

# Keeping people you care for safe during hot weather



## Ensuring the safety of those you care for during hot weather

Severe heat can be dangerous and even prove fatal in some cases.

As a provider of services, you will need to ensure the people you support /care for are protected from the effects of hot weather.

Some people are more vulnerable to hot weather than others. Some of the factors that increase people's risk include but are not limited to, age, chronic or severe illness, some medications and those who are unable to adapt their behaviour to keep cool.

### Be prepared:

To help your service prepare for periods of hot weather you should;

- Register for weather alerts with the Met Office [Met Office Alerts](#)
- Consider which of your clients may be at risk (ask primary care staff if unsure) and document it in their care plan.

### Clients

Ensure that you have protocols to monitor those most at risk and to provide additional care and support.

Check body temperature, heart and breathing rates, blood pressure and hydration levels.

Watch for any changes in behaviour, especially excessive drowsiness.

Watch for signs of headache, unusual tiredness, weakness, giddiness, disorientation or sleeping problems.

A damp cloth on the back of the neck helps with temperature regulation.

Discourage clients from physical activity and going out during the hottest part of the day (11am to 3pm).

Apply Sun cream every 2 hours if clients are outside.

### Environment

Monitor and record indoor temperatures.

Keep curtains closed especially in rooms when the sunlight comes through.

Be aware plastic pads and mattresses can be particularly hot during a hotter weather.

Create cool rooms cool areas 26° c or below.

Once the temperature outside has dropped lower than the temperature inside, open the windows - this may not be until very late at night or the early hours of the morning.

Turn off unnecessary electrical equipment and lighting.

## **Fans**

Do not aim directly at the body.

Keep a good distance away from the body.

Ensure the person has regular access to drinks, as fans can cause dehydration.

Ensure they are kept clean as part of a regular cleaning schedule.

**During an infectious illness outbreak seek advice from IPC colleagues about fan use**

## **Clothing**

Ensure clients have light, loose fitting clothing to wear.

Hats should be worn outside and shade the face, neck, and ears.

## **Food and water**

Ensure clients and staff have ability to access regular cold drinks.

Monitor client's fluid intake particularly if they are not able to drink unaided.

Consider plans to adapt to cold meals with high water content.

Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and hot drinks.

## **Staff**

Ensure sufficient staffing and contingency planning.

Ensure staff keep hydrated throughout the day.

## **Signs and symptoms**

If you suspect someone has heat stroke dial 999 [Heat exhaustion and heatstroke - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

## **Additional resources**

For more in-depth information for care managers and staff: [Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave: for care home managers and staff - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Heatwave Plan for England: Protecting health and reducing harm from severe heat and heatwaves \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)