



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing

# *Preventing harm and managing the health of older people during extreme hot weather*

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# *Think ahead - prepare*

Do not wait - prepare

Preparation for how older people will be supported during an episode of extreme hot weather **MUST** happen a long time **BEFORE** hot weather occurs.



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## *Key messages*

- Review those who may be affected
- Know when heatwaves have their greatest effect
  - Occur early in the season
  - In cities
  - Where there are several days of extreme temperatures
  - With a high night time temperature
- Develop systems to support older people



## *Develop supportive maintenance systems*

- Maintenance plans for:
  - Air conditioners
  - Fans
  - Fridge / freezers
- Back up equipment



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# *Develop supportive care delivery practices*

- Ensure staff have been educated
  - Know how to look after themselves
- Watch the weather forecasts
- Have a plan for each person at risk
  - Review medicines
  - Fluid intake
  - Encourage appropriate behaviours
    - Reduce excessive clothing



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## *Take pre-emptive action*

- Use of blinds and curtains to keep the environment cool
- Use air-conditioners
- Use fans cautiously
- Encourage fluid intake



# *Active observation*

- Check on older, sick and frail people
- Identify those most at risk
- Watch for the signs of heat stress



# *Actively manage*

- Fluids
- Reduce physical activity
- Use of cooling showers or sponges
- Medical review



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