

Business Continuity Planning (BCP) Webinar – FAQ's

1. Do you have BCP templates?

A good BCP should (as a minimum):

- **Identify** the risk / threat / issue
- **Analyse** the impact on the service (this includes the people you support, the staff you employ, the building you use and the resources you require)
- **Create** a strategy and plan about how you will respond
- **Measure** your plan and impact (test, train & maintain)

Every adult social care setting is different, so there is no 'one size fits all' – the key consideration is how will you continue to provide critical care and support, maintaining the health and wellbeing of both the people you support and the people you employ in the event of a business continuity issue(s).

Further information to support the development of your BCP can be found in our recent [BCP webinar](#) (and [accompanying presentation](#)).

2. What issues and risks should we include in our BCP?

BCP's are in operation all year. Our recent [BCP webinar](#) focussed on winter risks and pressures, including but not limited to:

- Staff absence
- Infectious Outbreaks i.e. COVID-19, Flu, Norovirus etc
- Power outages – planned and unplanned
- Loss of water
- Fuel / transport disruptions
- Impact of industrial action
- Adverse weather
- Other major incidents

It is important adult social care settings consider how to manage concurrent winter pressures, for example staff absences due to a COVID-19 outbreak and industrial action at the same time.

Locally, we have created a [checklist](#), including things to think about.

The [Energy Network Association briefing](#) provides a number of scenarios for adult social care providers to think about in the event of a power outage.

It is really important staff understand the BCP (including other health and safety / risk assessments i.e. fire safety) and are confident, trained and competent to implement them in a timely manner, including safely returning to 'BAU' after the incident.

3. How do we register people living in the community as a 'vulnerable' with their energy suppliers?

Gas and Electricity

OfGEM & the Energy Networks Association provide information on:

- Who is eligible
- How to register
- The support available

For further information, please visit: [Get help from your supplier - Priority Services Register | Ofgem](#) and [Getting extra help from your energy network operator – Energy Networks Association \(ENA\)](#).

Water

OFWAT provide information on the Priority Services register. For further information, please visit: [Priority Services - Ofwat](#)

4. How likely are power outages?

The Energy Networks Association recently produced a [useful briefing note](#) providing an overview about power outages due to an energy shortage.

In the event of planned power outages happening, it is anticipated most households could be affected (including vulnerable persons and care homes), however it is not currently anticipated everybody will be affected at the same time.

It will not be possible to let everybody know individually about planned outages, however there will be communications through the news, the internet and social media in advance of the outage.

Everybody is working hard to prevent planned power outages from happening; however, it is really important we all prepare ourselves in case they do happen, alongside unplanned outages, which can occur at any time.

By reviewing your BCP and individual risk assessments you can anticipate the impact of a power outage in advance and how you would be best placed to respond to it. For example, does a power outage deactivate your door controls and locking mechanisms; if so, how would you best support your residents in this scenario?

5. What support would be provided locally in the event of an unplanned power outage lasting several hours?

In the event of an unplanned power outage, each adult social care setting would invoke their BCP.

Supporting adult social care is a priority. Locally, a dedicated team of officers would support adult social care settings to manage a significant incident. Subject to the scenario, we would:

- Maintain email communication:
ascincidentmanagement@Staffordshire.gov.uk
- Update our [webpages](#) with key information

If you do not receive our regular ASC updates, please email us (using the above details) and we will add you to our mailing list. Please check your junk / spam folder if you have joined our mailing list but are not receiving regular updates.

To help us to maintain contact with you in the event of an emergency we are asking adult social care settings to [share an emergency mobile contact number](#) with us.

6. Should I buy a generator?

If you do not already have a generator, it is really important you ensure your building would support a generator, before you purchase one.

If you have a generator, it is really important you regularly service your generator, ensuring it is in good working order, and people know how to operate it safely, including how long the fuel supply lasts and how to refuel it. If the generator is not maintained or operated safely it increases risks such as fire.

It is important you consider any other back-up power supplies, ensuring:

- Batteries / power banks are in good working order and fully charged. Ensuring batteries are in working order is critical for hardwired fire alarm systems, as if not fire alarms may sound in the event of a power outage. If your systems are connected to an external system / responder i.e. call centre or fire station, you may receive a response if your alarms are sounding.
- You are aware of the lifespan of the battery, so you can consider further contingency measures, subject to the length of the power outage.

7. Will staff be able to get fuel (petrol /diesel) in the event of a power outage?

Petrol pumps require power to operate, typically, meaning adult social care settings should plan in the event of an outage, that staff would not typically be able to access fuel pumps.

It is good practice to encourage staff to keep their fuel tank half full and electric vehicles well charged.

Local emergency fuel plans would likely be instigated if there power outage over an extended period, but it is likely there would be delays in being able to access fuel, so it is important your BCP take this into account.

8. What should I consider during industrial action

During the first part of 2023 we are expecting a range of industrial action impacting on NHS Services, Ambulance Services, transport services and other public sector services.

Your BCP should consider the direct and indirect impacts on your services, including but not limited to, traffic disruptions, deliveries of supplies being affected / delayed, increased staff absence or staff delayed getting to work and delays / increased demands on the NHS (including primary care) and our emergency services.

As part of your BCP, you should:

- Consider enhanced staff absence – this includes considering staff who are trained in specific roles / tasks, for example first aiders and fire marshals.
- Consider first aid arrangements in the event of NHS and/or Ambulance strikes – this includes ensuring your first aid kits are well stocked and you know your local community health support services.
- Ensure essential systems such as your fire detection, warning and fighting equipment, alongside your evacuation plans, are regularly reviewed by a competent person, as per your [fire safety duties](#).
- Consider activities being undertaken on these days, to avoid any additional risks that could require a response from emergency services.