**Heat Plan: Long-Term Care/Assisted Living**

[*Site name*]

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| **What is a Heat Plan?**  A Heat Plan is activated when there is a heat event that has caused, or has the potential to cause, significant impacts to [clients/residents]. The preparation actions are to be completed by the end of April because hot weather can be expected between May and October.  **Purpose/Objective**  The purpose of this plan is to detail the interventions, actions and resources that [Site name] takes in preparation for the heat season and during response to a heat event. This plan incorporates daily measurements of indoor temperatures, and escalating and emergency measures for sites to take in the event of indoor temperatures approaching or exceeding 26°C.  **Components**   * Site Information * Threshold Criteria and Response Level Triggers * Heat Season Preparedness * Response Level Triggers and Control Interventions * Equipment and Supplies * Evaluation and After-Action Review * Plan Maintenance | |
| **Date of plan:** | *[Date of Plan Completion]* |
| **Document prepared by:** | *[Unit/Department Manager]* |

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| **Site Information** | | |
| **Site/Unit/Department Name:** |  | |
| **Type of Services:** |  | |
| **☐ *[****Resident/Client]* Care Area  ***☐ [****Non****-*** *Resident/Client]* Care Area | **☐** In-Patient  **☐** Out-Patient |
| **Number of Clients/Residents Served** |  | |
| **Key Contact Number(s):** | **Main reception:**  **After hours:** | |
| **Other Information:** |  | |

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| Threshold Criteria and Response Level Triggers |

# Heat Alert Response System (HARS) Criteria

The thresholds detailed below are those that have been established by the BC Health Effects of Anomalous Temperatures (BC Heat) Coordinating Committee (BC HEAT Committee). The BC HEAT Committee provides public and partner organizations with a warning of the health risk from heat events with the overarching objective to support planning and response efforts related to public health impacts for significant heat events in British Columbia (BC).

### Heat Warning

A **heat warning** is issued for a region when there are two or more consecutive days during which the daytime maximum temperatures are forecast to reach or exceed the trigger temperature criteria for that region, and the nighttime minimum temperatures are forecast to fall only to the region-specific temperature or warmer. These temperature thresholds indicate moderate public health risk. This criterion is the minimum basis for the extreme heat emergency.

### Extreme Heat Emergency

An **extreme heat emergency** emphasizes the very high public health risk that exists when high temperatures increase day over day, based on temperatures and conditions that indicate a very high public health risk, including a larger increase in deaths in the community is expected. Criteria are met when the forecast or observed temperatures in each region surpasses the heat warning criteria, and there is high certainty that temperatures would substantively increase day over day for three or more consecutive days.

#### Lower Mainland

The table below is a high-level overview of the HARS criteria, specific to the Lower Mainland regions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Tier** | **Region** | **Criteria** |
| **Heat warning** | **Southwest** |  |
| Western Metro Vancouver, including the North Shore, City of Vancouver and Richmond, Howe Sound, Whistler, Sunshine Coast, Vancouver Island (except northern sections) | 2 or more consecutive days of daytime maximum temperatures are expected to reach 29°C or warmer and nighttime minimum temperatures are expected to be at 16°C or warmer |
| **Southwest inland** |  |
| Eastern Metro Vancouver including Coquitlam and Surrey, and the Fraser Valley | 2 or more consecutive days of daytime maximum temperatures are expected to reach 33°C or warmer and nighttime minimum temperatures are expected to be  at 17°C or warmer |
| **Extreme heat emergency** | **Southwest** |  |
| Western Metro Vancouver, including the North Shore, City of Vancouver and Richmond, Howe Sound, Whistler, Sunshine Coast, Vancouver Island (except northern sections) | Daytime maximum temperatures are expected to reach 31°C or warmer, based on today’s temperature and tomorrows forecasted max |
| **Southwest inland** |  |
| Eastern Metro Vancouver including Coquitlam and Surrey, and the Fraser Valley | Daytime maximum temperatures are expected to reach 34°C or warmer, based on today’s temperature and tomorrows forecasted max |

# Response Level Triggers

The **response level triggers** detailed below provide a structured approach for staff intervention. These measures are designed to prevent temperatures from nearing 26°C and those that must be taken immediately if temperatures reach or exceed this threshold and are aligned with the BC HARS criteria for the Lower Mainland.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Level** | **Trigger** |
| **Standard activities** | To be taken to prevent indoor temperatures from exceeding 26°C |
| **Escalated interventions** | To be taken when indoor temperatures approach or reach 26°C |
| **Emergency interventions** | To be taken if the indoor temperatures exceed 26°C |

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| Heat Season Preparedness |

# Client/Resident Risk Identification

Annually, [site name] completes risk assessments for all clients/residents and will update as needed throughout the heat season. While all older adults are at heightened risk during heat events, the following criteria will be used to identify individuals at the greatest risk, with care plans updated accordingly:

* Individuals unable to adapt their behaviour to stay cool, such as those with cognitive impairments or limited mobility
* Individuals with specific health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, respiratory or renal insufficiency, Parkinson’s disease, or skin disorders that impact sweating
* Individuals taking multiple medications, particularly anticholinergics, vasoconstrictors, antihistamines, diuretics, antihypertensives, and psychoactive drugs
* Individuals experiencing mental health conditions, such as depression, bipolar, or psychosis
* Older adults, specifically those over the age of 75
* Individuals in isolation for infection control purposes

# Temperature Monitoring

[Site name] monitors internal temperatures throughout the season, with trigger points aligned with those listed in the [Threshold Criteria and Response Level Triggers](#_Threshold_Criteria_and)

The table below lists specific details for temperature monitoring to ensure consistent monitoring practices.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Considerations** | **Details** |
| **Equipment used for temperature monitoring** |  |
| **Designated locations for temperature testing** |  |
| **Storage location for temperature records** |  |

# Pre-Heat Season Actions Checklist

[Site name] considers the following pre-heat season checklist **before** the heat season to prevent indoor temperatures from reaching 26°C and ensures that a plan is in place should the temperatures approach or exceed 26°C. This checklist will be reviewed annually at the **end of April** and will also be reviewed during the heat season as supplemental to those detailed in [Response Level Triggers and Control Interventions](#_Response_Level_Triggers_1).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Who** | **Actions** | **Completed**  **– check box** |
| **Alerts and Communication** | | |
|  | * Ensure staff are familiar with [BC HARS](http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Health-Environment/Provincial-Heat-Alerting-Response-System.pdf) heat alert triggers and activation process |  |
|  | * Ensure all relevant staff are subscribed to receive weather alerts using [WeatherCAN](https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-general-tools-resources/weathercan.html) |  |
|  | * Ensure staff are aware of resources available to them for heat, including “cooling break zones”, hydration stations, wellness resources, etc. |  |
|  | * Ensure staff are trained on protocol to assess clients/residents for signs of heat-related illness and dehydration |  |
|  | * Prepare messaging for clients/residents and families that detail site plan and locations of “cooling zones” * Prepare material to be posted around site that details location of “cooling zones” |  |
| **High Risk Clients/Residents** | | |
|  | * Identify high risk clients, as detailed in [Client/Resident Risk Identification](#_Client/Resident_Risk_Identification) and ensure care plans are updated. Consider implementing when the following interventions will be used:   + Dietary changes   + Cooling baths, clothing misting, and/or cool pack application |  |
| **Site and Temperature Monitoring** | | |
|  | * Establish a plan to monitor indoor temperatures throughout the site and ensure that the hottest areas of the building are used to initiate response actions |  |
|  | * Assess the building and identify hot areas that may need cooling interventions, such as portable air conditioning, fans, etc. |  |
|  | * Assess where there might be potential cooling opportunities within the building for clients/residents * E.g. set up “cool rooms” or “cooling zones” by installing a portable air conditioning and HEPA air filter in the common rooms |  |
| **Equipment and Supplies** | | |
|  | * If building already has cooling systems, ensure that systems have been cleaned and filters replaced, and are in working order, such as HVAC, air conditioning units, ice machines, and water fountains |  |
|  | * Install blinds or curtains on all windows |  |
|  | * Plant shade trees strategically around the building to reduce heat exposure |  |
|  | * Acquire/make arrangements for items that may be needed during the heat season to keep rooms and clients/residents, and staff cool, such as portable units, ice, water, towels, etc. |  |
| **Staffing** | | |
|  | * Establish a plan to address potential staff shortages during the heat season, including re-deployment of staff to support cooling of clients/residents   + E.g. relocating work of recreation staff, PTs, OTs, etc. * Update staff and contractor call-out lists in case of gaps in coverage |  |
|  | * Review staff and contractor schedule and update call-out list, as needed, in case of gaps in coverage or re-deployment of staff |  |
| **Other** | | |
|  | Other: |  |

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| Response Level Triggers and Control Interventions |

The response level triggers, and control actions tables below provides the interventions that staff at [Site name] implement **during** the heat season when the [Response Level Triggers](#_Response_Level_Triggers) are met.

# Escalated Interventions When Indoor Temperatures Approach or Reach 26°C

[Site name] implements the following interventions to prevent indoor temperatures from approaching or reaching 26°C. These interventions are in addition to those outlined already considered in the [Pre-Heat Season Activities Checklist](#_Pre-Heat_Season_Activities).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Who** | **Actions** | **Completed**  **– check box** |
| **Alerts and Communication** | | |
|  | * Ensure staff are made aware of indoor temperatures approaching 26°C and communicate the recommended revised actions |  |
|  | * Send/update prepared materials for clients/residents and families to let them know the implemented actions, as appropriate |  |
| **High Risk Clients/Residents** | | |
|  | * Conduct regular assessments of all clients/residents for signs of heat-related illness or dehydration and implement cooling interventions, as needed |  |
|  | * Increase hydration of clients/residents |  |
| **Site and Temperature Monitoring** | | |
|  | * Regularly monitor temperatures within the building, as per monitoring plan |  |
|  | * Assess hot areas that may need cooling interventions, such as portable air conditioning, fans\*\*, etc. |  |
|  | * Assess if pre-identified “cooling zones” are still suitable and start preparing the space for clients/residents |  |
| **Equipment and Supplies** | | |
|  | * Deploy cooling supplies to keep rooms and/or clients/residents cool, such as portable air conditioning units, fans, ice water, towels, etc. |  |
|  | * Ensure blinds or curtains are closed in the morning to block heat and opened in the evening to promote heat ventilation |  |
| **Staffing** | | |
|  | * Review staff and contractor schedule and assess if additional coverage and/or re-deployment is needed to ensure there is coverage to regularly assess clients/residents for signs of heat illness, staff “cooling zone”, and/or increase hydration efforts |  |
| **Other** | | |
|  | * Other: |  |

# Escalated Interventions if Indoor Temperatures Exceed 26°C

[Site name] implements the following interventions to prevent indoor temperatures from exceeding 26°C. These interventions are in addition to those outlined in the [Pre-Heat Season Actions and Checklist](#_Pre-Heat_Season_Actions).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Who** | **Actions** | **Completed**  **– check box** |
| **Alerts and Communication** | | |
|  | * Ensure staff are made aware of indoor temperatures exceeding 26°C and communicate the recommended revised actions |  |
|  | * Send/update prepared materials for clients/residents and families to let them know the implemented actions, as appropriate |  |
| **High Risk Clients/Residents** | | |
|  | * Conduct regular assessments of all clients/residents for signs of heat-related illness or dehydration |  |
|  | * Increase hydration of clients/residents |  |
|  | * Encourage clients/residents to use self-dousing or ice towels, where it is safe to do so |  |
|  | * Transfer clients/residents to alternative locations, as needed |  |
|  | * Rotate clients/residents into air-conditioned rooms, as needed |  |
| **Site and Temperature Monitoring** | | |
|  | * Increase frequency of temperature monitoring within the building |  |
|  | * Assess hot areas that may need cooling interventions, such as portable air conditioning, fans\*\*, etc.   ***\*\* Note:*** *Fans may not provide adequate cooling during heat events, especially during extreme heat events. There should be contingency plans for clients/residents who are in rooms that are only cooled by fans* |  |
|  | * Assess if pre-identified “cooling zones” are still suitable and ensure that cooling supplies are available for staff and clients/residents |  |
|  | * Modify recreational services, including types of activities to accommodate for the indoor and outdoor temperatures |  |
| **Equipment and Supplies** | | |
|  | * Deploy cooling supplies to keep rooms and/or clients/residents cool, such as portable air conditioning units, fans, ice water, towels, etc. |  |
|  | * Ensure blinds or curtains are closed in the morning to block heat and opened in the evening to promote heat ventilation |  |
|  | * Acquire additional cooling supplies, as needed |  |
|  | * Modify food services menu, as needed, and consider foods that do not need to be cooked because this may increase indoor temperatures |  |
| **Staffing** | | |
|  | * Review staff and contractor schedule and assess if additional coverage and/or re-deployment is needed |  |
|  | * Rotate staff schedules/positions, as needed, to ensure cooling efforts are prioritized while maintaining staff safety |  |
| **Other** | | |
|  | * Other: |  |

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| Equipment and Supplies |

The equipment and supplies table below details the supplies and equipment used by [site name] to support the interventions outlined above:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Location or how to obtain, if not readily available** |
| **Hydration** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Cooling** |  |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Other** |  |
|  |  |

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| Evaluation and After-Action Review |

[Site name] evaluates the effectiveness of the interventions used during the heat season and holds a debrief to identify the following:

* What went well?
* What lessons did we learn?
* Are there any improvement opportunities?

Opportunities for improvement are incorporated into this plan annually and identified to enhance the emergency management program at [Site name] overall.

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| Plan Maintenance |

This plan should be reviewed annually and/or updated every three years if no changes are needed annually.

Review and update the plan and kit on an annual basis (12 months) from the publish date.