

REPORT TO HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

2ND OCTOBER 2018

EXCESS WINTER DEATHS & COLD RELATED ILLNESSES

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Received by SSDG: 03 September 2018
Date of Report: 19 September 2018

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an opportunity for Health & Wellbeing Board to review the multi-agency progress to tackle Excess Winter Deaths (EWD's) and cold related illnesses in Barnsley and prepare for winter 2018-19 and beyond.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Health & Wellbeing Board members are asked to:-

- Provide feedback on the content of the paper and draft high level action plan 2018-21
- Support proposed calls to action for Health and Wellbeing Board including:
 - Identification of vulnerable adults at risk from EWD's and cold related illness
 - Support commissioning arrangements for the Warm Homes single point of access
 - Ensure planning includes identifying relevant local interventions and providers across integrated care, including assessment, admission and discharge arrangements
 - Support the joint communication plan for tackling EWD's
- Agree next steps for action and communication amongst stakeholders

3. Background

- 3.1 Excess winter deaths are a statistical measure to quantify the effect of winter months for a given population. It can be expressed as the number of extra people who have died, or as an index comparing winter deaths to the number of deaths that occur at other times of the year.
- 3.2 During the 2016-2017 winter period, there were an estimated 34,300 excess winter deaths (EWD's) in England and Wales, which represents an excess winter mortality (EWM) index of 20.9%

- 3.3 As the EWM index varies each year, we use a 3 year average. The most recent figures for Barnsley (3 year average 2013-2016, all person, all ages) is 24.3% (indicative number = 529), compared to the Yorkshire average (17.8%) and England average (17.9%). The next release of the data will be in November 2018.
- 3.4 Most excess winter deaths in Barnsley occur in the 65-84 year age group. Given that the over 65 population of Barnsley is expected to increase by 17.2% between 2012 and 2020, it is reasonable to expect that the number of excess winter deaths will also increase substantially if action is not taken to address the causal factors.
- 3.5 Flu & Pneumonia and respiratory diseases were the main underlying causes of excess winter deaths in Barnsley between 2008 and 2015.
- 3.6 There is no clear cut explanation for excess winter mortality & morbidity and is due to a variety of wider factors, such as temperature, socio-economic circumstances, underlying health conditions, Influenza and other viral infections, falls, dementia & Alzheimer's, fuel poverty, housing tenure & housing conditions, and personal and social behaviours.
- 3.7 Certain groups are most at greater risk of harm from cold weather:
- older people (in particular those over 75 years old, otherwise frail, and or socially isolated)
 - people with pre-existing chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, stroke or TIA, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or diabetes
 - people with mental ill-health that reduces individual's ability to self-care (including dementia)
 - pregnant women (in view of potential impact of cold on fetus)
 - children under the age of five
 - people with learning difficulties
 - people assessed as being at risk of, or having had, recurrent falls
 - people who are housebound or otherwise low mobility
 - people living in deprived circumstances
 - people living in houses with mould
 - people who are fuel poor
 - homeless or people sleeping rough
 - other marginalised or socially isolated individuals or groups
- 3.8 There are a range of effective measures that reduce the likelihood of cold related illness and excess winter deaths including: home insulation and adequate heating; protective behaviours (adequate clothing, eating well, staying active); flu vaccination; falls prevention and early help & access to medical assistance and support.

4. Tackling EWD's in Barnsley

- 4.1 Last year, a task and finish group involving representatives from Barnsley Council, Barnsley CCG, Housing & VCF produced a high level action plan 2017-18, outlining outcomes, key tasks and timescales to address the main contributory factors of EWDs.
- 4.2 Available data, national guidance (including NICE guidance NG6 on Excess winter deaths and illness and the health risks associated with cold homes <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng6>, Cold Weather plan for England <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cold-weather-plan-cwp-for-england>), and good practice locally has informed the development of the plan.
- 4.3 In July 2018, a stakeholder event involving over 70 attendees from key organisations, reviewed progress from last year's winter and planned forward to this winter and beyond.
- 4.4 The themes informed a high level action plan 2018-2021 to prepare for this winter and future winters. The focus will be on system wide changes and integrated working, in particular to implement a single point of access for housing & health. This service will address cold homes & fuel poverty aligned with hospital discharge and as part of the wider Assisted Living Review. The plan will also set out actions to improve uptake of flu vaccinations; falls prevention; and develop a cross partnership communication plan.

5. Conclusion/ Next Steps

- 5.1 To review the Tackling EWD's action plan 2018-21 and agree next steps for action.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The financial implications for implementing the Warm Homes Fund single point of access was approved at cabinet on 5th Sept 2018.

7. Consultation with stakeholders

- 7.1 The report has been drafted in consultation with Cllr Miller/Cllr Andrews, stakeholders including colleagues from the BMBC People, Place, Communities Directorates, Bernslai Homes, Barnsley CCG, SY Fire & Rescue service, and Community & voluntary sector.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Tackling Excess Winter Deaths Action Plan 2018-21

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Date: 19/09/18