

Fire Scrutiny Committee Safe and Well Performance

Introduction

Following increased performance monitoring and further information sessions with operational crews, the performance both in output and quality around Safe and Well visits began to improve toward the end of Q3. Regrettably, the rate of Safe and Well visits by wholetime crews remains significantly below target despite considerable efforts to resolve this. Consequently, a renewed focus on training and accountability is underway to raise the standard and quantity of Safe and Well visits across identified high risk areas.

Performance at the end of January 2023

The number of requests for a Safe and Well visit continued to increase with 399 requests for a Safe and Well visit in January, this included several medium to high risk referrals arising from the use of the online home fire safety self-assessment (Safelincs) reported previously. This inward referral rate resulted in an increase in jobs outstanding for more than 28 days to 273. However, there was a large increase in visits being completed and closed, up from 199 in December to 316. Furthermore, the number of visits waiting more than 90 days remains low (<2%) which shows that very few people remain on the waiting list for more than three months. A review of the outstanding cases showed that many were people who had not been available when contacted, had been out visiting family or were in hospital. The crews are required to make three attempts to arrange a Safe and Well after which we write to the resident. The percentage of visits to vulnerable residents was 97%, well above the KPI of 75%.

[HFSC \(safelincs.co.uk\)](https://safelincs.co.uk)

Improvement Plans

Prevention management staff have begun attending the Response Performance Management meetings to highlight key areas for improvement. The Station Manager has arranged to speak at operational management events to explain the rationale for Safe and Well visits and to provide continuing professional development about quality and standards for the work.

The Service has continued to quality assure Safe and Well visit reports and is using the information from this to identify and share examples of good practice across the Service and to focus on next steps for improvement. This information is then being reported to the Response Management meeting.

There has been some slow improvement in the number of Safe and Well visits being carried out and completed in a timely manner. The completion of the time and motion study for

wholetime crews will enable the Service to identify latent capacity that could be used to increase prevention activity.

Two additional Community Safety Advisors, who carry out more complex Safe and Well visits full-time, have been recruited and have begun intensive training for the role. The new staff will enable the Service to focus fire-risk reduction for people at highest risk of fire injury. This is necessary because over 80% of our Safe and Well visits are for people with one or more high risk factors and identified as vulnerable to fire and as a result we have made onward referrals for additional support for between 25% and 57% of our visits.

Improving Standards

We have begun the introduction of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Person-centred Framework which will drive up standardisation of approach for Safe and Well with the focus now on addressing the personal behavioural and environmental risk factors for people, rather than the general safety of their home.

The Service has introduced the Online Home Fire Safety Self-Assessment, which is increasing the number of requests for a visit from people that were not known to other agencies. This is a significant improvement in our offer to local residents. People who are at low risk from fire, can access targeted, specific advice online but if their answers highlight medium to high risk, they are asked to consent to a referral to GFRS. This is enabling us to increase the rate of Safe and Well for our population and reach people who might never have come to the attention of statutory services.

Improved Identification of Risk

Information from national data reports and from analysis of incidents in Gloucestershire, has been shared with partner agencies to broaden the organisations that can identify people at risk of fire-related injury and to encourage their workforce to use the home fire safety self-assessment or our online referral form to seek support for local residents.

Cost of Living Support

In addition to increasing awareness of the benefits of a Safe and Well visit, we have been issuing slow cookers to vulnerable families as cooking materials remain a leading cause of accidental dwelling fire. This month we will be providing electric blankets to people living in cold homes or in fuel poverty, through social prescribers, charities and district councils. This will reduce the risk of vulnerable residents becoming ill from cold and enable us to remove damaged electric blankets that could pose a fire risk.