

# Annex K: Heat and Humidity Policy and Procedure

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to provide precautionary and preventative measures for our residents during the hot and humid summer months. Elderly people are extremely vulnerable to heat related disorders.

**Definitions:**

*Heat Exhaustion:* A disorder resulting from overexposure to heat or to the sun. Early symptoms are headache and a feeling of weakness and dizziness, usually accompanied by nausea and vomiting.

There may also be cramps in the muscles of the arms, legs, or abdomen. The person turns pale and perspires profusely, skin is cool and moist, pulse and breathing are rapid.

Body temperature remains at a normal level or slightly below or above. The person may seem confused and may find it difficult to coordinate body movements.

*Heat Stroke:* A profound disturbance of the body's heat-regulating mechanism, caused by prolonged exposure to excessive heat, particularly when there is little or no circulation of air.

The first symptoms may be headache, dizziness and weakness. Later symptoms are an extremely high fever and absence of perspiration. Heat stroke may cause convulsions and sudden loss of consciousness. In extreme cases it may be fatal.

**Precautionary Procedures:**

1. Keep the air circulating.
2. Draw all shades, blinds and curtains in rooms when exposed to direct sunlight.
3. Remove residents from areas that are exposed to direct sunlight.
4. Keep outdoor activities to a minimum.
5. Check to see that residents are appropriately dressed.
6. Provide ample fluids, and provide as many fluids as the resident will take.
7. Increase the number of baths given.