

Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service

‘Winter Warmer’

24th October 2017

Background to the service

- Service launched on 1st April 2016
- Available to people aged 65 and over and adults living with a disability
- To support people to live in their own home more safely and securely
- Reduce falls and avoidable hospital admissions
- Support the timely discharge of patients from hospital
- Countywide service

Three elements

- Handyperson incorporating Wellbeing and Home Check
- Hospital Discharge Facilitation
- Home Energy Checks

Handyperson

- Initial Wellbeing and Home Check assessment
- Arrange for works to be carried out if requested
- Chargeable (£25 ph) unless grab rails
- Onward referrals, signposting, information

Support so far

- 2071 People supported through the service since inception.
- 1105 In the first year.
- 966 So far this year, an increase of over 50% compared to the first half of last year.
- Over 60% of our work is to install grab rails, following a well being check.

Typical works

- Grab Rails
- Banister rail
- Bulb Change
- Fencing
- Galv Rail
- Garden Work
- General Electrics
- General Plumbing
- General Safety
- General Carpentry
- Gutter Cleaning
- Handyperson Works
- Key safe
- Steps

Discharge support so far – 327 cases

- Facilitating timely hospital discharges
- Referrals from hospital staff
- Monday-Friday 9am- 5pm
- Bed moves, key safe installations, grab rails
- Occasional referral from community to avoid admission
- Wellbeing and Home Check offered following discharge
- The average cost of one night in hospital is £300

Home Energy Checks

- Free assessment of your home looking at energy saving
- Install measures such as draught excluders, radiator foils, low energy lamps there and then
- Check energy bills to see if savings can be made and place on to priority registers
- Investigate available grants for loft insulation etc.
- Onward referrals to other Age UK services and organisations

In addition

- Offer advice on better usage of energy
- Reduce build up of condensation
- Discover if you're in 'Fuel Poverty' and make referrals for one off payments such as 'Warm Home Discount Scheme' from your energy provider or Cambridgeshire Community Foundation 'Winter grants'

An example of how we helped

- 85 year old gentleman from Fenland area
- Extremely high energy bills of over £190 per month
- Carried out a Home Energy Check and discovered the immersion heater was permanently switched on.
- Implemented various energy saving measures and took readings from electricity and gas meters.
- Called energy provider and switched tariffs which along with the energy saving measures and advice given has brought his monthly bill down to £103.00

Fuel Poverty

A household is fuel poor if:

- Their fuel costs are above the average national median level

And

- Were they to spend that amount on fuel, they would be left with income below the official poverty line

Typically, you are considered in fuel poverty if you spend more than 10% of your income on energy bills

- In 2015 11% (2.5 million) of homes were in fuel poverty

Fuel poverty risk factors

The Individual

- Low income
- High fuel costs
- Older person, particularly those living alone
- Fuel payment methods i.e. Card meters
- Medical conditions

The Property

- Age (pre 1964)
- Size
- Poorly insulated
- Solid walls
- Inefficient heating system
- Off gas network (15% of all homes are off gas)

Low indoor temperature impacts

- 18-24 degrees: No risk to healthy people
- Below 16 Degrees: More likely to suffer from respiratory infections
- Below 12 degrees: Two hours or more, core body temperature drops and rise in blood pressure and viscosity
- Below 5 degrees: Deep body temperature falls, significant increase in the risk of hypothermia

Health impacts in cold homes

Possible direct impacts

- Heart attacks/Strokes
- Respiratory disease
- Influenza
- Worsening of existing medical conditions
- Falls
- Hypothermia

Possible indirect impacts

- Mental health illnesses
- Risk of carbon monoxide poisoning
- Poor nutrition

Health impacts in damp homes

- Bacteria and viruses
- Allergies worsen when mould apparent
- Greater risk of infections
- Increase in dust mites
- Over 20,000 people die each winter from living in a cold or damp home

Tackling fuel poverty

- Improve energy efficiency of your homes

How?

- Seeking energy advice from your energy providers and Age UK Home Energy Assessors
- Maximise your income by prioritising your spend and taking care in your energy usage

Condensation

Condensation is the process of water vapour in the air turning into water droplets when it hits a cold surface. Water vapour is created by everyday living and activities in the home such as breathing, washing, bathing, cooking, drying clothes and burning fuel for heating. The more people in the home and the more of these activities taking place, the more likely condensation will occur.

Condensation

Condensation occurs

- Inadequate heating
- Inadequate insulation
- Inadequate ventilation
- Possible excessive moisture production

Signs of condensation

- Wet walls
- Black mould
- Musty smell
- Clothes, bedding etc. feeling damp
- Fungal fur in wardrobes

Reducing risk of condensation

- Put lids on pans while cooking
- Don't let kettles or pans boil for too long
- Open windows to ventilate ensuring doors are closed so as not to lose heat from the other rooms
- Avoid drying clothes indoors, but if needed, open the window to let the warm moist air out and ensure doors are closed
- When running a bath, use the cold water first followed by the hot to reduce the amount of steam produced.
- If possible, avoid using bottled gas and paraffin heaters as they are not only expensive to run, they produce a lot of water vapour.

Ventilate to remove moisture

- **Use extractor fans if fitted in kitchens and bathrooms**
- **Leave enough space in cupboards and wardrobes so air can circulate**
- **Regularly air cupboards, wardrobes and chest of drawers**
- **Place furniture at least 4 inches away from walls**
- **Do not allow air to stagnate. Open curtains during the day**
- **After bathing, open the window for 20 minutes to help dry the room out. Ensure the door is closed**
- **AVOID over ventilating your home by leaving the windows open all day during cold weather**
- **Close windows when heating is on**
- **Uncover air bricks and ventilators if sealed**

Heat, Insulate and Draught proof

- Ensure that the heating is warming the house evenly by using the programmer, thermostat and radiator valves if fitted
- Run the heating for prolonged periods as this means the boiler will not have to work so hard to maintain the temperature
- Try to maintain a low heat in all rooms, even those that aren't used
- Insulating your home will heat up cold surfaces and help keep the heat in
- Insulate the loft hatch to prevent draughts
- Secondary/Double glazing helps prevent heat loss

Heat loss in the home

- **Walls: 35%**
- **Roof: 25%**
- **Floor: 15%**
- **Draughts: 15%**
- **Windows: 10%**

What can you do

If you feel you're affected by fuel poverty, damp or cold homes, please, please contact us at Age UK's Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service.

We can offer you a free Home Energy Check which will provide you with immediate measures installed to help save you money on your energy bills and make your home more comfortable to live in. The advice we can offer will not only put money in your pocket, but could have a greater effect on your general wellbeing.

Wellbeing Check

- Remember the wellbeing check we offer
- Getting support now can mean you can live independently for longer by accessing the services we have and the organisations we work in partnership with

Contact details

Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service and Hospital Discharge Support

01480 700205 Monday to Friday

Thank you

Andy Wicklen

Cambridgeshire Handyperson Service Team Leader

01480 700205

Andy.Wicklen@ageukcap.org.uk

www.ageukcap.org.uk