

Snap Care – Hot Weather Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines measures to safeguard the health and wellbeing of clients and support staff during periods of hot weather or heatwaves. It aims to minimise the risk of heat-related illness, especially for vulnerable individuals receiving care in their own homes. This policy applies to all Snap Care support staff and clients receiving care and support in their own homes

Policy Summary:

This Hot Weather and Heatwave Policy outlines Snap Care's approach to protecting the health and wellbeing of clients and support staff during periods of extreme heat. It applies to all staff and clients receiving care at home and highlights roles and responsibilities for managing heat-related risks. The policy identifies vulnerable individuals, such as older adults, children, and those with chronic conditions, and provides clear guidance on staying hydrated, maintaining a cool environment, adjusting care routines, and recognising signs of heat-related illness like heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Staff are advised to monitor clients closely, take care of their own wellbeing, and report any concerns promptly. The policy will be reviewed annually or as needed based on feedback or official guidance.

Policy

Responsibilities

- **Managing Director / Office Staff:**
 - Monitor heatwave warnings.
 - Communicate alerts and guidance to staff and clients as needed.
- **Support Staff:**
 - Follow guidance in this policy.
 - Monitor clients for signs of heat-related illness.
 - Take appropriate actions and report concerns promptly.
- **Clients / Families / Representatives:** Where possible, follow advice given to reduce heat exposure and maintain hydration.

Risk Factors

Individuals at higher risk during hot weather include:

- Older adults (65+)
- Babies and young children
- People with chronic conditions (e.g., heart, lung, diabetes)

**If you have any questions about this policy, please contact us on
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- Individuals with mental health issues or cognitive impairments
- Clients with limited mobility
- People taking medications affecting temperature regulation (e.g., diuretics, antidepressants)

Key Procedures

General Precautions

Support workers should:

- Stay informed about local heatwave alerts
- Adjust visits or care routines where necessary and safe to do so, especially for non-essential tasks during peak heat (11am–3pm).
- Check that fans or cooling systems are working safely.
- Wear light, breathable clothes and carry water.

Hydration

- Encourage and assist clients to drink fluids regularly (preferably water)
- Offer drinks on every visit.
- Monitor for signs of dehydration: dry mouth, dark urine, confusion, headaches.
- Document fluid intake in your daily records.

Environment

- Help clients keep their living spaces cool:
 - Close curtains/blinds during the day.
 - Open windows at cooler times (early morning/evening).
 - Use fans if safe and practical.
 - Turn off unnecessary heat sources.

Personal Care

- Offer cool damp cloths if needed for comfort.
- Avoid strenuous activities during peak heat hours.

Signs of Heat-Related Illness

Support workers should watch for the following signs and take action:

Heat Exhaustion:

- Headache, dizziness, confusion

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- Heavy sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Pale, clammy skin
- Nausea or vomiting

Action: Move the person to a cool place, lie them down, give fluids, and call 111/999 if symptoms persist.

Heatstroke (Medical Emergency):

- Body temperature > 40°C
- Dry, hot skin with no sweating
- Confusion or unconsciousness

Action: Call 999 immediately. Cool the person down while waiting for help.

Staff Safety and Wellbeing

- Staff should take breaks in shaded or cool environments between visits.
- Carry bottled water and remain hydrated.
- Report heat-related symptoms or incidents to management.
- Avoid overexertion and plan travel times wisely.
- Discuss any specific health conditions with line managers to assess risk during hot weather.

Communication

- PASS Alert information
- Verbal advice may be given to clients, support workers and families.
- Any urgent concerns regarding a client's wellbeing must be reported immediately to management and/or emergency services.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following a significant weather event, staff concern, or CQC guidance update.

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This policy applies to the following people in our organisation	All employed staff members: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senior team• Care workers
Policy Date	28/03/2025
Due for Review	28/03/2025
Who has or can give authority to change policy	Registered Manager
Where is this policy kept	On the company's shared drive and the company's website

Date	Reviewer	Version	Date for Next Review

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