



Public Health
England



**To: Local Authority Chief Executives
Local Authority Directors of Public Health
NHS England Area Teams
Clinical Leads of Clinical Commissioning Groups**

CC: Accountable Officers of CCGs, Local Authority Emergency Planning Officers, NHS Trust CEs, NHS Foundation Trust Chief Executives, NHS Trust Medical Directors, NHS Trust Nursing Directors, Foundation Trust Medical Directors, GPs, Directors of Housing and Planning, Directors of Adult Social Services, Directors of Children Social Services, DCLG Resilience and Emergencies Division and Local Resilience Forums, PHE Region and Centre Directors, Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Healthwatch England CE, Monitor CE, Care Quality Commission CE, Professional Bodies (RCGP, RCP, RPSGB, RCN, CPHVA, FPH), Carers UK

PHE publications gateway number: 2014074
NHS England publications gateway number: 01580

13 May 2014

Re: HEATWAVE PLAN FOR ENGLAND 2014

As we approach summer, this letter is intended to draw your attention to the Heatwave Plan for England.

The following documents are available online at

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

- the Heatwave Plan for England 2014
- Making the Case: why long-term strategic planning for heatwaves is essential for health and wellbeing
- three information pamphlets containing action cards for easy use by organisations, staff and the public
- easy read and accessible versions

The objective of the Heatwave Plan for England is to protect the population from heat-related harm to health, by raising awareness of the negative health effects of severe heat and enabling services and the public to prepare and respond appropriately. It is an important component of long term and emergency planning which will become increasingly relevant in adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The plan has been jointly agreed between Public Health England, the Department of Health, NHS England, the Local Government Association and other stakeholders. The plan recommends a series of steps, to be taken throughout the year, to reduce the risks to health from heat for:

- the NHS, local authorities, social care, and other public agencies
- professionals working with people at risk
- individuals, community and voluntary sector

Heat-Health Watch Alerts

The plan continues to be underpinned by the Heat-Health Watch service. The Met Office will issue Heatwave Alerts from 1 June 2014 to 15 September 2014. There are five levels:

- Level 0 (long term planning, all year)
- Level 1 (heatwave and summer preparedness, 1 June to 15 September)
- Level 2 (heatwave is forecast – alert and readiness)
- Level 3 (heatwave action)
- Level 4 (major incident – emergency response, declared by central government)

Summary of key changes to the Heatwave Plan for England 2014

Following consultation with stakeholders, no significant or immediate changes were considered essential this year. Therefore, the only changes to content have been the removal of specific dates relevant only to 2013.

We will continue our review process and focus on engaging a wide range of stakeholders with the aim of improving the design and implementation of the plan in the future, as part of our on-going commitments to the National Adaptation Programme.

There are some additional details you should be aware of ahead of this summer:

1. **The distribution list for the Heat-Health Watch alerts** is now being managed directly by the Met Office. New registrations and amendments to existing registrations need to contact the Met Office using enquiries@metoffice.gov.uk providing the information requested on the final page of this letter. **Existing users do not need to re-register.**
2. **Ramadan** will take place this year from (approximately) Sunday 29 June and will continue for 30 days until (approximately) Tuesday 29 July.

3. Further heatwave advice for primary care is available from the **Royal College of General Practitioners** <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/clinical-resources/adverse-weather.aspx>
4. The **voluntary and community sector** (VCS) can play a vital role in helping to protect the public's health from the harmful effects of heat. Opportunities should be taken for closer partnership working between the NHS, social care and local authority commissioners and providers and the VCS. Clearly VCS sector organisations specialising in health and social care have a vital role to play but it is also important to include the wider voluntary sector in the planning. In essence the VCS should be engaged at all levels of planning and responding to heatwaves. Their engagement can help to communicate messages, identify organisations that represent particular communities, provide additional resources and co-ordinate partnerships of sector bodies. They can also aid in reducing vulnerability, particularly through identifying and engaging vulnerable people, many of who may not be already linked into statutory services.

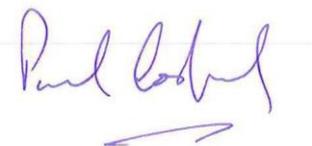
Recommended next steps

The plan is a good practice guide and the actions denoted within it are illustrative. There are five key messages we recommend to all local areas:

1. All local organisations should consider this document and satisfy themselves that the suggested actions and Heat-Health Watch Alerts are understood across the system, and that **local plans are adapted as appropriate** to the local context. local health resilience partnerships (LHRPs) may wish to use the plan to review their own heatwave plans.
2. NHS, social care and local authority commissioners, together with multi-agency local resilience forums and LHRPs, should satisfy themselves that the distribution of **Heat-Health Watch Alerts will reach those that need to take action**
3. NHS, social care and local authority commissioners should satisfy themselves that **providers and stakeholders take appropriate action** according to the Heat-Health Watch level in place and their professional judgements
4. Opportunities should be taken for closer partnership working with the **voluntary and community sector** to help reduce vulnerability and to support the planning and response to heatwaves
5. Long-term planning and commissioning to reduce heat-related harm, in view of the evidence on climate change is considered **core business by health and wellbeing boards** and included in joint strategic needs assessments and joint health and wellbeing strategies where appropriate

We hope that you and copy recipients of this letter will discuss the suite of documents that make up the Heatwave Plan with those organisations and teams that need to take action, in order to protect the health of the population from exposure to severe heat.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Paul Cosford".

Paul Cosford
Director of Health Protection and Medical Director, Public Health England

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Felicity Harvey".

Dr. Felicity Harvey
Director General for Public Health, Department of Health

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Rouse".

Jon Rouse
Director General for Social Care, Local Government and Care Partnerships,
Department of Health

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Pinto-Duschinsky".

Sarah Pinto-Duschinsky
National Director of Operations and Delivery, NHS England

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Hall".

Councillor Katie Hall
Chair of Community Wellbeing Board, Local Government Association



Cold Weather & Heat Health Alert Service Administration message

Tel: 0870 900 0100
www.metoffice.gov.uk

Message Issued on Friday, 11 April 2014 at 12:21

Change of recipient list management procedure

For your information, please note that all future requests regarding inclusion in Cold / Hot Weather Alerts should be sent directly to the Met Office.

Please ensure you use the following format:

Send requests to: enquiries@metoffice.gov.uk

Requests must include the following minimum information:

Name:

New registration /Delete registration/Amend registration (delete as appropriate)

Name of Organisation:

e-mail address (new registration):

existing e-mail address (amending current registration):

[Please note: e-mail address should be .nhs or .gov. If this is not possible please state: Organisation type:]

Regards,
Met Office