

Invest in wellbeing of managers and staff.
Promote positive physical and mental health to staff.
Provide regular opportunities for staff to discuss concerns.
Create a culture that looks for solutions not problems.
Treat staff well regardless of the impact of wider pressures.
Regularly monitor staff and check that they have the support they need.
Increase the levels of support you give to staff; ensure they have supervisions and can always contact colleagues.
Protect manager wellbeing - share responsibilities by using deputies and delegating more to wider team.
Ask for help when you need it – look to the owners of the service, your peers and other professionals to manage your own needs.
Build/maintain resilience and morale - discuss with team what they value.
Provide winter packs for staff to include items to remain well during the winter.

Cost of living

Budget for increased costs.
Secure increased investment from owners, review pricing.
Be upfront with funders about the impact and why costs may need to increase to maintain high levels of care.
Increase wages where possible.
Insulate premises to save energy costs.
Keep informed on cost-of-living crisis and recommendations (e.g., Money Saving Expert etc.).
Keep people and staff well informed, provide advice on how to protect from the cold.
Promote warm clothing options to people and staff.
Research how to lower energy consumption, provide advice to people and staff.
Look to promote and encourage use of local initiatives, community projects (e.g., healthy holidays for children, public buildings, food banks).
Create a cost-of-living champion role.
Minimise wastage - make sure all appliances are turned off when not in use and that the boiler is in optimal use mode.
Buy equipment before prices increase further (electric blankets etc.).
Research what grants, benefits and pension credit may be available.
Research cheapest supermarkets and price comparisons.
Stockpile food with long sell-by dates.
Arrange Blue light cards for staff.

Weather

Create a special weather Contingency Plan or section.
Ensure you have the personal equipment for bad weather.

Be as preventative as possible (e.g., ensure boiler serviced early etc.).
Ensure care team vehicles are prepared for winter (e.g., de-icer, winter tyres, etc.).
Identify who in the community has and is willing to support the use of 4x4 and other vehicles appropriate for winter access. Have replacement drivers on standby.
Identify high priority clients and start to plan with family or representatives.
Manage expectations, be open and upfront on challenges with people and families.
Plan double-up community appointments carefully, avoid adding to logistical problems.
Plan what staff can walk to each customer / residential service.
Work with other agencies to provide hard to reach locations in bad weather.
Monitor weather reports – adapt plans and staffing accordingly.
Store foods that are non-perishable.
Plan indoor activities.

Resources to help

Skills for Care has several resources to help you develop and maintain an effective Contingency Plan and mitigate against challenges, including winter pressures. Our resources include a recorded webinar, checklist, template examples and FAQs.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/rmwebinars