Bristol Health Partners

BRISTOL ONE CITY

Damp, mould and fuel poverty toolkit for staff

(Health, care and community staff in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire)

February 2026

Version 2

Acknowledgements:

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Please share any feedback or questions about this document to:
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Introduction

Damp, mould and fuel poverty have significant negative impacts on mental and physical health. Health, care and community staff have an opportunity to Make Every Contact Count and signpost clients* to support and advice to address these issues.

The national "Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home" guidance (2024) highlights

- the serious risks that damp and mould can pose to health,
- the imperative to respond quickly
- and practical steps to address damp and mould.

This simple toolkit aims to support staff to identify and respond to damp, mould or fuel poverty concerns. It aims to provide a range of resources which can be used flexibly as required by staff to provide effective signposting.

This resource has been collaboratively developed by the Bristol One City Damp and Mould Working Group which includes health, care, and housing staff. The toolkit was piloted during 2025 to gain feedback.

* Client is the term used in the toolkit to reflect the needs of patients and residents

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Damp, mould and/or fuel poverty identification and action

IDENTIFY RISK

SELF IDENTIFIED
Has the client (or their carer/parent/family) raised concerns about damp and mould or keeping their home warm?

STAFF TO IDENTIFY
Is the client at an increased risk of the negative health impacts of damp and mould OR showing symptoms negatively impacted by damp and mould? ***(see resource 1).***

AND/OR
Can you smell damp on the person's clothing?
Ask: Do you have any worries about damp and mould or keeping your home warm? If yes, would you like any support?

RECORD
If **YES** to any of above, record concerns about damp, mould and/or fuel poverty
e.g. primary and secondary care use SNOMED code 'Housing problem - Fuel poverty'

TAKE ACTION
Does the client (or their carer/parent/family) have capacity to advocate for themselves?
YES – SIGNPOST & ADVISE **NO – REFER & RAISE**

RAISE the negative health impacts of damp and mould, and/or living in a cold home.

PART 1 – SIGNPOST/REFER for damp, mould and fuel poverty advice (verbal/SMS – ***see template 1).***
These services can give advice about energy bills, heating your home, benefits and carry out home repairs. They particularly help those on low incomes and struggling to afford to heat their homes.

- Bristol and North Somerset residents - Warm Homes Advice and Money Service via online form or call 0800 0822234.
- South Gloucestershire residents - Warm and Well via online form or call 0800 500 3076.

PART 2 - If private/social housing AND significant damp and mould concerns, ADVISE raising / RAISE with landlord/housing provider (For printable factsheets see resource 2).

Can advocate for themselves - ADVISE:

1. Recommend contacting landlord / housing officer raising damp and mould issue in writing. Guidance available from local council websites and templates available from Shelter website.
   If Bristol City Council social housing, advise completing damp and mould report online form or calling 0117 922 2200 to report emergency repairs.
2. Advise highlighting the negative health impacts and including evidence if available e.g. print screen of NHS app/print out of medical conditions from GP reception. Where significant health concerns, a letter can be provided using template 2.

If already contacted landlord with no reply or resolve, advise contacting/following:

- If private-rented - local council Private Housing team by signposting to local council website,
- If Bristol City Council social housing - complaints procedure on council website,
- If housing association - complaints procedure on housing association website,

If social housing and completed complaint process but issue not resolved, contact Housing Ombudsman

Cannot advocate for themselves – RAISE (with client's consent):

- If private-rented - a letter can be provided to the client's carer/family, or landlord directly (if details known). If significant health concerns, notify local Private Housing team. Include property address, photos (where able), description of the issue (location and size) and contact details for the client/carer/family.
  Bristol - online form, South Gloucestershire - email psechousing@southglos.gov.uk,
  North Somerset - email privaterented.housing@n-somerset.gov.uk
- If Bristol City Council social housing - complete damp and mould report form on behalf of tenant,
- If housing association - send a letter to the housing association using letter template ***(see template 2)***.

Templates

Template 1: SMS signposting template to signpost client to damp, mould and fuel poverty advice (for professional use)

Bristol residents:
Dear [add name*],
If you would like free support with keeping your home warm and dry, contact the Warmer Homes Advice and Money Service by calling 0800 0822 234 or using their online form: https://www.cse.org.uk/my-home/contact-us-for-energy-advice/

For more information about the Warmer Homes Advice and Money Service, visit: https://www.cse.org.uk/my-home/advice-projects/wham-warmer-homes-advice-and-money/

[add if in rented housing AND damp and mould concerns*]
It is important to raise damp and mould issues with your landlord, highlighting the negative impact it has on your health. See the advice for tenants.

[add if in social housing AND damp and mould concerns*]
For information about damp and mould, visit: https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/housing/council-tenants/home-safety/damp-and-mould-in-your-home

South Gloucestershire residents:
Dear [add name*],
If you would like support with keeping your home warm please contact the Warm and Well Service for free advice and support by using their online form or calling 0800 500 3076.

For information about damp and mould see the South Gloucestershire Council website.

[add if in rented housing AND damp and mould concerns*]
It is important to raise damp and mould issues with your landlord, highlighting the negative impact it has on your health. See the advice for tenants.

North Somerset residents:
Dear [add name*],
If you would like support with keeping your home warm please contact the Warm Homes Advice & Money Service for free advice and support by using their online form or calling 0800 0822 234.

For information about damp and mould see the damp and mould fact sheet

[add if in rented housing AND damp and mould concerns*]
It is important to raise damp and mould issues with your landlord, highlighting the negative impact it has on your health. See the advice for tenants.

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Template 2: Letter template to raise concerns about the health impacts of damp, mould and/or cold (for professional use)

[Insert sender details & Address]

Re: Concerns about mould and damp in residence

Dear [Landlord/housing provider name],

I am writing to you concerning the presence of damp and mould in the property [Insert address]. Following a recent appointment with your tenant [Insert name], I have concerns about the presence of damp and/or mould in the property and risk of negative impacts on their health and wellbeing.

Your tenant/their family [has health conditions which could be caused/exacerbated by damp and mould **and/or** is at an increased risk of the negative impacts from damp and mould exposure*] as highlighted in the 2024 'Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home guidance'.

[Add detail within your professional scope (with tenant's consent)] –

1. Explain how your client is at an increased risk of the health impacts of damp and mould (see resource 1).

If medical professional, provide facts about health e.g. diagnosed health conditions, any symptoms, severity, if they are exacerbated by damp and mould, hospital admissions and/or risk.

If non-medical professional, it may be helpful to describe observed health status.

2. Add any further information about what you have observed e.g. impact on the individual and their family, damage to belongings.

[My client has identified/ My client's parent/carer/family has identified / During a home visit I have identified*] damp and mould within the home, with particular concern regarding the following: [Delete as appropriate]

- Visible mould growth on windows and/or surfaces
- Smell of damp
- Leaks inside property
- Windows cannot be opened in all rooms
- Concerns about the adequacy and effectiveness of the heating system

I am writing to you to request that these concerns are followed up as appropriate and any issues are addressed in line with Housing Legislation, including the Renters' Rights Act, Decent Homes Standards and Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2025 (including Awaab's Law).

Please contact the tenant to let them know what action you intend to take to remedy the issues.

Yours Faithfully,

[Your name], [Your role], [Your contact details]

* add/delete as appropriate

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Supporting resources

Resource 1: People at an increased risk

People at an increased risk from damp and mould are identified below:

Population groups:

- Pregnant women, their unborn babies and women who have recently given birth,
- Children and young people up to age 16 years (whose organs are still developing and are therefore more likely to suffer from physical conditions such as respiratory problems)
- Older people, aged 65+

Health condition/s:

- Respiratory condition (Such as asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, COPD, cystic fibrosis, other chronic lung conditions)
- Skin conditions (such as eczema)
- Cardiovascular conditions (e.g., angina, heart failure)
- Immunocompromised or have a weakened immune system (e.g. immunosuppressants or undergoing chemotherapy, had a transplant, taking medication that suppresses the immune system)
- People living with a mental health condition
- People who are bedbound, housebound or have mobility problems making it more difficult for them to get out of a home with damp and mould and into fresh air

OR

Experienced any of the following in the last 6 months:

- Repeated instances of coughing, wheezing or breathing difficulties or throat infections
- Repeated instances of dry, itchy, cracked, or sore skin
- Recurrent irritation of the eyes
- Recurrent nasal congestion, runny nose or sneezing
- Frequent worry about damp and mould impacting mental health
- Any A&E or hospital admissions due to breathing concerns or tightness of chest

Source: Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home

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Resource 2: Signposting and factsheets to direct clients to

Printable factsheets

Damp, mould and/or fuel poverty
Damp and mould - Damp and mould - Centre for Sustainable Energy
Damp and mould advice easy read - Advice leaflet damp and mould
Translated factsheets - Factsheets in other languages
Private Rented Housing
Bristol factsheet
South Glos factsheet

Webpages

Private Rented Housing
Bristol City Council Website
South Gloucestershire Council Website
North Somerset Council Website
Bath & North East Somerset Website
Damp and mould in private rented homes - Shelter England (includes letter templates for tenants)

Social housing
Damp and mould in social housing - Shelter England (letter templates for tenants)
Make Things Right | Social housing issue? Know how to complain.

Advice

Cost of living advice (includes fuel poverty and housing)
Cost of living support - Bristol
Cost of living help - South Gloucestershire Council
Cost of living advice and guidance - North Somerset Council
Cost of living advice and guidance – Bath & North East Somerset Council

Fuel poverty advice
How we help you - Centre for Sustainable Energy (Bristol & North Somerset)
Warm and Well | a fitter home for a healthy future (South Glos)
Energy at home (Bath & North East Somerset)

Housing advice
Citizens Advice Bristol– 03444 111 444
Housing Matters (drop-in sessions available) – free advice line 0117 935 1260
Shelter Bristol
Housing Advice Bath & North East Somerset Council

Training available for staff

- Fuel poverty awareness (Bristol) – Contact CSE
- Fuel poverty awareness (South Glos) - Training | Warm and Well
- Helping people living in cold homes e-learning (national) - e-learning for healthcare
- Avon Fire and Rescue Service Home Fire Safety awareness– email hfs.agency@avonfire.gov.uk

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