

SEVERE WEATHER PLAN

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to ensure Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust provides a robust and resilient response during severe weather affecting Somerset. The policy supports Trust arrangements in response to severe weather and is fully informed and supported by the Local Health Resilience Partnership (LHRP) Severe Weather Plan.
- 1.2 The plan is an operational framework for a local health response based on, but not replicating national strategy and guidance for severe weather, namely the;
- Heatwave Plan for England 2019;
 - Cold Weather Plan for England 2018;
 - *Keep Warm Keep Well* Booklet- HM Government Publications;
 - Met Office *Get Ready for Winter*;
 - National Flood Emergency Framework for England.
- 1.3 The severe weather categories covered by the plan are:
- heatwave;
 - cold weather;
 - flooding;
 - gales/storms.
- 1.4 The UK climate is changing and current analysis in the national UK climate change risk assessment suggests that summers are going to get hotter and winters colder in the future. This Severe Weather Plan assists the Trust's long-term planning which is now essential to support:
- co-ordinated long-term planning between agencies to protect people and infrastructure from the effects of severe weather and thus reduce excess illness and death;
 - long-term multi-agency planning to adapt to and reduce the impact of climate change, including 'greening the built environment', building design (e.g. increasing shading around and insulation of buildings), increasing energy efficiency (e.g. reducing carbon emissions);and transport policies.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This plan covers all Trust services and employees and covers all Trust operational hours from day only community services and office functions to 24 hour, 7 day per week services.

- 2.2 The scope of the plan covers the operational processes for mobilising Trust resources to respond to severe weather conditions which have the potential to significantly impact on Trust services and / or may require additional resources to implement effective control measures.

Links to other plans

- 2.3 This document should be read in conjunction with:
- Trust Incident Response Plan;
 - Trust Business Continuity Management Policy and local plans;
 - Trust Climate Adaptation Plan;
 - Somerset NHS Winter Plan;
 - LHRP Health Response Plan;
 - Standard Operating Procedure for Somerset Health Partners for Requests for 4x4 Transport during Severe Weather;
 - Avon and Somerset LRF Multi Agency Flood Plan;
 - Avon and Somerset LRF Severe Weather Plan.

3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The following specific duties and responsibilities apply within the Trust.
- 3.2 The **Chief Executive** has overall responsibility for the management of the Trust, including ensuring it has in place robust arrangements for business continuity and service recovery.
- 3.3 The **Chief Operating Officer** is responsible for the implementation of this plan in operational services during severe weather.
- 3.4 The **Accountable Officer for Emergency Planning (Director of Governance and Corporate Development)** is responsible for ensuring business continuity processes are managed in accordance with the requirements of Department of Health guidance and ISO 22301.
- 3.5 The **Head of Resilience** is responsible for ensuring amendments to the plan are made in a timely manner and reported to the Health, Safety, Security Management and Estates Group as an agenda item and to the Trust Board as deemed necessary;
- 3.6 The **Service Directors** are responsible for ensuring this plan is followed in their areas of responsibility during severe weather.
- 3.7 **Managers** will be responsible for ensuring wards and services are adequately staffed and managers should have early discussions with staff who may have

difficulty attending work due to severe weather to ensure suitable plans are in place to deal with any problem should it arise. Managers should maintain a register of staff who live nearby but normally work at another unit or base to ensure the availability of those staff when inclement weather prevents them from traveling to their normal place of work. The decision on the genuineness of the absence is that of the senior line manager but this power may be delegated to an appropriate deputy. Staff arriving late (or with the permission of the line manager leaving early) because of inclement weather will, if the reason of bad weather is accepted, be paid at the rate they would have received for that day if normal conditions prevailed. Accurate records should be kept by the managers of the implementation of this plan, with particular reference to difficulties experienced or problems encountered.

3.8 **All Staff** must ensure they are familiar with the contents of this plan and their individual roles within these plans.

4. EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED

4.1 The table below details the different terms used in the warnings sent out and what the Meteorological Office definitions of the terms are:

TERMINOLOGY	DEFINITION
Blizzards/Drifting Snow	Heavy snow combined with winds of more than 30 mph and visibility lower than 200 m
Dense Fog	Visibility is less than 50 m
Early Warning	A warning several days in advance and usually updated daily until the event has passed
Extremely Hazardous	Those conditions in which the police and/or appropriate motoring organisations advise people not to make unnecessary journeys or indeed not to travel at all.
Flash Warning	A warning given for an event with six hours notice or fewer
Freezing Rain	Rain will freeze on contact with untreated roads and surfaces
Heatwave	Heatwave is defined by forecasts of day and night time temperatures and their duration by the Met office; this defines heatwave thresholds on a Regional basis – the temperature thresholds for a heatwave in the South West are 30°C or hotter (day) followed by 15°C or hotter (overnight) then another 30°C or hotter (day);

Heavy Rain	Either 15 mm within 3 hours, likely to cause flooding where ground is saturated or 25 cm in 24 hours
Heavy Snow	2 cm per hour of snowfall or more expected for at least 2 hours
Severe Gales	Defined as gusts of 70 mph or more
Severe Gales/Storms	Defined as gusts of 80 mph or more
Severe Weather	Snow, ice, floods, fog and severe wind which render extremely hazardous journeys by road. This can be by private or public transport.
Weather Watch	These detail a lower level of risk and are generally for information only
Widespread Ice	Widespread ice is defined as when rain falls on to surfaces with temperatures at or below zero; or condensation occurs on surfaces at or below zero; or already wet surfaces fall to or below zero. widespread indicates that icy surfaces will be found extensively over the area defined in the Met Office bulletin.

5. NATIONAL SEVERE WEATHER WARNING SERVICE (NSWWS)

- 5.1 The NSWWS is provided by the Met Office in order to provide the public, emergency services and other responding agencies with timely warnings of impending severe weather. The warnings give a percentage probability of a particular event disrupting regions of the United Kingdom.
- 5.2 The basic messages associated with each of the warning states are:



6. NOTIFICATION OF SEVERE WEATHER WARNINGS

- 6.1 The Trust contact for the Meteorological Office is the Head of Resilience.
- 6.2 When severe weather is expected the Head of Resilience will share information with the:

- Chief Executive's Office;
- Chief Operating Officer;
- Service Directors;
- Director of Governance and Corporate Development;
- Director of Finance;
- Chief Medical Officer;
- Chief Nurse;
- Director of Workforce and Organisational Development;

These staff will cascade the information to their service areas through their pre-identified information cascades.

- 6.3 In the Head of Resilience's absence, the notification process will be actioned by the Head of Communications.
- 6.4 On receipt of information departments are expected to review local contingencies.
- 6.5 If any individual service is experiencing an adverse impact as a result of the weather, managers must contact the relevant Director during normal office hours or the On Call Director out of hours to make them aware. Local business continuity plans will be activated if appropriate.
- 6.6 All managers must remind staff of the need to take adequate precautions such as only making necessary journeys and carry appropriate provisions in their vehicles. This may include bottled water or extra warm clothing.
- 6.7 Outside of office hours the On Call Director will maintain a watching brief to ensure potential impacts on Trust services are monitored and appropriate action taken to protect services.
- 6.8 If the weather is so severe and requires a region-wide response, the LHRP Concept of Operations will be implemented. The LHRP Command and Control arrangements in these circumstances are given below:

7. TRIGGERS, ACTIVATION AND ESCALATION

Triggers

- 7.1 This plan can be triggered on receipt of a level 2 weather alert warnings from the Met Office or a Severe Flood Warning from the Environment Agency.

Activation

- 7.2 The Trust, through its commissioners, when weather impacts require special arrangements to be implemented or by NHS England when National Alert Levels are reached or a multi-agency Local Resilience Forum Tactical or Strategic Co-ordination Group is formed.

Escalation

- 7.3 From Level 3 activation of arrangements will be agreed via an initial teleconference between LHRP partners and coordinated via further teleconferences or face-to-face meetings as required.

8. SITREP REPORTING

- 8.1 The SITREP report template attached at **Appendix 1** will be completed by the Trust in preparation for the severe weather teleconferences and / or meetings.
- 8.2 The process for managing SITREPs is detailed below.

LEVEL OF ALERT	SITREP Process
Level 0/1	No SITREPs required Anticipate and Preparedness
Level 2	<u>Exceptional Reporting Only</u> SITREP completed by the Trust and emailed to NHS England by 10:00 hours on Thursday mornings. NHS England will collate and distribute whole system SITREP to LHRP partners by 14:00 hours to ensure potential impacts to the wider system are understood in preparation for the weekend. No further action required.
Level 3	SITREP completed by the Trust and forwarded to NHS England in preparation for a wide system teleconference. Weekly teleconferences will take place at 10:00 hours on Thursday mornings; however if the event warrants it ad hoc teleconference will be set up. Conference call members to review and access wide system impacts and agree mitigating actions, mutual aid and the need for further conference calls leading into / over the weekend. NHS England to collate and circulate notes and actions from conference calls.
Level 4	As advised via NHS England

9. COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

9.1 The primary method of communication will be through a teleconference although this may be replaced by face to face meetings if required and practical. The Trust will be invited to participate in severe weather conference calls by NHS England.

Warning and Informing

9.2 Should public information messages be required, this will be co-ordinated by NHS England working with health partners and the ASLRF Media Cell, if activated.

Media

9.3 Severe weather will generate media interest. Requests for interviews may be received from a number of sources. These may be general information enquiries, requests for radio / TV interviews or requests for information from people presenting themselves at LHRP partners' premises. All requests should be routed through the Head of Communications.

9.4 The Head of Communications will liaise directly with NHS England and, if appropriate, the ASLRF Media Cell to ensure media statements and press releases provide consistent and accurate information on the current situation.

10. KEY ACTIONS DURING SEVERE WEATHER

10.1 During severe weather the Trust will, in conjunction with partner agencies:

- identify patients who are at particular risk from the severe weather;
- identify any changes to individual care plans for those in high risk groups, including those with chronic illness or severe mental illness, including initiating daily visits by formal or informal carers to check on people living in their own home;
- work with the families and informal carers or at risk patients and to put arrangements in place to manage these risks as required;
- work with all partner agencies to secure appropriate transport to facilitate critical health care visits to at risk individuals;
- Ensure dynamic risk assessments are undertaken as the weather situation develops to ensure the safety of staff;
- Review surge capacity and the need for, and availability of, staff especially if the weather is forecast to last for a prolonged period of time

11. SEVERE WEATHER ACTION CARDS

11.1 Severe weather action cards can be found in **Appendix 2 of this plan**. The

action cards have been developed to provide an aid memoir to ensure appropriate actions to mitigate the impacts, and just as importantly warning and informing patients, carers and staff.

12. MUTUAL AID

12.1 The Avon and Somerset LHRP Memorandum of Understanding makes provision for securing mutual aid (staffing) from other NHS provider organisations in the event of having activated their Major Incident Plan or other emergency plan. A copy of the MOU can be found in Appendix A of the LHRP Incident Response Concept of Operations document.

13. TRANSPORT

13.1 Severe weather may affect the transport infrastructure and in some cases cause damage with long lasting effects. If during severe weather it becomes clear staff will be unable to use their normal mode of transport to maintain community based services, alternative transport arrangements will need to be made in order to support the priority services to at risk individuals.

13.2 Where specialist 4 x 4 transport is the only means of getting access to an at risk patient a request for support should be made using the Standard Operating Procedure (sop) for Somerset Health Partners for Requests for 4x4 Transport during Severe Weather. This is a finite resource that may not always be available; therefore all other alternative arrangements must be exhausted before attempting to use this service. It is important to note these 4X4 services operate on a 'best reasonable endeavour' basis and cannot guarantee availability.

13.4 All staff requests for transport must be made initially to their Line Manager. Wessex 4x4, when available, will offer the following transport services:

- convey members of staff from agreed locations (including home) to fixed points (including health-care settings and patients' homes) in order to provide time-sensitive clinical functions, or activities directly supporting these;
- urgent delivery of medical and non-medical products;
- any other appropriate tasking must be agreed between the requester (on behalf of the Trust) and Wessex 4x4.

13.5 The Line Manager will consider the request and if they feel it is valid it will be passed to the Head of Division, Service Manager or On Call Senior Manager who will review the request.

13.6 Once the senior manager is confident the request meets the criteria they will make a formal request for mutual aid.

13.7 The senior manager will maintain a log covering all requests, actions and outcomes.

Urgent Assistance

- 13.8 If 4 x 4 services are unable to help, and a high risk patient's care is going to become compromised, please contact the Emergency Control Room of South Western Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWASFT) clearly informing them of the priority need and urgency of the patient visit.

14. MANAGING STAFFING DURING SEVERE WEATHER

Principles

- 14.1 The Trust recognises severe weather can prevent employees from reaching their normal place of employment and will ensure the health and safety of its employees is not compromised by allowing affected employees immediate access to leave entitlement (special, paid, flexi or unpaid depending on the circumstances). No employee will be required to attend for work if it is unsafe to do so.
- 14.2 It is expected employees will make every reasonable effort to reach their normal place of employment or an agreed alternative location. However, employees are not expected to, and should not put themselves or others at risk.
- 14.3 Employees who live in areas of the county where historically they have suffered difficulties in getting to work during periods of adverse weather, should be prepared to make appropriate arrangements in relation to attendance at work.
- 14.4 Where a member of staff considers they are unable to get to and from work as a consequence of inclement weather, they must discuss this with their line manager and agree an alternative. Alternatives may include going to another Trust unit or facility which is more accessible from home rather than their usual place of work or working from home. The Trust will consider providing hotel accommodation for staff unable to return home or required for further duties.
- 14.5 Staff are expected to be able to walk up to three miles to work if it is considered safe to do so by the police and/or other appropriate organisations.
- 14.6 Payment of salary/wages for staff who do not attend work during severe weather will not be granted as a matter of course. Managers will investigate thoroughly the circumstances of each individual case and payment should only be authorised when the manager is satisfied the conditions in this policy have been met.
- 14.7 To ensure this policy is applied as consistently as possible, copies of applications for inclement weather payments will be held in the Trust Human Resources Department. Managers might wish to refer to them in making decisions on their own staff.

Additional Hours Worked

- 14.8 Some members of staff may have reported for duty early due to the disruption of normal transport arrangements.

- 14.9 Where the manager is satisfied this is the case, they may approve that such hours be recorded on timesheets and full payment will be made in accordance with the relevant conditions of service.
- 14.10 Alternatively, they may be able to be released early on the day in question which would result in no additional payment being required.
- 14.11 Where staff have worked where no time off in lieu provisions are applicable as laid down in their conditions of service, but the employee requests time off in lieu rather than payment, this should be arranged by their manager and the appropriate additional hours should not be recorded in time sheets.

Health and Safety

- 14.12 As an employer, the Trust has a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonable practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees at work.
- 14.13 Employees are also under a general duty to take reasonable care of their own physical and mental health and safety, and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- 14.14 The Trust will not encourage its employees to travel in dangerous weather, either during working hours or when travelling to and from work and employees should not feel pressured to risk their safety to get into their place of work.
- 14.15 Line managers should use their discretion when dealing with the issues that arise and deal with case by case.

Leaving Early

- 14.16 During severe weather, where there is concern for travel arrangements of staff, the decision about when to allow staff to leave work early will normally be taken by the appropriate manager.
- 14.17 It is recognised staff will be anxious about their domestic arrangements and staff will be allowed to use the Trust's telephone systems where appropriate.
- 14.18 Staff whose circumstances make it essential they be allowed to leave earlier, e.g. those who have dependents who have no other carers available or those with particular health problems, will be allowed to leave at their manager's discretion and subject to the needs of the service.
- 14.19 Regular updates on the prevailing weather and road conditions will be received by the Trust who will ensure these are communicated across the organisation.

Inability to Attend Work

- 14.20 In all circumstances of inability to attend for work or late arrival the employee must report the fact to their line manager at the earliest opportunity. The standard working day/shift is defined as the normal working hours for those employees who have fixed working hours and 7.25 hours for those on flex-time.

- 14.21 If an employee is not able to make the journey to work, the following options should be discussed and agreed by the Line Manager:
- agree a change in your working arrangements, for example 'swap' shifts on the rota;
 - make up the lost time at a later date by working an additional shift or hours;
 - take annual leave;
 - take unpaid leave if your annual leave entitlement is exhausted.
- 14.22 As an alternative to the granting of leave an employee may, if appropriate, be required to attend at a different workplace or work from home (see below).

Agile Working

- 14.23 Members of staff who have been identified as agile workers can work from alternative bases or from home as part of their normal working arrangements as agreed with their line manager.

Closure of Place of Work

- 14.24 Where a decision is taken by the Trust to close a place of work due to adverse weather, affected employees may be required to attend at an alternative place of work or work from home. If neither of these applies, employees will be entitled to paid leave for their normal hours of work for the duration of the closure.

Employees with Carer Responsibilities

- 14.25 These employees must ensure they have emergency care arrangements in place to deal with disruption to their normal care arrangements during severe weather. If this is not possible the employee should discuss the matter with their line manager and will be entitled to take annual/ flexi/ unpaid leave. The normal requirement for advance notice of the intention to take leave will be suspended in these circumstances

Attendance at an Alternative Place of Work

- 14.26 In some circumstances, Trust staff may be able to assist in providing services in other Trust wards and units in which they do not normally work. They should contact the unit or ward to establish whether or not they can provide assistance in the circumstances.
- 14.27 In this circumstance, staff would not be expected to travel no more than three miles on foot if weather conditions permit.
- 14.28 Where severe weather disrupts the normal activities of Trust staff, every effort should be made by the senior member of staff, who has been able to make it to the team base, to contact those patients considered to be vulnerable or who

have appointments that day.

- 14.29 Where staff are attempting to carry out their duties in adverse weather conditions, the Trust Uniform Policy will be relaxed in order that warm and sturdy clothing is worn.

Home Visits

- 14.30 If staff find they are unable to maintain their home visits due to it being deemed unsafe to travel, they must contact their manager for advice.
- 14.31 Wherever possible alternative arrangements should always be agreed and put in place with patients prior to the advent of adverse weather. All community patients should be caseload zoned and a priority list for high risk patients must be available for each shift.

15. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- 15.1 All Trust managers and directors must ensure their staff have read and are familiar with this policy which they should be made aware of as part of their induction to the Trust.
- 15.2 The Trust has the responsibility to ensure its business continuity arrangements are tested on a regular basis. Exercising the Trust response to a severe weather event may form the basis for testing these arrangements and this will be designed by the Head of Resilience.

16. MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

16.1 Monitoring arrangements for compliance and effectiveness

Overall monitoring will be by the Joint EPRR Group. The Head of Resilience will report any areas of concern within the quarterly reporting to the Group and new significant risks will be escalated to the Group.

- 16.2 Any occasions that require implementation of the plan will be subject to post-incident review and a report and lessons learned presented to the Senior Management team.
- 16.3 This plan will be regularly updated to take account of organisational changes and new national guidance.

17. REFERENCES, ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

17.1 Cross reference to other procedural documents

Business Continuity Management Policy

Evacuation and Shelter Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Lockdown Policy

Risk Management Policy

Untoward Event Reporting Policy and procedure

All current policies and procedures are accessible in the policy section of the public website (on the home page, click on 'Policies and Procedures'). Trust Guidance is accessible to staff on the Trust Intranet.

18. APPENDICES

18.1 For the avoidance of any doubt the appendices in this policy are to constitute part of the body of this policy and shall be treated as such.

Appendix One Severe Weather Sitrep Report Template

Appendix Two Severe Weather Operational Action Cards

APPENDIX ONE: SEVERE WEATHER SITREP REPORT TEMPLATE

Service/Ward/Hospital:		Date:	
Name (completed by):		Time:	
Telephone number:			
Email address:			

Type of Incident (Name)	
Impact / potential impact of incident on services / critical functions and patients (See Note 1 below)	
Impact on other services	
Mitigating actions for the above impacts	
Impact of business continuity arrangements	
Media interest expected / received	

Mutual Aid Request Made (Y/N) and agreed with?	
Additional comments	
Other issues	

Note 1

1. General increase in admissions?
2. Weather specific increase in clinical presentations? (E.g. heatwave - Strokes, Signs of dehydration / cold weather- hypothermia, falls, fractures etc.).
3. Impact on caseload (e.g. patients not attending appointments- gone out for the day as weather good. or increase in requests for appointments/visits due to heat/cold related illness. Difficulty getting to patients causing delay in receipt of treatments-diabetics in community, dialysis).
4. Impact on Staff-wellbeing (e.g. sickness levels).
5. Impact on infrastructure (e.g. keeping buildings cool/warm, transportation of people and goods, IT issues due to heat).
6. Social issues- (e.g. temporary relocation of patients, staff and public).

APPENDIX TWO – SEVERE WEATHER ACTION CARDS

HEATWAVE OPERATIONAL ACTION CARDS

LEVEL 1 1 June – 15 September

HEATWAVE AND SUMMER PREPAREDNESS

During the summer months, NHS Trusts will work in partnership to ensure awareness and preparedness is maintained in case a heatwave is declared.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Make sure you are familiar with the principles and core elements of the Heatwave Plan for England.	All staff
	2	Ensure you are familiar with Trust and local business continuity plans.	All staff
	3	Include heatwave risk assessments in patients' clinical records and consider making necessary changes to care plans in the event of a heatwave (e.g. initiating daily visits by formal or informal care givers for those living alone).	Community staff
	4	Identify patients on your caseload who may be vulnerable during a heatwave and raise their awareness of the effects of hot weather on their health.	Community staff
	5	When making home visits, be aware of room temperatures in households and, if necessary, advise on how to keep cool and hydrated (Using the guidance – Looking after yourself and other in hot weather ¹)	Community staff
	6	Ensure thermometers area available in all inpatient and other key areas to monitor room temperatures.	Inpatient staff
	7	Identify or create cool rooms/areas (able to be maintained below 26°C) within inpatient areas.	Inpatient staff

¹ [Looking after yourself and other during hot weather 2013](#)

LEVEL 2

HEATWAVE IS FORECAST - ALERT AND READINESS

60% risk of heatwave in the next 2-3 days

The Heat Health Alert level 2 will be issued 2-3 days in advance of an expected 60% probability of the above temperatures being reached for a period of two days or more. As most deaths occur in the first two days, this is an important stage at which to ensure readiness and swift action to reduce harm from a potential heatwave.

Actions			
NHS PROVIDERS	1	Send heatwave alerts to staff and make sure they are aware their roles within heatwave plans.	All staff
	2	Ensure there is sufficient staffing, particularly for vulnerable patients.	All staff
	3	Review caseloads and care plans for vulnerable patients who have no regular contacts and consider how to maintain daily contact, i.e. through visits or phone calls.	Community staff
	4	Give key public health messages to patients and their carers.	Community staff
	5	When making home visits, continue to be aware of room temperatures in households and give appropriate advice.	Community staff
	6	Check and record temperatures in inpatient areas during the hottest periods.	Inpatient staff
	7	Ensure cool areas in inpatient areas are below 26°C.	Inpatient staff
	8	Ensure sufficient cold water and ice is available on inpatient wards.	Inpatient staff
	10	Consider weighing patients regularly to identify dehydration and rescheduling physiotherapy to cooler hours.	Inpatient staff

LEVEL 3

HEATWAVE ACTION

Temperature reached in one or more Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service regions

A Heat Health Alert level 3 will be issued when the trigger temperatures have been reached.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Activate local plans to maintain business continuity – including a possible surge in demand for Trust services.	All staff
	2	Continue to give out key public health messages to patients and carers.	Community staff
	3	Implement care plans for contacting and caring for vulnerable community patients.	Community staff
	4	During home visits, be aware of room temperatures and continue to provide appropriate advice	Community staff
	5	Advise carers to contact the GP if they have concerns about patients' health.	Community staff
	6	Ward staff ensure access to cool rooms, close monitoring of vulnerable patients, reducing internal temperatures through shading, turning off unnecessary lights/equipment, cooling building at night, ensuring discharge planning takes home temperatures and support into account	Inpatient staff
	7	Ensure inpatient room temperatures are checked and recorded regularly during the hottest periods. Ensure the welfare of patients and staff at all times. Contact Estates to hire in cooling equipment such as portable air conditioning if required.	Inpatient staff

LEVEL 4

MAJOR INCIDENT – EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Central Government will declare a Level 4 alert in the event of severe or prolonged heatwave affecting sectors other than health

A level 4 alert will only be issued when it is deemed to be a national emergency and the heatwave is so severe and/or prolonged that its effects extend outside health and social care – e.g. power or water shortages, and/or where the integrity of health and social care systems is threatened.

In the event of a major incident being declared, all existing emergency plans and procedures will apply.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Implement local Major Incident Plans.	Senior Managers
	2	Stand up Trust Incident Control Centre if required.	Senior Managers
	3	Establish contact with CCG, Area Team and Local Authority Incident Control Centres.	Senior Managers
	4	All Level 3 Heatwave actions to continue.	All staff
	5	Continue implementing local business continuity management plans.	All staff

COLD WEATHER OPERATIONAL ACTION CARDS

LEVEL 1			
WINTER PREPAREDNESS			
<i>1 November to 31 March each year</i>			
This is in force throughout the winter from 1 November to 31 March and indicates preparations should be in place to protect health and ensure service continuity in the event of severe cold and winter weather			
Actions			
NHS PROVIDERS	1	Provide a seasonal influenza vaccination programme to all front-line staff and encourage staff to be vaccinated.	Senior Managers
	2	Ensure information is going to the right staff and appropriate actions are agreed and can be implemented when received, especially to protect vulnerable patients.	All staff
	3	Work with partners and staff on raising awareness of winter planning (e.g. flu vaccination, REAP escalation, business continuity plans).	All staff
	4	Make sure your vehicle is prepared for and safe to drive during winter weather.	All staff
	5	Put together a “winter kit”, e.g. warm clothing, boots and waterproofs, in case you are unable to complete your journey or get stranded during winter weather.	All staff
	6	Confirm access arrangements for Wessex 4x4 support.	Community staff
	7	Ensure patients are aware of influenza and other vaccination programmes.	Community staff
	8	Ensure staff identify vulnerable patients on their caseloads and make necessary changes to patients’ care plans.	Community staff

	9	Ensure the care coordinator / key worker is clearly identified and recorded in patients' records.	Community staff
	10	Ensure there are clear arrangements for 'signposting' vulnerable patients to other services (e.g. home insulation schemes, benefits entitlements).	Community staff
	11	Work with vulnerable patients, their families and carers to ensure they are aware of the dangers of Cold Weather and how to keep warm.	Community staff

LEVEL 2

ALERT AND READINESS

This is declared when the Met Office forecasts a 60% risk of severe winter weather in one or more defined geographical areas in the days that follow. This usually occurs two to three days ahead of the event. A Level 2 alert would be issued when a mean temperature of 2°C is predicted for at least 48 hours, with 60% confidence, and/or widespread ice and heavy snow are forecast, with the same confidence.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Prepare business continuity plans to deal with a surge in demand for services, referring to Winter Plan and REAP escalation.	All staff
	2	Communicate alerts to staff and ensure organisation level Cold Weather Plan actions are implemented, especially those to protect vulnerable patients.	All staff
	3	Make sure your car is topped up with fuel, your mobile is charged and personal winter kit is with you.	All staff
	4	Review caseloads and adjust care plans for vulnerable patients living on their own who have no regular contacts and consider how best to maintain daily contact i.e. through visits or phone calls	Community staff
	5	Ensure staff undertake appropriate home checks when visiting patients, e.g. room temperature; medications and food supplies.	Community staff
	6	Consider carers' needs and the support they can continue to give.	Community staff
	7	Ensure rooms on inpatient wards are kept warm.	Inpatient staff
	8	Set up overnight accommodation, where possible, for staff unable to return home.	Inpatient staff

LEVEL 3**SEVERE WEATHER ACTIONS**

This is issued when the weather described in Level 2 actually happens. It indicates that severe winter weather is now occurring, and is expected to impact on people's health and on health services.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Communicate alerts to staff and ensure locally agreed actions take place, especially those to protect vulnerable patients.	All staff
	2	Activate plans to deal with surge in demand.	All staff
	3	Activate local business continuity arrangements.	All staff
	4	Use all available resources to maintain critical services and identify what non-essential activities could cease. Minimise unnecessary journeys.	All staff
	5	Implement local care plans for contacting vulnerable patients.	Community staff
	6	During home visits, be aware of room temperatures and continue to provide appropriate advice.	Community staff
	7	Ensure carers are receiving appropriate advice and support.	Community staff

LEVEL 4

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

This is reached when a period of cold weather is so severe and/or prolonged that its effects extend outside health and social care, and may include, for example, transport or power or water shortages; and/or where the integrity of health and social care systems is threatened. At this level, multi –sector response at national and regional levels will be required. .

The decision to go to a Level 4 is made at national level and will be taken in light of a cross-Government assessment of the weather conditions, coordinated by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Cabinet Office).

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Implement Incident Response Plans / Major Incident Plans	Senior Managers
	2	Stand up Trust Incident Control Centre if required.	Senior Managers
	3	Establish contact with CCG, Area Team and Local Authority Incident Control Centres.	Senior Managers
	4	Continue to implement local business continuity arrangements	All staff
	5	All Level 3 Cold Weather actions to continue.	All staff

FLOODING OPERATIONAL ACTION PLANS



FLOOD ALERT

Flooding is possible.

Be prepared.

(Issued between two hours to two days in advance of flooding)

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Maintain a Watching Brief - check Met Office forecast and Environment Agency Flood Alerts and be prepared to take action.	All staff
	2	Start to review surge capacity and the need for, and availability of, staff support in the event of a prolonged flood incident.	All staff
	3	Trust services to prepare to implement local business continuity plans if required.	All staff
	4	Make sure your vehicle is prepared for and safe to drive during flooding.	All staff
	5	Ensure you have protective clothing and equipment in case you are unable to complete your journey	All staff
	6	Start to identify vulnerable community patients who may require additional support during flooding.	Community staff



FLOOD WARNING

Flooding is expected.

Immediate action required.

(Issued half an hour to 1 day in advance of flooding)

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Maintain a Watching Brief - check Met Office forecast and Environment Agency Flood Alerts and be prepared to take action.	All staff
	2	Continue to review surge capacity and the need for, and availability of, staff support in the event of flooding.	All staff
	3	Review services to ensure staffing levels will be sufficient to cover the anticipated flooding period.	All staff
	4	Prepare to implement local business continuity plans.	All staff
	5	Use all available resources to maintain critical services and identify what non-essential activities could cease. Minimise unnecessary journeys.	All staff
	6	Review caseloads and adjust care plans for vulnerable patients living on their own who have no regular contacts and consider how best to maintain daily contact i.e. through visits or phone calls	Community staff
	7	Make daily contact with vulnerable community patients.	Community staff
	8	Consider carers' needs and the support they can continue to give.	Community staff
	9	Vulnerable patients should not be discharged to accommodation at risk from flooding.	Inpatient staff
	10	Set up overnight accommodation, where possible, for staff unable to return home.	Inpatient staff



**SEVERE FLOOD
WARNING**

SEVERE FLOODING. DANGER TO LIFE.

(ISSUED WHEN FLOODING POSES SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO LIFE)

Actions

**NHS
PROVIDERS**

1	Implement Major Incident Plans.	Senior Managers
2	Stand up Trust Incident Control Centre if required.	Senior Managers
3	Establish contact with CCG, Area Team and Local Authority Incident Control Centres.	Senior Managers
4	Continue with Flood Warning Actions above.	All staff
5	Continue to implement business continuity arrangements.	All staff

STORMS AND GALES OPERATIONAL ACTION CARDS

LEVEL 1			
BE AWARE			
General Impacts		Health Impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe weather warning for strong winds 60-70mph • localised disruption to transportation /infrastructure 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption to service provision leading to minor health impact. • Slight increase in A&E/minor injury attendance 	
Actions			
NHS PROVIDERS	1	Maintain a Watching Brief - check Met Office forecast and be prepared to take action.	All staff

LEVEL 2

BE PREPARED

General Impacts

- Winds speeds 70-80mph
- Widespread structural damage and resulting disruption.
- Disruption to Infrastructure and transportation

Health Impacts

- Disruption to Trust services.
- Increase in MIU attendances.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Maintain a Watching Brief - check Met Office forecast and be prepared to take action.	All staff
	2	Consider potential impacts on Trust services and take any necessary actions before the storm arrives.	All staff
		Raise staff awareness and provide situation updates.	All staff
	3	Prepare to implement local business continuity plans.	All staff
	4	Make sure your vehicle is prepared for and safe to drive during flooding.	All staff
	5	Ensure you have protective clothing and equipment in case you are unable to complete your journey	All staff
	6	Identify vulnerable community patients who may require additional support.	Community staff
7	Set up overnight accommodation, where possible, for staff unable to return home.	Inpatient staff	

LEVEL 3

TAKE ACTION

General Impacts

- Winds above 80mph
- Widespread severe structural damage and service disruption
- Disruption to-Infrastructure and transportation

Health Impacts

- Major disruption to service provision leading to major health impacts
- Large increase injuries requiring in MIU attendance
- Increase in death
- Displacement of people impacting health e.g. .medications required.

Actions

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Maintain a Watching Brief - check Met Office forecast and be prepared to take further action.	All staff
	2	Maintain a safe working environment and working practices.	All staff
	3	Continue to review surge capacity and the need for, and availability of, staff support during and after the storm.	All staff
	4	Use available resources to maintain critical services.	All staff
	5	Implement local business continuity plans.	All staff
	6	Maintain contact with vulnerable patient and work in partnership with other agencies to support vulnerable people who may be affected by the storm.	Community staff
	7	Consider carers' needs and the support they can continue to give.	Community staff
	8	Discharge planning should reflect local conditions so that patients are not put at risk	Inpatient staff

LEVEL 4**EMERGENCY****Actions**

NHS PROVIDERS	1	Implement Major Incident Plans.	Senior Managers
	2	Stand up Trust Incident Control Centre if required.	Senior Managers
	3	Establish contact with CCG, Area Team and Local Authority Incident Control Centres.	Senior Managers
	4	Continue all actions in Level 3 above.	All staff
	5	Continue to implement business continuity arrangements.	All staff