

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request Reference FoI/20/300**  
**Heating Needs of Service Users**

**Request details**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act to request information from the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board on the following:

- 1. Does the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board have procedures or policies in place to ensure primary health and home care practitioners assess the heating needs of people who use their services at least once a year, as recommended by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance on *Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes (NG6)*?**
- 2. Does the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board record or audit compliance with the recommendation referenced in question 1 among primary health and home care practitioners?**
- 3. Does the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board have procedures or policies in place to ensure that, when a patient is discharged from a health or social care setting, an assessment is carried out into whether they are likely to be vulnerable to the cold and if action is needed to make their home warm enough for them to return to, as recommended by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance on *Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes (NG6)*?**
- 4. Does the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board record or audit compliance with the recommendation referenced in question 3?**

**Response details**

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB) would like to advise that there are many Services that see patients at home and/or are involved in their discharge.

The Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS) ask questions around heating as patients enter the service. It is part of the initial assessment.

The Service ask about the type of heating and whether the patient can operate the controls and if they understand the timer on their heating system.

The Service will identify if the house is cold and will ask why this is? Whether it is patient choice, lack of finances or broken appliances etc.

As part of the Reablement service, the Occupational Therapists will ask if the appliances are in good working order and serviced regularly. This is part of a risk assessment for staff entering the property.

If any issues come to light the Service will discuss solutions with the patient, the family (with consent) or refer to agencies for case worker involvement. The agencies can advise on grants and schemes.

The DN/Nurse Assessor Service do not routinely as part of the assessment processes undertake an assessment of the heating needs of the patients they support in the community.

Given that is the case, the Service therefore does not then record or audit compliance with the NICE recommendation. Individuals where this is considered an issue would be sign posted and referred on to appropriate services to receive assessment and support.

### **Stroke Service**

From an Occupational Therapy perspective: the Stroke Service address heating needs as and when patients access the service, they do not have a remit to carryout annual reviews of any aspect of intervention . During an individual's home visit or an environmental access visit we would consider current heating source that is in place, any safety or risk factors e.g. if there is a gas fire located in room where someone is to sleep, if someone is unable to access/reach controls. The Service agencies and Housing Departments or provide information to enable the patient and families to address the requirements themselves.

There are no specific compliance / audits carried out.

### **CRRU**

The CRRU Service ask about heating on the initial assessment but that is always done on the first visit when the member of staff are actually in the patients home.