

Heatwave Plan for Warwickshire County Council 2019

Protecting health and reducing harm from severe heat and
heatwaves in Warwickshire



See Quick Navigation Section on [Page 3](#) for location of
Service Action Cards

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The CSW Resilience Team is responsible for the drafting, issuing, continuous reviews, maintenance and updating of this document.

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Quick Navigation Section

Warwickshire County Council Service Action Cards

Action Cards for each Service (Link Enabled)

Description	Alert Level	WCC Service (Link Enabled)	Page
Responsibility summaries (All appropriate services)	1 Summer Preparedness	CSW Resilience Team	16
		Public Health	17
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Public Health England - Key Guidance

The Key Public Health Messages on preventing the health effects of heat from Public Health England are included in [Appendix B](#).

Public Health England have also prepared a range of material to help professionals reduce the risks associated with the heat to their clients/patients, these include:

- Advice for health and social care professionals
- Advice for care home managers and staff
- Advice for professionals looking after children (e.g. teachers and nursery staff)
- Posters and leaflets for a range of audiences

These resources can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england

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1.0 Plan Activation

This plan will automatically be activated in line with the National Heat-Health Watch Service which goes live on 1st of June and operates until the 15th of September each year. After this time the risk of a Heatwave is negligible, although there are elements of all-year long term planning which may be required, referred to as Level 0 throughout this plan.

The activation of this plan will initially be activated at Level 1 where there will be a number of actions to carry out, as detailed in the associated action cards. When an escalation in Level has been notified by the Met Office there will be further actions required depending on the level of alert issued. These alerts will be cascaded by the CSW Resilience Team according to the Severe Weather Warning Process.

1.1 Associated Plans & Documents

- [Heatwave Plan for England](#)
- [Making the Case: the impact of heat on health – now and in the future](#)
- [Advice for health and social care professionals: Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave](#)
- [Advice for care home managers and staff: Supporting vulnerable people before and during a heatwave](#)
- Severe Weather Policy for Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire

1.2 Glossary of abbreviations

CCGs	Clinical Commissioning Groups
CCS	Civil Contingencies Secretariat
CSWRT	Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Resilience Team
HPfE	Heatwave Plan for England
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
PHE	Public Health England
WCC	Warwickshire County City Council
SWWP	Severe Weather Warning Process

1.3 Aim

The primary aim of this plan is to reduce the avoidable excess deaths and ill health within Warwickshire due to Heatwave conditions.

1.4 Objectives

This can be achieved by ensuring:

- All Warwickshire residents and customers that would be put at risk by a Heatwave are identified by both the Council and NHS organisations through the appropriate services.
- NHS/Local Authority providers of care have ensured that their staff are aware of the actions needed to be taken to support vulnerable patients and have put appropriate measures in place to ensure these actions have been complete.
- Carers, the voluntary sector, and appropriate partner agencies are mobilised in a timely manner to support vulnerable people.
- The wider public of Warwickshire are aware of the risks and the actions they can take to protect themselves individually and to support those most vulnerable to heatwave conditions.

1.5 Introduction

A heatwave occurs when day time and night time temperatures remain abnormally high over a period of 2 or more days. The temperature thresholds for the West Midlands region are +30 °C during the day and +15 °C during the night.

Research in the UK and across Europe has provided evidence that excess deaths occur during higher temperatures. The latest data published by Public Health England states that during the heatwaves of summer 2017 there were 778 excess summer deaths recorded nationally.¹

A sustained heatwave will result in extra deaths due to heat related conditions. These conditions include heat exhaustion and heatstroke. The latter can result in organ failure, brain damage or death. However, it doesn't have to reach "heatwave" level for excess deaths to occur. In 2003 the temperature rose rapidly from 20 degrees to 28 degrees within days, and there was a corresponding rapid increase in mortality. The rise in mortality as a result of very warm weather follows very sharply – within one or two days of the temperature rising.

By the time a heatwave starts, the window of opportunity for effective action is very short, generally only days. It is therefore imperative that those most at risk are identified prior to any increase in temperatures. Local Authority and NHS organisations are therefore required to have suitable plans in place to deal with the health issues arising from a heatwave.

¹ PHE heatwave mortality monitoring, Summer 2017,

1.6 At Risk Groups

During a heatwave, there are a number of groups who are particularly at risk due to their age, health or living conditions.

Reason for increased risk	Group affected
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older people, especially those over 75, living alone or in a care home • Babies and children, particularly under 4 years old
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those with long term health conditions • People who are supported by carers at home • People on certain medications which may affect the hypothalamus • Individuals with impaired sweat mechanisms • People with severe physical or mental illness • People who are alcohol/drug dependant • Pregnant women • People living with dementia
Living Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homeless/ rough sleepers • People living in urban areas and south facing top-floor flats

In a moderate heatwave, it is mainly the high-risk groups mentioned above who are affected. However, during an extreme heatwave such as the one affecting France in 2003, the fit and healthy can also be affected.

2.0 National Heat-Health Watch System

A major part of the HPfE is the National Heat-Health Watch system. This is in place between 1st June and 15th September every year and is operated by the Met Office. Based on Met Office forecasts, levels of response are triggered from the Local Authority and other bodies.

The system comprises of five main levels outlined below. It is based on threshold day and night-time temperatures as defined by the Met Office. These vary from region to region, but the average threshold temperature is 30°C during the day and 15°C during the night.

Level 0	Long Term Planning All year
Level 1	Heatwave and Summer Preparedness Programme 1 June- 15 September
Level 2	Heatwave is forecast – Alert and readiness 60% risk of Heatwave in the next 2-3 days
Level 3	Heatwave Action Temperature reached in one or more Met Office National Severe Weather Warning Service regions
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.

2.1 How to receive and distribute Heatwave Alerts

2.1.1 Notification Process – How to receive Cold Weather Alerts

Services and individuals with .gov or .nhs email addresses can register directly with the Met Office to receive Heatwave Alerts. This service includes:

- Instant receipt of Heatwave Alerts upon issue (both escalation and de-escalation).
- Weekly 30-day Heat Health forecast with the probability of the threshold being met to assist medium/short term planning.

For information on how to register, please email:

cswrt@warwickshire.gov.uk

The CSW Resilience Team will not be sending out Heatwave Alerts so you must register directly with the Met Office to receive them. It is the responsibility of heads of service (or nominated individuals) to register to receive the alerts.

2.1.2 Distributing Alerts

It is the responsibility of heads of service (or persons they nominate) to register to receive the alerts. Once heads of service / nominated persons have received a Met Office Alert email, they are responsible for cascading to colleagues and/or commissioned services as agreed. The distribution of Alerts should be accompanied with the allocation of specific actions / tasks for the recipient(s) found on Action Cards as well as any additional service/team specific information. See Roles and Responsibilities Section for Action Cards.

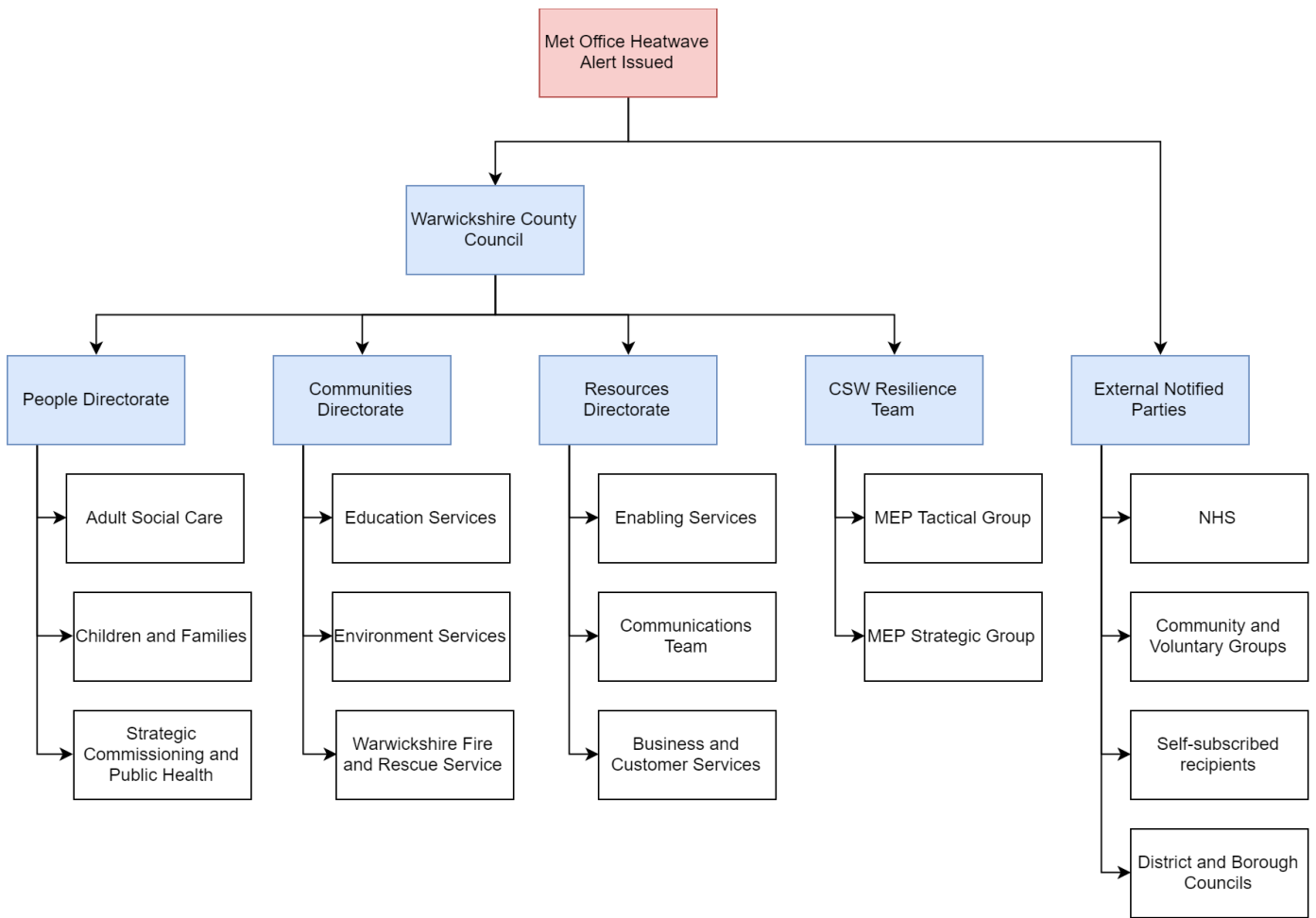
2.1.3 Advice for services / organisations receiving Alerts

If the Alert Level is frequently moving between Levels 2 and 3 it may be more effective for a service / organisation to maintain a state of Level 3 responsibilities and actions until the Alert Level has returned to Level 1. This should enable a more straightforward and efficient approach.

The Warwickshire Heatwave plan and Action Cards will be available on the CSWRT Intranet section as well as being emailed to recipients at the beginning of the Heat Health period.

The current Heat Health Alert level and relevant information can also be found via the following link: www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/heat-health

Figure 1: Heatwave Alert Cascade for Warwickshire County Council



For the national cascade structure for alerts please see the [National Heatwave Plan for England](#).

3.0 Roles & Responsibilities

3.1 Level 1 – 4 Responsibilities – Warwickshire Service Action Cards

The Heatwave Plan for England identifies a number of roles and responsibilities for agencies involved in the response to a Heatwave. These actions as well as additional agreed actions for relevant local authority services/directorates are outlined in Action Cards.

Action Cards detail the key actions / responsibilities to be undertaken at each level for service managers to implement or delegate to an appropriate person.

Action Card for each Service by Alert Level (Link Enabled)

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3.2 Level 0 Responsibilities

This table identifies the responsibilities for services during the Long Term Planning / Level 0 period.

Level 0 – Long Term Planning	
Service Area	Responsibility
CSWRT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review heatwave resilience arrangements against national guidance, local practice and lessons learnt • Work with partner agencies to co-ordinate locally appropriate heatwave plans • Work with all relevant WCC service areas and partner agencies to ensure heatwave planning features within wider resilience planning • Review internal CSW alert and cascade processes including distribution lists, roles and responsibilities.
Public Health (People Directorate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Public Health arrangements against national guidance, local practice and lessons learnt • Review internal alert and cascade processes including distribution lists, roles and responsibilities; and review the heatwave web page • Embed the work of heatwave planning (excess seasonal deaths) through strategic planning related to the impact of climate change and ensure maximum adaptation to reduce harm from heatwaves • Work with partners • Communicate with public health commissioned services. • Work in partnership with other areas of the authority that are leading on climate change and sustainability adaptation to reduce harm from heatwaves.
Social Care (People Directorate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop systems to identify and improve resilience of high-risk individuals • Request an HHSRS assessment from EH for clients at particular risk • Encourage cycling/walking where possible to reduce heat levels and poor air quality in urban areas. <p>External Providers/Care Homes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with commissioners to develop longer term plans to prepare for heatwaves • Make environmental improvements to provide a safe environment for clients in the event of a heatwave. • Prepare business continuity plans to cover the event of a heatwave (e.g. storage of medicines, computer resilience, etc.) • Work with partners and staff to raise awareness of the impacts of severe heat and on risk reduction awareness
Communications Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop/review the Heatwave Plan communication channels • Review internal alert and cascade processes including distributions lists

SEE ACTION CARDS IN APPENDICIES FOR LEVEL 1 – 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.0 The Impacts of heatwave on other sectors

Should we reach Heatwave Level 4 there is likely to be a significant impact on other key sectors. Anticipated risks include;

- **Transport infrastructure** – road surfaces may melt causing extreme congestion and stranded motorists. The rail network will also be susceptible to rails warping or buckling in extreme or prolonged heat.
- **Power supplies** – increased demand is expected due to use of air conditioning units. Rising temperatures can cause cooling problems for power stations and lower their efficiency.
- **Environmental pollution** – both air and water quality can lower in prolonged heat due to excess pollutants and accelerated growth of algae. Public nuisance and complains about health and environmental problems such as odour, dust and vermin infestations are likely to increase.
- **Increased potential for wildfires/forest fires** – as vegetation will be drier than usual in a heatwave there is increased risk of an uncontrolled fire.
- **Animal welfare** – there is potential for increased pet fatalities due to irresponsible owners leaving animals in restricted enclosures with poor ventilation, i.e. dogs in cars. There also risks around livestock, with increased ventilation needed for temporary housing and potential for delays in transportation causing distress and suffering.
- **Water shortages** – all water companies have contingency plans in place in case of disruption to supply or sewerage services, but strong demand has the potential to jeopardise availability. Hosepipe bans may be required if high temperatures persist. In the event of an unavoidable failure of the piped water supply, water companies must supply water by alternative means such as in static tanks in the street or bottled

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water. There is a requirement to provide no less than 10 litres per person per day rising to 20 litres per person per day after five days.

- **Crops** – Rising temperatures can lead to crop shortages, either due to the crops dying or not being harvested at the appropriate times. High temperatures may also limit when crops can be sown, and in what quantities. Crop storage may also be affected as temperature control will be much more difficult.

Appendix A: Service Specific Heatwave Action Cards

A.1 CSW Resilience Team Action Cards

CSW Resilience Team - Level 1 Summer Preparedness

- > Issue the Level 1 Heat Health Watch alert indicating the Summer Preparedness Programme under the HPfE has begun
- > Issue the revised Heatwave Plan for Warwickshire ensuring all appropriate Directors/Heads of Service have access to the latest version of the Heatwave plan
- > Use Safety Advisory groups to advise organisers of large events of possible heat risks and advise of solutions to mitigate the effects of hot weather.
- > Work with service, partner agencies, providers and businesses where appropriate to coordinate heatwave plans, ensuring vulnerable and marginalised groups are appropriately supported.
- > Ensure business continuity plans are in place and implement as required; ensure appropriate contact details are provided to LA / NHS emergency planning officers to facilitate transfer of emergency information.

CSW Resilience Team - Level 2 Alert & Readiness

- > Ensure organisers of events take into account possible hot weather risks through the Safety Advisory Groups
- > Monitor local conditions and cascade any pertinent information to those in receipt of Heat Health Plans / Alerts

CSW Resilience Team - Level 3 Heatwave Action

- > Review the safety of any public events taking place during this time.
- > Work with LA services and partners agencies as appropriate to ensure all actions are carried out and disseminate any key updates. Work with partner agencies (e.g. transport) to ensure that water is carried on community transport for patients.

CSW Resilience Team - Level 4 National Emergency

- > Notify Tactical and Strategic groups and activate the Major Emergency Plan if not already done so and carry out processes identified in the plan
- > Maintain all Level 1, 2 & 3 responsibilities

A.2 Public Health Action Cards

Public Health - Level 1 Summer Preparedness

- > Working with the Communication Team and CSW cascade any appropriate briefings, letters and advice sheets to ensure staff are aware of who is at risk.

Public Health - Level 2 Alert & Readiness

- > Liaise with Communications Team & CSW to increase media messages to staff and public and especially 'hard to reach' groups.
- > Implement Business Continuity if required
- > Attend Heatwave Health Communications Group teleconference meeting to gain assurance that CCG's, Hospitals, Care Homes and Providers have implemented their own plans across the city

Public Health - Level 3 Heatwave Action

- > Cascade Alerts to community and voluntary sector
- > Issue level 3 media alerts about keeping cool to the public/internal staff and schools via the Communications team
- > Support organisations to reduce unnecessary travel in a prolonged heatwave
- > Lead Heatwave Health Communications Group teleconference meeting to ensure alerts are reaching CCG's, Hospitals, Care Homes and wider health providers.

Public Health - Level 4 National Emergency

- > Work with the Communication Team to continue to cascade any appropriate briefings, letter and advice sheets through appropriate channels to ensure staff and the wider public are aware of whom is at risk
- > Continue actions identified in levels 1 to 3

A.3 Social Care (People Directorate) Action Cards

Social Care (People Directorate) - Level 1 Summer Preparedness

- > Ensure care homes and hospitals are aware of the WCC Heatwave plan and are engaged in preparing for heatwaves. Ensure other institutional establishments (e.g. private residential homes and schools) are aware of heatwave guidance
- > Identify high-risk individuals on your caseload and raise awareness of heat related illnesses and their prevention among clients and carers
- > Include risk in care records and consider whether changes might be necessary to care plans in the event of a heatwave (e.g. initiating daily visits by formal or informal care givers for those living alone) Identify or create cool rooms/areas (able to be maintained below 26C) Install thermometers where vulnerable individuals spend most of their time

Social Care (People Directorate) - Level 2 Alert & Readiness

Service / Provider Managers

- > Communicate alerts to staff (and commissioned services if agreed)
- > Ensure staff are aware of the key public health messages to reduce the health impacts of the heat and are able to advise people how to keep themselves and their environment cool (see [Appendix B](#) for key messages or [click here](#))
- > Review and prioritise high-risk people and check high-risk people have visitor/phone call arrangements in place
- > Communicate public media messages – especially too hard to reach vulnerable groups
- > Ensure sufficient staffing; implement business continuity measures if required
- > Increase advice to health and social care workers working in community, care homes and hospitals

Frontline Staff and Care Workers

- > Reconfirm key public health messages to clients and ensure they are following the advice (see [Appendix B](#) for key messages or [click here](#))
- > Check clients room temperature if visiting
- > Check indoor temperatures are recorded regularly during the hottest periods for all areas where patients reside
- > Ensure cool areas are below 26°C
- > Ensure sufficient cold water and ice are available

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- > Consider weighing clients regularly to identify dehydration and rescheduling physio to cooler hours

Social Care (People Directorate) - Level 3 Heatwave Action

Service / Provider Managers

- > Communicate alerts to staff (and commissioned services if agreed)
- > Ensure staff are aware of the key public health messages to reduce the health impacts of the heat and are able to advise people how to keep themselves and their environment cool (see [Appendix B](#) for key messages or [click here](#))
- > Activate maintain business continuity plans is required – should consider preparations for a possible surge in demand
- > Advise carers to contact GP if concerned regarding their clients health

Frontline Staff and Care Workers

- > Visit / Phone high risk people
- > Reconfirm key public health messages to clients and ensure they are following the advice (see [Appendix B](#) for key messages or [click here](#))
- > Check indoor temperatures are recorded regularly during the hottest periods for all areas where patients reside

Social Care (People Directorate) - Level 4 National Emergency

- > If activated, act on responsibilities as outlined within Warwickshire's Major Emergency Plan
- > Implement daily sit reps with all appropriate services to identify shortfalls and business continuity issues
- > Continue actions identified in levels 1 to 3

A.4 Communication Team Action Cards

Communications Team - Level 1 Summer Preparedness

- > Work with partners and staff on risk-reduction awareness (e.g. key public health messages), using a variety of methods to maximise dissemination
- > Issue Level 1 summer preparedness messages on website and intranet as well as Facebook and Twitter. Core messages to communicate are included in Annex 2 (pg.42) of the [National Heatwave Plan](#).

Communications Team - Level 2 Alert & Readiness

- > Issue Level 2 alert & readiness message on website and intranet as well as Facebook and twitter. Core messages to communicate are included in Annex 2 (pg.42) of the [National Heatwave Plan](#).
- > Implement Business continuity if required.

Communications Team - Level 3 Heatwave Action

- > Issue Level 3 heatwave action message and ensure it is on the website and intranet as well as Facebook and twitter. Core messages to communicate are included in Annex 2 (pg.42) of the [National Heatwave Plan](#).
- > Take part in any teleconferences to discuss actions during Level 3.

Communications Team - Level 4 National Emergency

- > If activated, act on responsibilities as outlined within Warwickshire's Major Emergency Plan
- > Work with all service areas to ensure appropriate updates, briefings and advice are being cascaded through appropriate channels
- > Continue actions identified in levels 1 to 3

Appendix B: Key Public Health Messages (Public Health England)

Key Public Health Messages

Stay out of the Heat:

- **Keep out of the Sun between 11am and 3pm**
- **If you have to go out in the heat, walk in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear a hat and light scarf**
- **Avoid extreme physical exertion**
- **Wear light, loose-fitting cotton clothes**

Cool yourself down:

- **Have plenty of cold drinks, and avoid excess alcohol, caffeine and hot drinks**
- **Eat cold foods, particularly salads and fruit with a high water content**
- **Take a cool shower, bath or body wash**
- **Sprinkle water over the skin or clothing, or keep a damp cloth on the back of your neck**

Keep your environment cool:

- **Keeping your living space cool is especially important for infants, the elderly or those with chronic health conditions or who can't look after themselves**
- **Place a thermometer in your main living room and bedroom to keep a check on the temperature**
- **Keep windows that are exposed to the sun closed during the day, and open windows**
- **At night when the temperature has dropped close curtains that receive morning or afternoon sun, however, care should be taken with metal blinds and dark curtains, as these can absorb heat – consider replacing or putting reflective material in-between them and the window space**
- **Turn off non-essential lights and electrical equipment – they generate heat**
- **Keep indoor plants and bowls of water in the house as evaporation helps cool the air**
- **If possible, move into a cooler room, especially for sleeping**
- **Electric fans may provide some relief, if temperatures are below 35°C**
- **Consider putting up external shading outside windows**
- **Use pale, reflective external paints**
- **Have your loft and cavity walls insulated – this keeps the heat in when it is cold and out when it is hot**
- **Grow trees and leafy plants near windows to act as natural air-conditioners**

Look out for others:

- **Keep an eye on isolated, elderly, ill or very young people and make sure they are able to keep cool**
- **Ensure that babies, children or elderly people are not left alone in stationary cars**
- **Check on elderly or sick neighbours, family or friends every day during a heatwave**
- **Be alert and call a doctor or social services if someone is unwell or further help is needed**

If you have a health problem:

- **Keep medicines below 25 °C or in the refrigerator (read the storage instructions on the packaging)**
- **Seek medical advice if you are suffering from a chronic medical condition or taking multiple medications**

If you or others feel unwell:

- **Try to get help if you feel dizzy, weak, anxious or have intense thirst and headache; move to a cool place as soon as possible and measure your body temperature**
- **Drink some water or fruit juice to rehydrate**
- **Rest immediately in a cool place if you have painful muscular spasms (particularly in the legs, arms or abdomen, in many cases after sustained exercise during very hot weather), and drink oral rehydration solutions containing electrolytes.**
- **Medical attention is needed if heat cramps last more than one hour**
- **Consult your doctor if you feel unusual symptoms or if symptoms persist**

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