Fuel Poverty Referrals and Toolkits – Leading the way...

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Anthony Ball
Public Health Cornwall Council

William Baker
Citizens Advice
### National Review of Projects to Address Health Impacts of Cold Homes for Vulnerable and Fuel Poor Households

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<tr>
<th>Liverpool City Council (National Energy Action)</th>
<th>Refreshing the NEA Fuel Poverty Health catalogue (2015)</th>
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- Building cold homes referrals with the health sector toolkit
- Local Authority Toolkit: Supporting Fuel Poor and Vulnerable Households

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<th>Cornwall Council</th>
<th>Outputs: Guide (for health referrals) Toolkit (for local authorities)</th>
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Who was involved in the creation of the toolkits?

- Collaboration between Cornwall Council and Citizens Advice
- Funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- Other stakeholders included Warm Wales, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Citizens Advice, Care and Repair, Centre for Sustainable Energy, Derby City Council, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Gentoo Group, Happy Energy, Islington Council, Oldham Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Plymouth City Council, Western Power Distribution, Royal College of General Practitioners, Wigan Council, Wiltshire Council, Sheffield Hallam University
Warm homes, affordable fuel, healthy people: how Citizens Advice can help

Fuel poverty researchers network, May 2018
William Baker, Citizens Advice
Citizens Advice clients - energy issues

400,000 clients cannot keep their home warm enough in winter. Of these:

- 72% switch the heating off or turn it down to save money
- 52% heat and use fewer rooms than they would like to save money
- 37% cut back on other necessities, like cooking, to afford energy use
- 22% find it difficult to use the heating controls to set the times and temperature of their home
- 22% said their heating system or insulation is not good enough*

* includes equipment that is broken or not working properly
Energy advice at Citizens Advice

- **Energy projects:**
  - 150 Local Citizens Advice offer Energy Best Deal and Energy Best Deal extra
  - Extra Help Unit: specialist advice on complex energy supply issues
  - Consumer service advice line: telephone advice on energy issues
  - About to take on Big Energy Saving Network

- **Tools and resources:**
  - Energy price comparison
  - Supplier ratings based on consumer service offered
  - Home Energy Advice Tool - assess home energy standards & recommend improvements

- **Energy advice strategy to improve energy advice**
  - Energy advice becomes part of core advice framework
    - Basic energy advice skills for all advisers
    - Specialist energy adviser in every local office
  - New opportunities for providing advice, e.g. health
  - Improve integration of advice work with policy & advocacy work
Cold homes, unaffordable fuel and health

For clients

- Cardiovascular & respiratory disease, mental health
- Minor illnesses & health problems exacerbated
- Social isolation, children’s education
- On average at least 9,000 excess winter deaths per year attributable to cold homes

For health services

- Cost the NHS: £850 - £1.36 billion per year (BRE, Age UK)
- Increased pressure on already stretched health and social care services
- Similar impact on NHS as physical inactivity & smoking and not much less than alcohol
Winter pressures on the health service

• For each winter death there are 8 emergency admissions
• 40% of hospital admissions are unplanned (Purdy 2012)
• Emergency admissions
  - risen by over 1/3 in past 10 years
  - mostly older people
• BMA: “winter pressures overwhelm NHS” (Jan, 2018)
  - corridors packed with patients
  - people waiting for eight hours before even being seen
  - senior staff in tears
  - senior doctor: conditions many had never experienced before
• Short term and long term solutions required:
  - preventative approaches can help
NICE guideline, NG6: Key recommendations

1. Develop a local strategy: health consequences of cold homes
2. Set up single point of contact housing & health referral service
3. Provide tailored solutions via referral service
4. Train front-line workers to identify people vulnerable to cold-related ill health
5. Discharge vulnerable people from hospitals to a warm home

BUT

- Progress on implementing guideline very slow
- Only 32% HWBs referenced one or more of the NICE recommendations in JSNA or Strategy (NEA, 2016)
**Citizens Advice action to support NICE guideline**

**Winter resilience pilot**
- 7 local Citizens Advice trialled and tested different referral pathways with health partners
- Big impact on clients’ control of energy use & ability to keep warm
- Health partners welcomed service and wanted to see it continued
- Gloucester CA funded to continue referral service

**Warm & Well in North Yorkshire**
- Single point of contact housing and health referral service
- Connects frontline health workers with services that can sort out practical help
- Funded until at least 2020

**Cold home toolkits**
- Joint initiative with Cornwall Council
- On Citizens Advice website – google “Cold home toolkits”
Case study 1: Sue

- 78 year old widow, owner occupier
- Poor health
  - Coronary heart disease, arthritis, osteoarthritis, high blood pressure, deep vein thrombosis, anxiety and depression
  - About to go to hospital for hip operation
- Broken boiler - no heating or hot water

Citizens Advice help

- Warm Home Discount: £140
- New boiler
  - Trust fund, worth £3,000
  - £350pa saving on old boiler (when worked)
- Heating & hot water: helped recovery & well-being on return from hospital
- Now on supplier’s Priority Services Register
Case study 2: Steve

- 63 year old single man, private rented flat
- Home circumstances
  - Central heating not working; heated whole flat with 1 fan heater
  - Electric & gas prepayment meters
  - Stopped topping up gas prepayment meter 3 years ago
- Poor health
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), relies on electric nebuliser
  - Self disconnected during night: tried to go to shop to top up prepayment meter but unable to breathe properly so ambulance called

**Citizens Advice help**

- Warm Home Discount: £140 pa
- Both prepayment meters changed to credit meter: avoid future self-disconnection
- Standing charge and debt on gas prepayment meter written off
- New efficient cooker (Trust fund) & new boiler (ECO): £400 pa fuel bill savings
- Now on both supplier’s Priority Services Registers
- Now in receipt of PIP & ESA severe disability premium: extra £100 per week
- Big reduction in hospital visits

Client quote: “CAB help has saved my life”
Five actions to improve support

1. All local authorities and health trusts should work with voluntary sector agencies, like Citizens Advice, to provide housing & health referral services in their area

2. NHS trusts should recognise the vital role housing and health referral services can play in alleviating winter pressures

3. Public Health England, NHS England and government departments should oversee and review implementation of NICE guideline NG6 and promote good practice

4. Local authorities and health trusts should consult the Cold Home Toolkits for guidance on housing & health referral services

5. Local authorities and health agencies should provide adequate and sustainable resources for housing & health referral services
More information about our work

Warm homes, affordable fuel and healthy people: full report
Warm homes, affordable fuel and healthy people: summary report

Cold home toolkits:

Local authority toolkit
Health professionals toolkit

See also videos on cold home toolkits page

Energy Best Deal
Big Energy Saving Network

For more information about how we can help, contact: WRproject@citizensadvice.org.uk
Toolkits launched to combat fuel poverty and cold homes across England

Local Authority toolkit
• call to action to work together
• many homes as possible are energy efficient by 2030 to stay warmer for less

Health toolkit for health services
• identify and refer patients who are vulnerable to living in a cold home
• Considering what may be making the person ill.

The toolkits can be found at: https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/cold-homes-toolkit/ Funded by Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, produced by Cornwall Council and Citizens Advice
Building cold homes referrals with the health sector: objectives

1. Help health services understand the drivers for taking action and how they can support people to live well at home;

2. Help local authorities, third sector and other organisations understand how to best engage the health sector in making cold homes referrals
5 steps to building cold homes referrals with the health sector

1. Know the evidence base for fuel poverty, cold homes and health

2. Understand how the health sector works and how to gain support

3. Work with health sector to identify people who are vulnerable to living in a cold home

4. Develop a referral process, and keeping referrals coming

5. Monitor and evaluate cold homes referrals to demonstrate impact
Working with the health sector to identify people who are vulnerable to living in a cold home

What health professionals can be engaged in making cold homes referrals:
- Health professionals that visit patients' homes spend more time with patients in their homes and are able to experience the patient's living conditions. These include professionals such as occupational therapists, ambulance teams, community nurses, health visitors, midwives, public health, respiratory specialists, etc.
- GPs are well trusted by patients and will have regular contact with patients who have health conditions that you may want to target, such as COPD or children with asthma. A referral into your scheme by a GP may encourage the patient to engage, as GPs are generally trusted sources of information.
- Hospital services, such as hospital discharge teams, would benefit from a cold homes referral service, as unplanned admissions, especially of elderly people, increase significantly over the winter period. Helping address the cold home of a vulnerable patient should help to reduce use of hospital services if the condition is of a nature that is affected by cold.

Top tips for mapping cold homes and vulnerable patients with GP practices:
- You'll need a secure system to store your data – one that meets data storage regulations, and conforms to NHS requirements for safe storage of information.
- Where it is not possible to acquire an NHS email address, or time is too short, consider other ways to share data. In this example, the hospital emails a spreadsheet every month of people requiring a referral. They weren't able to use an NHS email address, so use a GD
tone. Instead. In other areas, the NHS has issued a contract to a supplier of services.

Demonstrating the urgency for early referrals
Interventions for cold homes take time to implement, depending on requirements, infrastructure and the type of energy intervention. It will be important to communicate this to the health professional you are hoping to engage in making a referral, so that they understand the importance of an early referral.

The figures on the right show average times taken to implement common energy installation interventions.

Gloucester and District Citizens Advice – CCG and Better Care funding for tackling cold homes

Gloucester and District Citizens Advice is launching a cold homes referral service this winter (2017), thanks to funding from Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Gloucestershire Council.

Working with partners, Warm and Well, Gloucester and District Citizens Advice will provide a complete advice and referral service for people suffering ill health due to living in cold homes. They will take referrals from health care professionals in GP surgeries, the Gloucestershire Respiratory Team and Warm and Well, as well as self-referrals from people who see their publicity about the service and tailor support to meet the client's needs.

Following the launch of Citizens Advice 'Winter Resilience' project last year, which piloted the housing and health referral service recommended by NICE at seven local Citizens Advice, Gloucester and District Citizens Advice approached their local CCG to request support for their scheme.

Their request for support came at a time when commissioning budgets are being cut nationally, and services are being commissioned with a significantly reduced budget. This makes it a challenging time to secure funding, and commissioners are having to decide how best to spend limited funds.

Despite this, Gloucester and District Citizens Advice were successful in their request for CCG funding, and have some tips for securing health sector funding.
Local Authority Toolkit objectives

Set up and run schemes to support fuel poor households
1. Share learning and good practice
2. Guidance on how to set up and deliver fuel poverty and energy efficiency support schemes;
3. Share good practice examples;
4. Share tools that target and find fuel poor households and at risk of living in fuel poverty;
5. Share innovative referral routes
6. Guidance on accessing available funding and leveraging funding
7. Provide guidance, best practice recommendations and signpost
Local Authority Toolkit - Lessons

Three themes to inform setting up cold homes and fuel poverty referral partnerships and schemes:

Theme A Staying Warmer for Less – this means providing information and advice and signposting customers to partners and agencies that can help with the running costs of the home.

Theme B Capital investment or measures to improve home – through energy efficient heating systems, boilers, replacing storage heaters and insulation.

Theme C Behavioural changes – digital inclusion and cultural shifts – shop around for best deals, take control of life (heating and warmth), ventilate and use improved heating most efficiently.

Nine steps to pick and mix to set up a Fuel Poverty Partnership and Referral Network

**Step 1**
Check out what is already happening in your local area and who are the key players. It is helpful to understand what is strong about your area, not what is wrong, to determine who and which players can help to make your area stronger.

**Step 2**
Who are your customers? Should the focus be on everyone in fuel poverty or limit the service to those that may qualify for energy efficiency help and assistance? Whilst any programme run locally should meet the needs of the local population, the good practice identified by the toolkit shows that an open criteria is most beneficial to helping all those in need.

**Step 3**
Meet with key partners and if relevant set up your partnership based on what is relevant for your area and involve appropriate partners.

**Step 4**
Agree with your partners which partner should lead the partnership or should it be another agency or suitable third sector lead.
What does the LA toolkit address?

The toolkit is for local authorities, health and third sector partners to work together to reduce fuel poverty.

The toolkit is designed to:

• Help local authority officers and members understand the drivers for taking action;
• Help local authority officers and members understand what options they have and what outcomes they are trying to achieve;
• Provide guidance and signpost to tools to support in taking action.
What next - Learning and lessons

- Good practice or common practice
- Toolkits – many exist....
- Magic bullet ..
- Dedicated professionals
- Flexible approach
- Partnerships are challenging
- Personnel changes
- Referral networks need to be maintained
- Communication and feedback
- Summary

Toolkit update and review
Summer 2018
Why Support Delivery of Fuel Poverty Strategy?

Homes

“upgrade the energy efficiency of households…estimate that it will cost:

- **£1.9 billion** to achieve the 2020 milestone,
- a further **£5.6 billion** to meet the 2025 milestone
- and an additional **£12.3 billion** to meet the 2030 target”

People

“the average household in fuel poverty would need to spend an **additional £371 per year** to heat and power their home to a reasonable standard”
Cornwall partnering with BEIS on Home Energy

Enables Local Authorities to **use local knowledge to identify fuel poor households and deem them eligible for ECO Affordable Warmth measures based on locally defined criteria**;

- **Track record of delivery** through Cornwall Council’s Winter Wellbeing Partnership working with NHS and trusted third sector intermediaries;
- 300 homes with First Time Central Heating delivered and 150 (Warm Homes Fund)
- **Supported by Energy Company Obligation (ECO)** delivery partner.

www.cornwall.gov.uk
Remember ...learning so far...and why

“Why treat people and send them back to the conditions that made them sick” Sir Michael Marmot, The Health Gap 2015

“After the first time of living in my property for 2 years with storage heaters turning on my gas central heating it felt like home for first time.” Central Heating Fund customer

For help this Winter call 0800 954 1956

Winter Wellbeing is a partnership of over 30 public, charitable and business organisations.

Top tips for staying safe, warm and well this Winter

This guide is supported by DECC Central Heating Fund
Local Authority Top Tips

Contact Details
Wellbeing and Public Health Service
Cornwall Council
Truro, TR1 3AY

aball1@cornwall.gov.uk
emma.mcmaster@cornwall.gov.uk

For more information, contact:
WRproject@citizensadvice.org.uk

www.cornwall.gov.uk