living Sustainability Action Plan 	<p>deliver related action plan and monitor progress. Membership to include BHCC Housing, Public Health, ASC & Children's Services; NHS/CCG; CVS; ESFRS; Landlords, including RPs (housing associations); Gas network operator (SGN); District Network Operator for electricity (EDF).</p>
<p>2. Ensure there is a single-point-of-contact health and housing referral service for people living in cold homes Ensure the referral service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes account of existing services. • Involves face-to-face contact, if necessary, with the person using the service, their families and their carers. • Works with the person and their carers to identify problems caused by living in a cold home and the possible solutions. • Makes it clear to the person and their carer what actions are planned (or taking place) and coordinates activities to minimise disruption in the home. • Encourages self-referrals using a free phone number. • Monitors and evaluates the impact of actions taken and gives feedback to the practitioner or agency that originally referred the person. 	<p>HWB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and advice to Citizens Advice Bureau bid to British Gas Energy Trust, for funding to implement single-point-of-contact health and housing referral service. • Compiling learning from the Warmth for Wellbeing (WfW) pilot project • Advice and support on fuel poverty and cold homes through the Welfare 	<p>2.1 Report findings and learning from WfW and identify potential longer term funding for city-wide scheme/single point of contact for cold home referrals</p> <p>2.2 Ensure learnings from DECC funded trials of 'Warmth on Prescription' schemes are used to inform any future local development (Explore any potential future funding from this source)</p> <p>2.3 Review current Moneyworks commission</p>

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		<p>Benefits Advice Service in selected general practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer-all into Private Sector Housing (PSH), part of Council Housing department, previously trialled • Links with community and voluntary sector (CVS) and Advice Partnership through Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) Programme & CWP • Brighton & Hove Energy services Company (BHESCO) help desk operates on an ad hoc basis dependent on available resource and funding. • Moneyworks commission includes giving 	<p>to establish scope for this to be single-point-of-contact (SPoC)</p>

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		advice on fuel poverty, debt and welfare benefits	
<p>3. Provide tailored solutions via the single- point-of-contact health and housing referral service for people living in cold homes</p> <p>Solutions should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing insulation and heating improvement programmes and grants. Programmes should be led, or endorsed, by the local authority and include those available from energy suppliers • Advice on managing energy effectively in the home and securing the most appropriate fuel tariff and billing system (including collective purchasing schemes, if available) • Help to ensure all due benefits are being claimed • Registration on priority services registers • Advice on how to avoid the health risks of living in a cold home • Access to, and coordination of, services that address common barriers to tackling cold homes. For example, access to home improvement agencies that can fix a leaking roof, or to voluntary groups that can help clear a loft ready for insulation. • Short-term emergency support in times of crisis (for instance, room heaters if the central heating breaks down or access to short-term credit) 	<p>HWB; BHCC; housing providers; energy utility and distribution companies; faith and voluntary sector organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Your Energy Sussex (YES) • Advice and support on fuel poverty and cold homes through the Welfare Benefits Advice Service in selected general practices • Your Energy Sussex /Community Energy South – ‘Sussex Energy Tariff’ • Ad hoc switching advice sessions / energy cafes • Mears Home Improvement Agency • Annual WHHP Programme • HRA capital works programme & Asset Management Strategy 	<p>3.1 Ensure any review of Housing commissioning including review of Home Improvement Agency takes into account need to have robust housing options service in place that is advertised to partners across the city</p> <p>3.2 Consider commission of new service or develop Moneyworks commission</p> <p>3.3 Ensure any opportunities presented by changes to ECO funding are maximised by BHCC/YES</p> <p>3.4 Explore funding streams from national government/ EU and other sources as they become available to assist in funding measures for Brighton & Hove residents</p> <p>3.5 Further exploration of energy switching, Sussex Energy Tariff</p>

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<p>4. Identify people at risk of ill health from living in a cold home Primary health and home care practitioners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with relevant local authority departments, use existing data, professional contacts and knowledge to identify people who live in cold or hard-to-heat homes • Include this information in the person's records and use it (with their consent) to assess their risk and take action, if necessary (see recommendations 2 and 3). • Ensure data sharing issues are addressed so that people at risk can be identified. 	<p>Primary health and home care practitioners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual WHHP programme provides advice and information to workers across BHCC, NHS & CVS to increase awareness and facilitate identification of at risk patients and clients. • Previous fuel poverty awareness training sessions • Work with CCG, GPs and clinical teams to identify and refer at risk patients through WHHP Programmes and previous WfW pilot project. • Liaising with CCG Clinical Lead for Sustainability re. opportunities to utilise the newly developed risk 	<p>4.1 Address data sharing issues as part of broader arrangements 4.2 Further engagement with health and care providers across the city 4.3 Engage with Home Care practitioners, review guidance from DECC re. data sharing 4.4 Develop e-learning package / training strategy and enable provision to a broad range of local practitioners 4.5 Engage with health provider Learning & Development teams</p>

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		stratification tool to identify vulnerable patients.	
<p>5. Make every contact count by assessing the heating needs of people who use primary health and home care services Primary health and home care practitioners should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least once a year, assess the heating needs of people who use their services, whether during a home visit or elsewhere, taking into account the needs of groups who are vulnerable to the cold. • Use their time with people to assess whether they (or another member of the household) are experiencing (or are likely to experience) difficulties keeping their home warm enough. • Be aware that living in a cold home may have a greater effect on people who have to spend longer than an average amount of time at home. This could include those with chronic health conditions (including terminal illnesses) or disabilities. • Be aware that people may not want to admit they are having difficulties paying for heating and may try to hide this. (For instance, they might only put the heating on when expecting a scheduled home visit.) • Give people at risk, and their carers, information about how living in a cold home can affect their health. They should also tell them about services that can help and refer them if necessary. Ensure recipients can understand and act on the 	Primary health and home care practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous fuel poverty training provided to frontline workers 	<p>5.1 Embed training into corporate / Adult Social Care (ASC) training programmes 5.2 Engage with health provider L&D teams 5.3 Work with CCG, Community NHS trust (including through the 'Better Care' programme) to engage relevant health professionals/GP practices/teams to assess and refer on</p>

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<p>information they are given.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a cold home is a risk to someone's health and wellbeing, assess the likely effect and identify how the situation could be improved. Make sure relevant services are aware who will take action and when. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ referral to the local health and housing service ○ referral to a health service (for instance, to ensure the person is offered flu vaccinations at the start of the winter). • Record assessments and actions in the person's notes or care plans. Make this information available to other practitioners, while respecting confidentiality. 			
<p>6. Non-health and social care workers who visit people at home should assess their heating needs</p> <p>People who do not work in health and social care services but who visit people at home (see who should take action?) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer anyone who needs help with the problems of living in a cold home to the local single-point-of-contact health and housing referral service, if they give their consent (see recommendations 2 and 3). • Give people who may be vulnerable to the cold information on the effect that living in a cold home can have on their 	<p>People who do not work in health and social care services but who visit people at home, for instance: to carry out housing repairs, to read or install meters (including the installation of smart meters), or to provide general support or to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel poverty training to front line practitioners from a range of services 	<p>6.1 Train relevant ESFRS staff 6.2 Train and share information with contractors in the Your Energy Sussex supply chain 6.3 Work with Green Growth Platform and the Sustainable Business Partnership to train and inform local businesses</p>

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<p>health and what can be done to remedy this.</p>	<p>socialise. This includes: faith and voluntary sector organisations; energy utility and distribution companies; housing professionals; installation and maintenance contractors</p>		
<p>7. Discharge vulnerable people from health or social care settings to a warm home Those responsible for arranging and helping with someone's discharge from a health or social care setting (see who should take action?) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether the person is likely to be vulnerable to the cold and if action is needed to make their home warm enough for them to return to. This assessment should take place at any time of the year, not just during colder weather, and well before they are due to be discharged to allow time for remedial action. For instance, it could take place soon after admission or when planning a booked admission. • As part of the planned discharge, coordinate the efforts of all the practitioners involved to ensure the home is warm enough. This could include simple measures such as turning on the heating before discharge, providing advice on the ill effects of cold on health, or providing advice on how to use 	<p>Secondary healthcare practitioners; social care practitioners</p>	<p>To confirm current discharge planning with BSUH NHS Trust</p>	<p>7.1 Provide information to workers involved in discharge process at Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust on risks and support available to patients and carers 7.2 Engage relevant workers to make early referrals for housing improvements</p>

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<p>the heating system. (It could also involve more complex measures – see below.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If needed, refer the person to the local single-point-of-contact health and housing referral system (see recommendations 2 and 3). For example, refer them if the heating system needs replacing or the property needs insulating, or to prevent or address fuel debt. (The latter may accrue during someone's stay in health or social care accommodation.) • Ensure any heating issues are resolved in a timely manner, so as not to delay discharge from hospital. 			
<p>8. Train health and social care practitioners to help people whose homes may be too cold Training providers for health and social care practitioners (see who should take action?) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure training to support continuing professional development includes detail on the effect on health and wellbeing of living in a cold home and the benefits of addressing this issue (for example, insulation could save money on heating bills). • Ensure ongoing training programmes raise awareness of local systems and services to help people who are living in homes that are too cold for their health. • Ensure practitioners can raise the issue of living in a home that is too cold. They should also be able to advise on 	<p>NHS England, universities and other training providers. This includes: accredited agencies that train practitioners in environmental health, nursing and allied professions, medicine and para-medicine, environmental health and housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous WHHP fuel poverty awareness training • NEA training • BESN training delivered by BHESCO 	<p>8.1 Embed training into corporate / ASC training programmes and explore options for sharing this with 3rd sector and private providers 8.2 Engage with Brighton and Sussex Medical School and University of Brighton nursing and midwifery to check forms part of syllabus</p>

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sources of support and help and know how to refer someone, if necessary.			
<p>9. Train housing professionals and faith and voluntary sector workers to help people whose homes may be too cold for their health and wellbeing</p> <p>Training providers for housing professionals and for people working in the faith and voluntary sector (see who should take action?) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure those in contact with people who may be vulnerable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are aware of how cold housing can affect people's health and wellbeing ○ can spot when and how someone is at risk of being too cold at home ○ know of local services designed to address these problems ○ understand how to refer someone for help. 	<p>Training providers including:</p> <p>Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Chartered Institute of Housing, National Council for Voluntary Organisations, National Association for Community and Voluntary Action, National Housing Federation, Board Development Agency, further education colleges and accredited NVQ training agencies, universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous WHHP fuel poverty awareness training • NEA training • Big Energy Saving Network training delivered by BHESCO • HRA staff trained and engaged in schemes targeted at Council Housing Tenants 	<p>9.1 Work through the Strategic Housing Partnership to share learning and training opportunities amongst all housing workers</p> <p>9.2 Explore opportunities to share learning/training packages with local CVS groups through Community Works and local faith networks</p>

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<p>10. Train heating engineers, meter installers and those providing building insulation to help vulnerable people at home</p> <p>Employers who install and maintain heating systems, electricity and gas meters and building insulation and those involved in employee training (see who should take action?) should ensure employees who visit vulnerable people are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained to deal sensitively with the needs of the person they are visiting. For instance, they should provide information about the work they are doing in a form that can easily be understood by the recipient. • Aware of how a cold home can affect someone's health and are able to spot if someone is vulnerable to the cold and the risks they are facing. • Able to identify if ventilation is adequate – and know how to put this right if it is not. This includes knowing who to call if there is a problem. • Given accreditation for these skills. 	<p>Employers who install and maintain heating systems, electricity and gas meters and building insulation; training providers including energy utility and distribution companies, further education colleges and accredited NVQ training agencies</p>		<p>10.1 Through Your Energy Sussex, Green Growth Platform and Sustainable Business Partnership work with local supply chain to ensure heating engineers have information on support available and referral options</p>

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<p>11. Raise awareness among practitioners and the public about how to keep warm at home Health and wellbeing boards, Public Health England and the Department of Energy and Climate Change should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure up-to-date information is available in appropriate formats for both practitioners and the public on how cold homes can affect people's health. • Address commonly held misconceptions, for instance, that drinking alcohol can help keep someone warm, that hypothermia is the main health problem caused by the cold, or that sleeping in a cold bedroom is good for your health. • Ensure up-to-date details of national and local support is available for both practitioners and the public. This support might include: help to improve the fabric of the housing or the heating system; help to make heating the home more affordable; or general advice on how to keep warm. • Ensure national advice takes into account local and regional variations in the kind of support offered. 	<p>HWB; Public Health England; the Department of Energy and Climate Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous WHHP fuel poverty awareness training and outreach workshops • Information and advice leaflets and room thermometer cards provided through WHHP • NEA training • BESN training delivered by BHESCO • BHCC web pages 	<p>11.1 Build on previous WHHP Programmes to run annual public awareness campaigns</p> <p>11.2 Work with healthy living pharmacies in the city to link with related winter campaigns such as flu.</p> <p>11.3 Utilise Public Health England NHS Winter Campaign and associated marketing and resources.</p>
<p>12. Ensure buildings meet ventilation and other building and trading standards Building control officers, housing officers, environmental health officers and trading standards officers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure changes to buildings are carried out at least to the standards required by building regulations, in particular with 	<p>Building control officers; housing officers; environmental health officers; trading standards officers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Housing team inspections and visits, advice on condensation and mould leaflet • Previous promotion 	<p>12.1 Target training and information at housing officers, building control and trading standards officers</p> <p>12.2 Ensure alignment to new regulations on Energy Efficiency in Private</p>

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<p>respect to ventilation (see the government's Planning portal).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use existing powers to identify housing (particularly in the private rented sector) that may expose vulnerable residents (see recommendation 5) to the cold. Existing powers fall under both the housing health and safety rating system and trading standards legislation (in relation to energy performance certificates). <p>Ensure any relevant problems are addressed.</p>		<p>of Private Sector Housing Team and referral route to GPs</p>	<p>Rented Sector and monitoring of this locally</p>

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