



## STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE

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| <b>Subject</b>                            | <b>Adverse Weather SOP042</b>  |
| <b>Applicable to</b>                      | Care staff   |
| <b>Date issued</b>                        | 19 March 2024  |
| <b>Next review date</b>                   | 19 March 2025  |
| <b>Lead responsible for Policy</b>        | Director of Care   |
| <b>Policy written by</b>                  | Deputy Director of Care  |
| <b>Notified to</b>                        | Policy Working Group (21 Feb 2024)   |
| <b>Authorised by</b>                      | Senior Leadership Team (March 2024)  |
| <b>CQC Standard</b>                       | Well-led   |
| <b>Links to other Policies/Procedures</b> | <a href="#">Adverse Weather Policy OP015</a><br><a href="#">Lone Working Policy OP001</a>          |
| <b>Summary</b>                            | This SOP outlines the action Care staff and Managers should take during adverse weather conditions |
| <b>Target Audience</b>                    | Care staff   |

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Staff should refer to the Hospice website for the most up to date Policy. If the review date of this document has passed it is still valid for 3 months. After that staff should seek advice from their clinical lead or manager.

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| <p><b>1.</b></p> | <p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>There are regular predictive weather forecasts made by the Met office which provide details of anticipated adverse weather events. When adverse weather is predicted managers should take reasonable steps to make plans to ensure that services are maintained safely for as long as possible.</p> <p>The decisions made in the event of adverse weather will be a balance between ensuring patient care, staff safety and essential services are not compromised. The decision with regard to whether it is safe to travel to and from one's normal place of work and within the community served can only be made at the time, taking into account the particular circumstances which apply and having due regard to the prevailing traffic and weather conditions including any Met Office advice. This guidance therefore requires managers and staff to exercise responsible decision making, bearing in mind the needs of the patients and the expectations of the Hospice.</p> |
| <p><b>2.</b></p> | <p><b>Adverse Weather Conditions Alerts</b></p> <p><b>Heat</b></p> <p>Heat health alert system operates from 1 June to 30 September (can operate out of season).</p> <p><b>Cold</b></p> <p>The Cold health alert system operates from 1 November to 30 March (can operate out of season).</p> <p>Both heat and cold systems are based on the Met Office forecasts and data.</p> <p><b>Flood</b></p> <p>The Environment Agency provide flood warnings and floods can occur throughout the year.</p>   |

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|    | <p><b>Level of Action</b></p> <p><b>Green (preparedness):</b> No alert will be issued as the conditions are likely to have minimal impact on health; business as usual and summer/winter planning and preparedness activities.</p> <p><b>Yellow (response):</b> These alerts cover a range of situations. Yellow alerts may be issued during periods of heat/cold which would be unlikely to impact most people but could impact those who are particularly vulnerable.</p> <p><b>Amber (enhanced response):</b> An amber alert indicates that weather impacts are likely to be felt across the whole health service, with potential for the whole population to be at risk. Non-health sectors may also start to observe impacts and a more significant coordinated response may be required.</p> <p><b>Red (emergency response):</b> A red alert indicates significant risk to life for even the healthy population.</p> |
| 3. | <p><b>Attendance During Bad Weather</b></p> <p>It is the duty of all staff of Nottinghamshire Hospice to ensure that they make adequate arrangements to report to their place of work at their stipulated start time. However, it is accepted that there are exceptional circumstances that may affect the ability of the staff member to report for duty at the given time.</p> <p>If there are no specific local instructions, then employees should report that they are unable to attend for work as early as possible. Further details on reporting is outlined in the <a href="#">Adverse Weather Policy OP015</a>.</p> <p><b>At no time should you put yourself, your property, or your colleagues at risk.</b></p>   |
| 4. | <p><b>Deployment of Staff During Adverse Weather Conditions</b></p> <p>If there are difficulties caused with staffing due to adverse weather conditions, Care Coordination in conjunction with the Clinical On Call manager will prioritise and allocate staff taking into account:</p>  |

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|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of staff and patient</li> <li>• If other agencies can visit</li> <li>• If Carers/family are present</li> <li>• Patient's condition, acuity and need.</li> </ul> <p>The Clinical On Call manager will liaise with the Director On Call as appropriate.</p> <p>During all adverse weather conditions staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• undertake appropriate home checks when visiting patients, for example room temperature, medications and food supplies, and ensure that unpaid carers are receiving appropriate advice and support</li> <li>• check if patients and carers have sufficient resources to maintain body temperature, e.g. warm or cool clothing, blankets, heaters, fans etc. and if required signpost to advice as highlighted in Appendix 1.</li> <li>• ensure that high-risk individuals are actively monitored during cold weather episodes, and that those most vulnerable to cold-related illnesses have visitor or phone call arrangements in place.</li> </ul> |
| <b>5.</b> | <p><b>Staff Preparedness</b></p> <p>Staff must ensure that their vehicles are fit for road conditions e.g. screen wash, something to clear the windscreen.</p> <p>Staff should ensure that they have a shovel, blanket and water in the car should it be needed at any time/ in case of inability to proceed with journey.</p> <p>Staff must follow the <a href="#">Lone Working Policy OP001</a> guidance to ensure that the Hospice is aware of their movements.</p>  |
| <b>6.</b> | <p><b>References</b></p> <p><a href="#">Adverse Weather and Health Plan UK Health Security Agency</a></p>   |

### Cold Weather – What Staff Can Do

Staff can signpost those vulnerable to cold weather to:

- sources of support for keeping their home warm and with [cost of living support](#), including [help to manage energy bills](#), as needed
- advice on simple measures to improve home energy efficiency and safety to reduce risks that may increase in cold weather (for example from carbon monoxide exposure) as outlined in UKHSA's [Keeping warm and well: staying safe in cold weather](#) guidance
- advise on things that can be done to find out [what's causing damp and/or mould at home and how to address it](#), where relevant – [new guidance](#) from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) outlines what private and social rented landlords should do to respond to damp and mould and take preventative action.