

Top tips for hot weather

Summer is here!

Most of us enjoy sunny weather, but extreme heat can affect fit and healthy people as well as the vulnerable. It can potentially cause serious discomfort or worse, seriously damage people's health. During the warm summer months, make sure the hot weather doesn't harm you, anyone you know or anyone you support in your job role.

So what is a heat wave?

A heat wave occurs when temperatures remain really high day after day and they can occur suddenly, with rapid temperature rises. During the heat wave of 2003 over 2000 excess deaths were recorded across England and Wales; it is for this reason that we must put measures into place to protect vulnerable people. However, it is also important to be aware that our staff/volunteers may struggle in a heat wave; particularly those who work in kitchens; have physical duties or work outdoors!

It's all in the preparation!

The Heat wave Plan for England provides advice and guidance on preparing care services and has some basic measures for minimising the risks for vulnerable people:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england>

The 'at risk' groups are:

- Older people (especially those over 75)
- Babies and young children
- People with mental health problems
- People on certain medications
- People with a serious chronic condition, particularly those with cardiovascular or respiratory diseases
- People who abuse alcohol or drugs
- People with mobility problems
- People who are unable to adapt their behaviour to keep cool, including those with cognitive difficulties such as Alzheimer's, those with a disability or who are bed-bound
- People who are physically very active (such as manual workers who work outdoors)



Everyone involved in providing services to vulnerable people and all managers of services that could be affected by a heat wave should be prepared. Good preparation should start with raising awareness across staff teams and identifying service users who might be made more vulnerable because of excess heat.

continued overleaf...

Introduction



The NACC has put together useful resource leaflets to help in your planning, including information on:

- Heat related illness
- Tips on how to keep cool
- Guidance for staff working in kitchens
- Posters and guidance to help you keep your service users and staff hydrated

Heat wave Alert Levels

Finally, as we enter the 'official' summer months (1 June to 15 September each year) please sign up to the Met Office's Heat-Health Watch system. The Met Office provides essential heat wave information through this system. There are five alert levels (0-4) based on average temperature thresholds (30°C in the daytime 15°C at night time).

Information can be found on the Met Office Website (www.metoffice.gov.uk).

They can also be contacted by phone: 0870 900 0100 or 01392 885680/01392 885681 or fax: 0870 900 5050.



There is lots of useful information out there. Please follow the links below to authoritative guidance which forms part of the governments' Heat wave Plan for England.

1. Looking after yourself and others during hot weather
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/310608/10091-2902332-TSO-Looking_after_yourself_ACCESSIBLE.pdf
2. Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heat wave. Advice for care home managers and staff
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/310606/10090-2902330-TSO-Heatwave-Care_Home_Managers_ACCESSIBLE.pdf
3. Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heat wave. Advice for health and social care professionals
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/310605/10089-2902329-TSO-Heatwave-Advice_for_Health_Professionals_ACCESSIBLE.pdf

