Cold Weather Plan for England 2012: Action cards for Cold Weather Alert Service

Health, social care and local authorities: providers

Level 0 Long-term planning *All year*

- Ensure that you are engaged with local EPRR and other strategic arrangements as these develop – especially for winter planning
- Ensure that your organisation can identify those most vulnerable to cold weather and draw up plans for joined-up support with partner organisations. Agree data-sharing arrangements within information governance principles (see section 7.2, *Supporting the Case*)
- Assess the longer-term implications of climate change; reduction in carbon emissions; and sustainability for longer-term business continuity
- Consider how best to mobilise and engage community organisations and support the development of community emergency plans

Level 1 Winter preparedness programme *1 November–31 March*

- Undertake internal reviews to ensure that CWAs are going to the right staff and that appropriate actions are agreed and able to be implemented when received, especially to protect vulnerable patients and clients
- Make sure that staff have identified all those vulnerable to cold weather and that arrangements are in place to support and protect them appropriately
- Work with partner agencies to coordinate cold weather plans. Ensure data-sharing and referral arrangements are in place. Work with environmental health officers on HHSRS hazard identification.
- Work with partners and staff on risk reduction awareness (e.g. flu jabs for staff), information and education
- Work across all local authority teams to identify accident hotspots on the pavements or roads. Advise on gritting priorities to prevent accidents in icy weather and ensure access by utilities and other essential services
- Provide a flu vaccination programme to all front-line staff and encourage staff to be vaccinated*
- Ensure that there is a business continuity plan for severe winter weather. Plan for a winter surge in demand for services.

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Level 2 Severe winter weather is forecast – Alert and readiness

Mean temperature of 2°C and/or widespread ice and heavy snow are predicted within 48 hours, with 60% confidence

- Communicate alerts to staff and ensure that locally agreed Cold Weather Plan actions take place, especially those to protect vulnerable patients and clients
- Implement local actions for the vulnerable
- Consider how to maintain regular contact as required
- Ensure staff undertake appropriate home checks when visiting clients (e.g. room temperature, medications, food supplies etc.)
- Consider carers' needs and the support they can continue to give
- Hospitals and care, residential and nursing homes: ensure that rooms, particularly living rooms and bedrooms, are kept warm (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2, Cold Weather Plan)
- Activate business continuity arrangements and emergency plans as required. Activate plans to deal with a surge in demand for services

Level 3 Response to severe winter weather – Severe weather action

Severe winter weather is now occurring: mean temperature 2°C or less and/or widespread ice and heavy snow

- Communicate alerts to staff and ensure that locally agreed actions take place, especially those to protect vulnerable patients and clients
- Implement local plans for contacting the vulnerable. Consider daily visits/phone calls for high-risk individuals living on their own who have no regular contacts
- Ensure carers are receiving appropriate advice and support
- Implement plans to deal with surge in demand
- Implement business continuity arrangements

Level 4 Major incident – Emergency response

Central Government will declare a Level 4 alert in the event of severe or prolonged cold weather affecting sectors other than health

- All Level 3 responsibilities must be maintained during a Level 4 incident
- Implementation of national emergency response arrangements by central Government
- Continue to implement business continuity arrangements