

Aged Care summer strategy



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Aged Care summer strategy Outline

- Summer strategy approach
- Heatwave background: summer 2008-09
- Risk factors
- Planning
- Messages & products
- Discussion

Aged Care summer strategy Approach

- all hazard
 - plan
 - prepare
 - emergency response and recovery
- service sectors
 - public sector residential aged care
 - older people living in their own homes

Aged Care summer strategy Approach (cont)

- partners
 - central & local
- research/evidence
- Responsibilities

- Heatwave planning for local government
(Public Health framework)

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Heatwave - background

Summer 2008-09

- January 2009 Heatwave in Victoria: an Assessment of Health Impacts
 - 374 excess deaths
 - greatest number of deaths were those 75+ years
 - increases in
 - Emergency department presentations
 - Ambulance Victoria assessments
 - Locum GP attendances

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Heatwave - background

- Personal Alert Victoria

High temperatures Wed 28 Jan – Sun 1 Feb 09

- Increase in missed daily calls
- Significantly increased number of medical emergencies
- Higher than average number of cancellations as a result of client being deceased

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Heatwave - background

- Heatwave planning pilot projects
 - 13 local government areas
 - Products & messages
 - Target groups, reach
 - Services
- The Importance of place
 - Physical environment
 - Geographic location

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Heatwave - background

- Awareness of Health Professionals and Carers of the Health Risks to the Elderly from Extreme Hot Weather
 - no formalised heatwave strategies
 - all perform activities that contribute to minimise harm
 - some services well placed to do more
 - all believe they have a role

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Heatwave – risk factors

Predisposing factors for heat stress illness

- extremes of age
- dehydration
- lack of acclimatisation
- lack of aerobic fitness
- impaired ability to sweat
- obesity
- infection
- compromised thermo-regulation

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Heatwave – risk factors

Risk factors

- Increased risk
 - Pre-existing illness (as above)
 - Confined to bed
 - Unable to care for self
 - Socially isolated
 - Economic deprivation
 - Electricity outage

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Heatwave – risk factors

- Decreased risk
 - Working air-conditioner
 - Air-conditioned location to visit
 - Participating in social activities
 - Having a pet
 - Access to transport
 - Dressing lightly
 - Taking extra baths/showers/sponging

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Heatwave – planning

State-wide/inter-sectoral issues

- Definitions & responsibilities
- Consistent, standardised warning system
- Continuous improvement/evaluation
- Climate change

Aged Care summer strategy Heatwave – planning

- Central policy & framework
- Local leadership & coordination
- Partners
- Products & messages
- Structures for communication
- Service responses
- Geographic responses

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Heatwave – messages & products

- public health messages - immediate
 - Adequate hydration
 - Adequate nutrition (maintain sodium levels)
 - Loose light clothing
 - Avoid sunburn
 - Avoid unnecessary exercise
 - Shelter in cool ventilated place
 - Relief by bathing/sponging

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Heatwave – messages & products

- public health messages – longer term
 - Aerobic fitness
 - Lose weight
 - Optimise chronic medical conditions
 - Acclimatisation to hot weather
 - Adequate home insulation & ventilation

Aged Care summer strategy Heatwave – supporting services

- Messages and products
 - Residential aged care
 - Older people living in their own homes
 - HACC
 - PAV
 - Homeless people
- Staff training

Questions

- Key agencies and/or partners in your local service system?
- How will you consult & coordinate?
 - Older people?
 - Service providers?
- Who are the hard to reach? How will you reach them?
- Key priorities for Aged Care work?