



Serial number: BN2026/016

Date: 20 May 2026

Event: Heat Health Alert: YELLOW - SE, EM, WM, EoE & London

Notified by: Extreme Events and Health Protection, Centre for Climate and Health Security

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Incident Response Plan (IRP) Level: N/A

Incident Lead: N/A

Distribution: Please see page 3 for information with regards to the distribution instructions for this Briefing Note.

Summary:

UKHSA and the Met Office have issued a Yellow Heat-Health Alert for the Southeast of England, London, East Midlands, West Midlands and East of England. This alert is being issued outside of the core Heat-Health Alert season (1 June–30 September) due to forecast conditions meeting impact thresholds.

The current alert is in place between 09:00 on 22nd May 2026 and 17:00 on 27th May 2026.

This briefing provides a high-level overview of the health risks associated with hot weather during Summer 2026 and the responsibilities in the health systems during an alert.

Background and Interpretation:

Heat and health risks

1. **Seasonal Reports:** Detailed [monthly, seasonal and annual summaries](#) of weather conditions are available from the Met Office.
2. **Impact Data:** The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) annually reports on heat-related health impacts, with previous reports accessible via [GOV.UK](#)
3. **Summer 2025 Heat Deaths:** During summer 2025, five heat episodes resulted in 1,504 heat-associated deaths (95% CI: 936–2,072). There were 1,535 fewer deaths than predicted, based on the observed temperatures and the historic temperature-mortality relationship. Heat-associated deaths were predominantly observed in southern, central and eastern regions of England

Adverse Weather and Health Plan and Weather-Health Alerting Service

1. **Weather Health Alert System:** The [Weather-Health Alerting System](#) is governed by the [Adverse Weather and Health Plan](#) (AWHP). The health risks and effects of adverse heat are described in the Plan and its [supporting evidence](#). UKHSA and the Met Office work together to ensure the Weather-Health Alerts and National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) systems are complementary to one another and help ensure the maximum possible warning time.
2. **Heat-Health Alert (HHA):** Operates from 1 June to 30 September. An out of season alert may still be issued if impacts from adverse weather on health are expected. Heat-Health Alerts are cascaded through the health and care system. Details of the for Heat-Health Alert Levels can be found in the [Weather Health Alerting User Guide](#).

Guidance and Advice & Communications toolkit - Hot weather and health

1. **Guidance:** The [Hot weather and health: guidance and advice webpage](#)
2. **Action Cards:** [The hot weather and health action cards](#)
3. **Toolkit:** To support stakeholders with their hot weather communications [UKHSA has updated our toolkit for 2026](#). The material in this toolkit is intended to provide basic health information that can be communicated during hot spells so that the right messages reach the right people at the right time. The content included in this toolkit can be used to target both public and professional audiences.

Implications and Recommendations for UKHSA Regions:

1. UKHSA regional teams must be familiar with heat-health alert levels and related actions, supporting Directors of Public Health (DsPH) and other stakeholders. Regional teams should:
 - Support Health Actions: Support DsPH to assist health and social care commissioners, providers, and frontline staff in reducing heat-related harm.
 - Ensure Multiagency Planning: Work with DsPH through Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) and Local Health Resilience Partnerships (LHRPs) to establish robust, coordinated plans for adverse weather events, particularly heat episodes.
 - Coordinate Communications: Liaise with DsPH and local partners, in collaboration with regional UKHSA communications teams, to clearly define roles, responsibilities, and spokespeople for local messaging.
 - Implement Communication Plans: Deliver agreed local communication strategies in coordination with regional UKHSA communications teams.
2. UKHSA Regions should be aware of the [Hot weather and health: guidance and advice webpage](#), actions in the [AWHP](#) and should support DsPH and other local stakeholders as appropriate.
3. UKHSA Regions must register to receive Weather Health Alerts: [click here](#)

Implications and recommendations for local authorities, LRFs, LHRPs, and NHS England

All partner organisations should:

- Access the [Adverse Weather and Health Plan page](#) to ensure familiarity with heat-related guidance and the Weather-Health Alerting System.
- **Local Resilience Forums (LRFs):**
 - Assess and prepare for operational impacts of hot weather and extreme heat.
- **Local Health Resilience Partnerships (LHRPs):**
 - Review local adverse weather plans.
 - Ensure Heat-Health Alerts are effectively distributed to relevant health and social care providers.
- **Local Authorities:**
 - Confirm readiness of stakeholders and partners to act upon Heat-Health Alerts.
 - Consider training social care, housing, and frontline staff on heat risks.
 - Conduct home visits to identify and protect vulnerable individuals.
- **Health and Wellbeing Boards:**
 - Incorporate long-term heat-health protection strategies into joint strategic needs assessments and health strategies.
 - Be prepared for concurrent risks, contacting UKHSA communications as necessary for guidance.

References or Sources of information:

- Further hot weather advice for the public is available from the [NHS heatwave advice](#), the Met Office [Weather Ready Campaign](#) and the [Hot weather and heatwave - Prepare Campaign](#)
- For those who were unable to attend, we are sharing the link to the [pre-recorded session](#) and the [live Q&A session](#) for the UKHSA Summer Preparedness Stakeholder webinar 2026 to help partners prepare for the hot weather season and highlight the updated AWHP materials
- Stakeholders may find it helpful to refer to our latest research and analysis this season, including research into the [experiences of social care during summer 2022](#), and the latest [heat mortality monitoring report](#)

Instructions for Cascade

- **UKHSA Private Office Groups** who cascade onwards within Groups

- **UKHSA Regions Directorate:**
 - UKHSA Health Protection Teams
 - Deputy Directors to cascade to Directors of Public Health, LRFs and LHRPs
- **UKHSA Regional Communications**
- **Directors of Public Health** to share with Directors of Adult Social care
- **DHSC CMO**
- **OHID Regional Directors of Public Health**
- **NHS EPRR** to share with ICBs
- **NHSE National Operations Centre**