

Evaluation Report 2017/18

1. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

This report provides evaluation of the coldAlert service for the winter period 1 November 2017 to 18 April 2018.

For information on how the coldAlert service operates, visit the website www.coldalert.info

2. MET OFFICE SUMMARY OF WINTER WEATHER 2017-18

“This winter generally was rather unsettled, with weather systems coming in from the west for most of the time, allowing only brief settled spells. Temperatures fluctuated either side of average, with some mild spells (especially in southern areas) but also spells with widespread frosts, with the most widespread cold weather coming right at the end of the season”.

This is reflected in the number, duration and timing of coldAlert issued this winter.

3. SERVICE DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE

3.1 coldAlerts issued

Fifteen coldAlerts were issued during the 2017-18 winter, Eight at Level 2 – ‘Alert and Ready’- be prepared and seven at Level 3 – ‘Take Action’. Alerts were issued to cover 34.5% of the winter period days (38 days out of 110).

Date	Alert Level	Duration	Comments
28.11.17	2	48 hours	
07.12.17	2	48 hours	
07.12.17	3	5 days	Escalation of coldAlert to Take Action level
12.12.17	3	48 hours	
17.12.17	2	72 hours	
27.01.18	2	48 hours	
04.01.18	2	72 hours	
02.02.18	2	5 days	
05.02.18	3	5 days	
23.02.18	2	4 days	
23.02.18	3	4 days	Escalation of coldAlert to Take Action level
26.02.18	3	5 days	Continuation of coldAlert issued on 23 Feb
02.03.18	3	3 days	
16.03.18	2	4 days	
16.03.18	3	4 days	Escalation of coldAlert to Take Action level

Table 1: coldAlerts sent between 1 November 2017 and 18 April 2018

3.2 coldAlert subscribers at 18 April 2018

Subscribers in East Sussex: **854** (an increase of 319 – target 250)

Total number of subscribers: **1092** (an increase of 406)

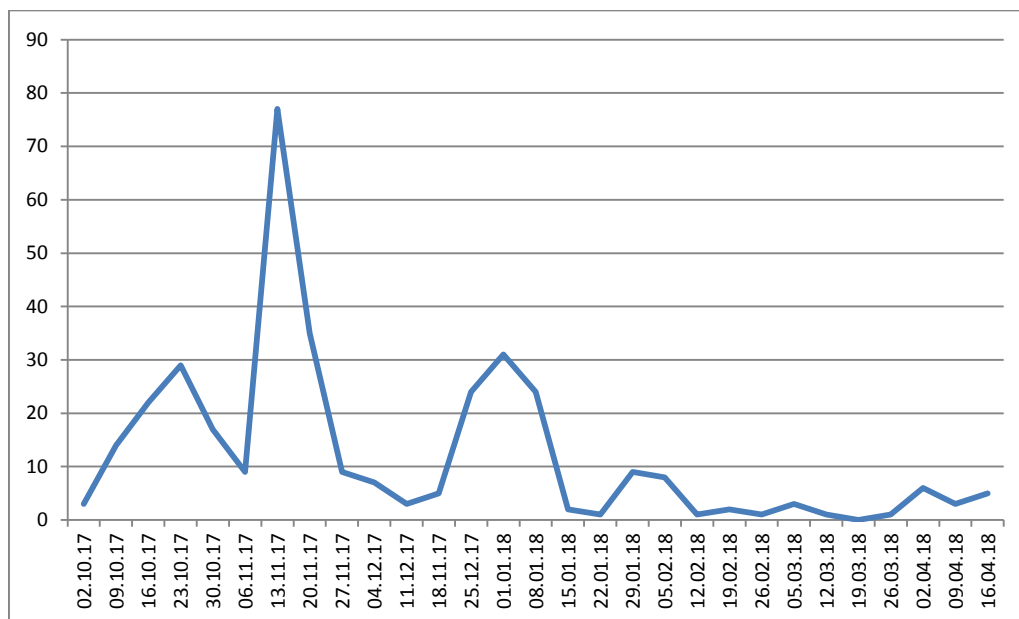


Figure 1: Peaks in coldAlert registrations

3.3 Delivery methods

Delivery of coldAlerts to the 1092 subscribers has been via the following methods:

Method	
Text message (to mobile phone)	432
Voice message (to landlines)	309
Email	280
iOS App	41
Android App	30
Total active subscribers	1092

Table 2: Delivery methods

The age of subscribers to the coldAlert service are detailed below; there little change in the percentages with just a slight increase in the number of subscribers aged 85+ from 4.5% to 5%:

- ✿ Under 25 – 6%
- ✿ 26 to 55 – 30%
- ✿ 56 – 70 – 29%
- ✿ 71 to 84 – 31%
- ✿ Over 85 – 5%

Note: The data provided is for active subscribers, the trends in the data for East Sussex replicate the statistics for all coldAlert subscribers.

Where clients subscribed directly or via partners (e.g. STEPS and Homeworks) we were able to capture the postcode, age and health conditions, see tables below.

Area	No.	85+
Peacehaven (BN10)	2	
Crowborough (TN6)	5	2
Bexhill on Sea (TN39)	18	5
St Leonards on Sea (TN27)	10	1
Frant (TN3)	1	1
Uckfield (TN22)	2	
Hailsham (BN27)	12	4
Hastings (TN34)	7	2
Polegate (BN26)	5	2
Heathfield (TN21)	5	2
Five Ashes (TN20)	1	
Horam (TN21)	1	1
Mayfield (TN20)	1	
Eastbourne (BN21)	3	2
Golden Cross (BN27)	2	1
Herstmonceux (BN27)	1	
Battle (TN22)	1	
Rotherfield (TN6)	1	1
	78	24

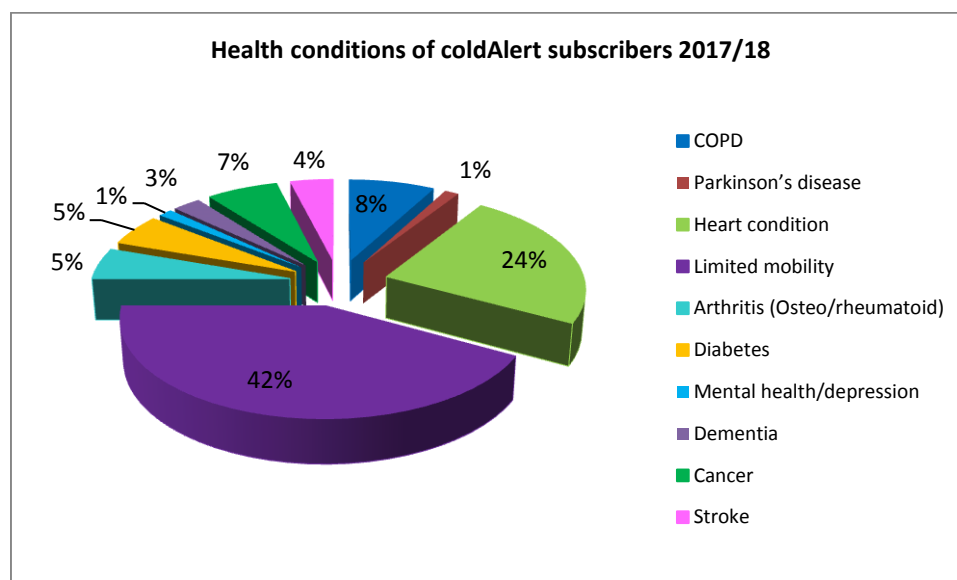
Table 3: Postcode area and aged over 85

Health condition	No.
COPD	6
Asthma	0
Parkinson's disease	1
Heart condition	18
Limited mobility	33
Arthritis (Osteo/rheumatoid)	4
Diabetes	4
Mental health/depression	1
Dementia	2
Cancer	5
Stroke	3
	77

Table 4: Health conditions

3.4 Health profile of coldAlert subscribers

All clients registered via STEPs or Homeworks were asked to provide details of health conditions which are exacerbated by severe cold weather, these are shown in the chart below. Of the 319 new subscribers in East Sussex 114 (24%) gave details of their health conditions. Providing health conditions is not a requirement of the registration process for coldAlert and many subscribers choose not to provide this information.



4. SERVICE COSTS

Item	Cost (£)
Project Officer (registration & support, issuing alerts, marketing, evaluation)	£8,400.00
Website hosting & security	£175.00
Messaging costs (texts)	£660.00
Marketing	£500.00
Total service cost	£9,735.00

Table 7: Breakdown of costs to deliver the coldAlert service in Sussex in 2017/18.

The cost equates to £8.91 for each service user in East Sussex during the winter period 2017/18, this shows a reduction in cost from £17.26 per person in 2016/17 and a continual reduction in service costs year on year for the last two years.

It is anticipated that costs of delivering the service will reduce further in 2018/19 when the alert are generated through the free text notification service Gov.uk Notify.

5. PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The coldAlert service was promoted throughout the winter period starting in October 2017. Promotional information, including a combination of hard copy leaflets and email electronic leaflets, were sent to Breathe Easy groups, hospitals, GP surgeries and 3rd sector partners and Children's centres across Sussex.

A social media campaign was launched in November 2017 by ESCC communications team with regular posts on the ESCC Facebook page and via Twitter. The coldAlert service has also been promoted through the coldAlert Twitter account with information re-Tweeted by CAB, Sussex FRS, Care for the Carers, Sussex Young Carers, third sector organisations and individuals.

Information regarding the coldAlert service was published in Brief Encounter, To the Point and the Public Health Bulletin in November 2017 and in the electronic edition of Your County magazine.

In addition the service paid for £200 of Facebook (FB) adverts through the ESCC FB site, the adverts ran for a 6-week period in Nov/Dec 2017 and the most popular ads repeated in Jan/Feb 2018. There was a noticeable spike in the number of subscribers during each period of social media activity (see table 1, page 2).

In addition to the social media campaign the service was promoted through partners at the East Sussex Energy Partnership, Fuel Poverty Network and Sussex-air Quality Partnership meetings.

The service continues to engage with health professionals and targeted health groups (respiratory, cardiovascular groups, British Lung Foundation, British Heart Foundation, Age UK, Age Concern, Care for the Carers, Young Carers, GP surgeries), as well as local authorities housing and fuel poverty partnership groups.

5.1 Winter home check service

The Winter Home Check service has been promoted alongside coldAlert again this winter. Advice messages were sent in December and January 2018 to all registered coldAlert subscribers, to promote the East Sussex Winter Home Check (WHC) Service. The coldAlert service has also promoted the WHC service regularly through the coldAlert Twitter account, several advisory Tweets have been re-Tweeted by followers including East Sussex Fire and Rescue service, Age UK and local Citizens Advice Bureau offices.

6. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Subscription data

The subscription data captured on the coldAlert website is being reviewed and updated to ensure it complies with the GDPR legislation. Although no data is held by Sussex-air (data is held by Kings ERG) we are aware that more personal information was being requested than was essential for service delivery and reporting purposes. The registration page will be simplified and only capture the district or borough location, not the full address of the subscriber. We are also updating the health data captured, to give a clearer picture of the number of people subscribing for personal use or as a parent/carer.

Outcome:

The impact of the GDPR legislation will mean that we will have less personal information relating to the subscribers, which will impact on the detail we are able to provide in the evaluation reports.

6.2 Collaborative approach to marketing

Marketing across Sussex via social media has shown a peak in subscriptions and we will continue to work with the ESCC comms team to promote the service.

We provide hard copy leaflets and posters to a range of frontline staff, Children's Centres, GP surgeries, carer's organisations and third party contacts. Although the subscriptions generated from leaflets is lower than that of social media it is important that we try and reach people who are more comfortable with traditional methods of marketing.

On 1 June 2018 we will be launching the Heat Alert service which will provide heatwave alerts during the summer months. We know that the same groups are affected by extremes in both hot and cold weather and will benefit from receiving both Heat and coldAlerts. We will promote both services to targeted vulnerable people throughout the year.

Outcome:

The benefits of using social media to promote the service are clear from the increased levels of subscriptions during the campaigns; however this is less targeted than other types of publicity. With this in mind, we will continue to explore marketing opportunities for reaching vulnerable people in deprived areas of East Sussex by working closely with Public Health colleagues and front line services.

We promote the service across Sussex and Brighton and Hove, and will continue to use best practice in sharing information with Sussex-air partners, Public Health colleagues and communications teams in other authorities to ensure we are reaching.

6.3 Holistic view of alert services and future funding

In June 2018 the Heat Alert service will launch, it is recommended that Public Health reviews the role and benefit of health-related alert services, rather than funding coldAlert in isolation, to determine whether supporting other health-prevention alert services in an integrated approach would deliver a more effective health prevention outcome. coldAlert and Heat Alert services will be publicised to the same end users as it is believed that extremes in temperature either hot or cold will impact the same groups of individuals e.g. the elderly, infirm and very young.

Outcome: Evidence-based decision as to the benefits and dis-benefits of integrated health-prevention alert services.

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

The coldAlert service is managed by the Sussex Air Quality Partnership (Sussex-air.)

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