

Spring Edition

Cutting fuel bills in the warmer weather

As the days get longer and – hopefully – warmer, you can start to save money on your gas and electricity bills by following these tips.

- Apply for heating and insulation grants now while contractors are not so busy with the winter rush.
- Dry washing outdoors in sunny or windy weather to minimise tumble drier use.
- Wear thin layers of clothing so you can remove and add as necessary.

If you have gas central heating –

- Programme your heating to come on for less time if you feel your home is too warm.
- You might also want to turn down your room thermostat by a degree or two and turn down or even turn off some of your radiators.
- It is definitely NOT cheaper to run your heating 24/7 – use your programmer, room thermostat and thermostatic radiator valves, if you have them, to make your home comfortable AND keep your bills down.

For those with electric storage heaters –

- Turn down the input/charge dial to a medium/low setting.
- Keep the output/room temp dial set on minimum, unless you feel cold in the evening.
- If you need to turn up the output/room temp dial in the evening, make sure you remember to reset it to minimum before you go to bed.
- Watch weather forecasts to make sure your storage heaters are appropriately set for any unseasonally hot or cold weather.

If your home is too warm –

- Turn off heating before you start to open windows – otherwise you are wasting money heating the outdoors.

New year – new staff

Warm and Well said a sad farewell to Kerry Kempston, who has moved to a new post in health education. Many of Kerry's former clients are grateful for her hard work on their behalf over the past three years and she is greatly missed by colleagues.



Dianne (left) and Gillian, the new Warm and Well advisers.

There are now two new part-time energy advisers job sharing the Warm and Well caseload. Gillian MacDonald covers Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Dianne Welsh covers Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Gillian said: "I am excited about this new challenge and look forward to working on Warm and Well with Dianne." Dianne was also delighted to be working on Warm and Well: "Kerry told me how much she had enjoyed her contact with all the clients and health professionals she met in the course of her work. I can't wait to get started."

Keeping Warm and Well

From the beginning of August 2006 to the end of January 2007 Warm and Well received 74 referrals from health professionals. We accessed the Central Heating Programme grant on behalf of 12 clients, of which three have now had a new system installed. A further 13 clients were referred for insulation grants, of which three have now been completed. In addition three clients have been referred for a new storage heating system, one client has had an extension to their current system, one has had their current system repaired and one has had a replacement immersion fitted. All clients visited also received FREE energy saving lightbulbs. The table below details the savings clients will make from these energy efficiency measures.

Energy Efficiency Measure	Number of measures	Lifetime Financial Savings
Central Heating	3	£1,961
Cavity Wall Insulation	2	£ 28,789
Loft Insulation	1	£13,816

Real People, real help –

Cosy Kids

Cosy Kids is part of Warm and Well funded by the ScottishPower Energy People Trust, that aims to alleviate fuel poverty amongst families with young children in Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian.

During the last quarter, Cosy Kids received 30 referrals; these comprise of seven from East Lothian, three from Midlothian and 20 from Edinburgh. Since the project was launched in July 2006 the number of referrals received has increased to 102.

Over the coming months, emphasis will be placed upon increasing awareness of the Cosy Kids project throughout Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian so that more families can be referred for help and advice about how to achieve affordable warmth in their homes.

To book a briefing, or to request some leaflets, please telephone Helena on **(0131) 538 7936** or email cosykids@changeworks.org.uk.

Cosy Kids case study

Tanya was referred to Cosy Kids by her health visitor, who was concerned about how cold her flat was. She is a lone parent of three young children living in a top floor flat that she rents from a housing association. Tanya had changed to a new electricity supplier, but her payments had doubled, so she stopped using her heating. When our Cosy Kids advisor visited, she checked that Tanya's flat had the recommended amount of loft insulation and that her electric storage heaters were working properly. She advised Tanya how to use her heating to get the maximum amount of heat without having to spend over her budget. When the adviser checked Tanya's bills, she found that the company had put her on the wrong tariff for her type of heating. Tanya was happy for Cosy Kids to contact her electricity supplier, and the adviser made sure she was put on to the correct tariff. The electricity supplier sent Tanya refund of £120, because she had been paying too much. She is now able to use her heating sensibly to keep her family warm and keep her bills to an affordable level.



Helena,
Cosy Kids adviser

Out and about

Warm and Well and Cosy Kids advisers are happy to give briefings to health teams across Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian. We can offer everything from an informal 10 minute chat during your tea break to a full presentation. Cosy Kids can also speak to any group that works with families who have young children.

Gillian recently gave a talk about Warm and Well to The District Nurse Forum at Leith Community Treatment Centre and Dianne attended a Health in Mind group meeting to promote the service. Helena Tuer has been very busy with talks about Cosy Kids to Parkway Child and Family Centre, with a request from them to do regular talks to the parents using the new centre when it opens in South Queensferry. She also gave a briefing to the ScottishPower Energy People Trust, Children 1st in Macmerry and the Dads Work group in Musselburgh.

How to refer

Any health professional can refer people from their caseload living in cold, damp or draughty homes in Edinburgh, East Lothian or Midlothian. Our referral form is very quick and easy to complete. You can get a form by writing to us at the address below, telephoning Gillian or Dianne or e mailing (see our contact details below). We are happy to accept photocopied forms by post or you can fax them to us at the number below.

If you have a family living in Edinburgh, East Lothian or Midlothian who have children under five whose health is being compromised by cold, damp or draughty living conditions contact Helena Tuer on 0131 538 7936. She can arrange to visit families to offer advice about grants to improve insulation or heating and can help them get the best out of their existing heating system.

Warm and Well
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