

Practice Briefing

Warm Homes, Healthy People Scheme

What is it?

A partnership project aiming to reduce the incidents of ill health linked to cold homes. Public Health Suffolk together with the District and Borough Councils has devised a home based service to help patients identify the causes of high fuel bills and cold homes. The project offers a range of solutions to tackle these problems in a holistic way. Reducing burdens on the health service.

How does it work?

Practices are asked to identify patients who they feel are vulnerable due to their health and housing circumstances and who may benefit from extra support. Support includes; financial assistance with emergency heating and boiler repairs, emergency fuel payments, home-based energy advice delivered by trained assessors, energy efficiency improvements, benefit checks and fuel debt advice. Eligibility criteria apply.

Who is this for?

Patients:

- Over 65 years old
- Frail
- Suffering from respiratory conditions or recently being hospitalised for chronic respiratory disease (asthma, COPD), influenza or pneumonia?
- Suffering from cardiovascular diseases or recently being hospitalised for coronary heart disease, high blood pressure or stroke?
- Suffering from dementia, Alzheimer's disease or severe mental illness?
- Having arthritis, limited mobility or being at risk of falls?
- With learning disabilities?
- Under 5 years old



Refer this patient to the Warm Houses Healthy People Fund by emailing warmhomereferrals@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk. This is a confidential and secure email. Please send via your nhs.net account

Please include;

- Patient's name
- Patient's address
- Patient's contact details
- How the patient meets the criteria

A liaison officer will contact the patient directly to make arrangements for support.

OR - Patients can self refer by calling 08456 037 686

Case Study

Pamela has been diagnosed with ME, mitochondrial failure and sleep apnoea. Her heating had not been working properly for 2 years. The radiator valves were stuck on some of the radiators resulting in radiators only working in the toilet, hall and bedroom. As this was not heating the rooms Pamela lived in she decided to get convector heaters for the lounge and bedroom and to turn off the central heating as it was not effective in keeping her warm. This additional heating was expensive to run.

Warm Homes Healthy People provided a temporary heater on the day of the home energy survey. Pamela then had heaters in the living room, bedroom and bathroom whilst quotations were sought for the heating system repair. Once quotations were received, Warm Homes Healthy People approved the works within one week and contributed to the cost of the repair. The heating system was power-flushed and the radiator valves were repaired, leaving Pamela with a fully operational central heating system.

Pamela also benefited from a £100 winter fuel payment being credited to her energy bill. A cold house impacted negatively on Pamela as she needs warmth to ease the pain. Changes in temperature also made her feel worse, this included moving from a cool, to a warm room as she felt increasingly ill and was prone to over-heating even when the room temperature was cool. Since having the heating repair Pamela has been more mobile around the house with fewer problems moving from room to room, she can also shower comfortably. Pamela feels better physically; she is happier and has fewer episodes of overheating and pain. The fuel payment was also very helpful, Pamela has not worried about having the heating on and her direct debit has gone down.