



# STAY WARM, STAY WELL



**Follow-Up Report  
June 2014**

## Stay Warm, Stay Well EAS Follow-up Evaluation Report June 2014

### Introduction

Energy Action Scotland (EAS) secured funding from SSE to deliver a 'Stay Warm, Stay Well' (SWSW) project. The project was completed in April 2014 and a report submitted to SSE that month.

SWSW training was intended to equip front line staff with the knowledge necessary to support their vulnerable clients on energy-related issues. Participants in SWSW completed evaluation forms immediately after their training (information from these evaluations was collated and included in the project report). Obviously, this feedback is important for EAS in terms of ensuring that training delivered remains relevant and effective, but EAS was also keen to show that front line workers were actively making use of what they learned.

Accordingly, EAS devised a follow-up evaluation questionnaire<sup>1</sup>, which was sent out electronically with a covering letter<sup>2</sup> to everyone who completed SWSW training. The 378 recipients (all those for whom EAS had an e-mail address) had undertaken their SWSW training between one and four months previously.

### Follow-up Evaluation

EAS received **109** completed questionnaires, a 29% return. The responses have been collated and are as follows:

#### Question 1

*As a result of attending SWSW training, do you feel more confident about supporting your clients?*

**Yes 107      No 2**

*If yes, please note any aspects of the training that were particularly useful (50 responses received<sup>3</sup>):*

- Learned how to read meter and save energy
- Understanding the structure and regulation of the industry, the definition of fuel poverty, and the obligations placed on energy providers to provide support their most vulnerable customers
- All the training was extremely useful
- Information on tariffs and meters and condensation dampness
- Fuel cost calculations and "condensation reduction" and making better use of the boiler controls to reduce fuel costs.
- Contact numbers and resources
- Knowledge of services available to those experiencing fuel poverty
- Resources of information and basic practical advice
- I feel better informed and can help others to make informed choices now
- The Standing Charge and Usage Charge on Electric and Gas Meters
- All aspects
- More aware of what information to give clients and useful contacts.

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1

<sup>2</sup> Appendix 2

<sup>3</sup> All participant comments are exactly as provided – no changes to spelling, grammar or context

- The outlining of health symptoms that should be looked out for, or warned against if folk are under heating their homes. The highlighting of services such as Fuel Direct, and the Priority Services Register. Although I had completed the Energy Awareness course back in 2011, this was a really good refresher - I think having had some 'experience in the field' I learned more
- Although if had gained some experience dealing with tenants electricity issues the event helped solidify my knowledge of the breadth of tariffs and ways to reduce costs.
- Meter related - the necessity of checking the actual reading and the meter number against the bill
- Learning about the services for vulnerable clients to ensure they are prioritised when there are supply issues.
- The cost of running particular electrical items. Dampness in the home and how this can be prevented e.g. open vents. financial assistance available to clients
- Different ideas to keep your home warm, reading meters and tariffs
- Gained a lot of useful information
- Highlighting grant making organisations was especially useful to know
- Finding out that just by switching payment methods, money can be saved.
- All of it was very informative
- If I were to have the need to advise someone, then I have an understanding
- How to work out the cost per kilowatt hr, the running costs of the appliances, more aware of energy efficiency overall
- Awareness of energy efficiency grants and other supports
- The SWSW training was extremely insightful and has given us many ways to bring up conversation to indentify if our clients are at risk of fuel poverty or if they are already experiencing fuel poverty. We have been able to bring in measures to address such issues and we have been able to talk about bills, tarrifs and reading meters through group discussion as well as on a one to one basis.
- Knowing the different meters and the various rates that can be charged
- How to prevent dampness and condensation
- Having the training provided a good insight into what advice, resources etc is available for service users
- Interpreting utility bills
- Although I have my C&G in Energy Awareness it was good to get a refresher.
- Making Clients aware of power charges/suppliers and imprtance of choice of meters.
- Access to appropriate grants/help, energy efficiency tips.
- I feel more informed and confident of assisting individuals with the correct information regarding energy bills and insulation issues
- The training was useful as i could help my clients with bills dampness etc.
- Calculating power consumption. How many electrical items in home.
- Energy Efficiency grants and schemes and energy companies' obligations to customers
- I was amased at the savings that could be made by having the correct information. this was very beneficial when advising our residents
- Able to advise clients of the process they can go through if finding it difficult in paying their utility bills, and it does not need to be that they would be cut-off from supply
- As part of my job i work with new tenants and vunerable the overall course has been mosted valuable.
- I can confidently advise clients of fuel poverty, reading bills and meters
- Increased knowledge on offering tips about saving money

- All of it, many things the training contained many people would just read over and file as they do not understand how to read meters/bills etc.
- In particular, looking at reducing energy consumption in the home.
- Signposting people to groups/organisations that can help them apply for discounts and funds to help them live more comfortably in their home.
- Energy debt advice
- With numeric data it is easier to convince people to change
- The general course content was very informative in particular the information in electrical tariffs and billing.
- I have gain more knowledging experience and understand how to support my clients and myself.
- How to read the energy bills, and also the exercise in making people aware of just how much energy they use with appliances in their homes

***If no, please give a brief explanation:***

- Too much information was given in one day and not enough paper work given to bring back home<sup>4</sup>
- Do not deal with clients directly

## **Question 2**

***Have you made use of what you learned from the Stay Warm, Stay Well training?***

**Yes 107      No 2**

***If yes, have you used your knowledge:***

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| • on a personal basis?                                | <b>85</b> |
| • with clients?                                       | <b>89</b> |
| • with groups (including clients and their families)? | <b>24</b> |
| • other (e.g. to assist colleagues)?                  | <b>48</b> |

***Please indicate which of the following you have given advice and/or support about (tick all that apply):***

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| • cold homes and understanding related health issues            | <b>55</b> |
| • fuel bills/paying for fuel                                    | <b>75</b> |
| • fuel debt   | <b>49</b> |
| • understanding meters (including pre-payment meters)           | <b>46</b> |
| • reading meters  | <b>33</b> |
| • energy efficiency grants and schemes                          | <b>39</b> |
| • condensation dampness   | <b>54</b> |
| • insulation measures   | <b>30</b> |
| • Warm Home Discount/Winter Fuel Allowance/Cold Weather Payment | <b>59</b> |
| • using heating/hot water systems effectively                   | <b>32</b> |
| • other   | <b>2</b>  |

***If no, please give a brief explanation (i.e. no opportunity yet, not sufficiently confident, etc):***

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<sup>4</sup> EAS is not sure what the expectations were! The information and support materials for SWSW comprised a very comprehensive package. Participants were also advised about being able to access the Advisors Toolkit, an online resource containing around 60 individual factsheets

- Due to coming into warmer weather but also the client group I work with, fuel poverty is not at the forefront of conversation. Therefore I have not yet had the opportunity to give advice
- 1 – no reason given

### Question 3

*Have you signposted/referred clients to, or arranged any of the following? (please tick all that apply):*

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| • insulation measures  | <b>27</b> |
| • energy efficiency grants and schemes                           | <b>42</b> |
| • priority services register/additional help from energy company | <b>31</b> |
| • energy company funds/trusts/foundations                        | <b>20</b> |
| • Warm Home Discount   | <b>46</b> |
| • benefits health check/income maximisation                      | <b>49</b> |
| • additional help with fuel debt/high fuel bills                 | <b>39</b> |
| • change of supplier/tariff/payment method                       | <b>36</b> |
| • other (please describe)  | <b>3</b>  |

- Referral to SCARF in Aberdeen as clients have had high fuel costs
- 2 – no detail given

### Question 4

*Do you have an example/brief case study you can provide?* **27**

- I am a Fuel Poverty Worker, who is new to the field. I currently have 6 open cases and have been able to provide them with information/support in applying for warm homes discount, support from energy companies and general energy efficiency advice. I feel that my confidence and ability to do this effectively has been helped by the training I attended.
- Put some of the information that I received from the course in my monthly newsletter that I distribute to my tenants. Posters put up with information. Assistance offered to support anyone make an enquiry.
- A couple of existing clients, he has dementia, she is his carer, went through income maximisation, applied for the council tax discount, we also looked at changing their energy tariffs. Their electricity went off one afternoon, no information available to them. They phoned me, I contacted SP Networks, found out what the issue was and fed it back to the couple. As a result of this, they agreed to go on the priority services register, I sent them information. I shared the story at a practice development meeting, and no-one else in the organisation knew about the priority services register, despite most of our service users being vulnerable groups.
- None, I think the training was pitched just right, not too long or technical but packed with useful practical things we can do for clients in need.
- Lady called to ask about us helping to find anyone that could help her with her fuel bills - sp to other agency
- I attended a meeting at which correspondence was read out regarding warm home discount .From the knowledge gained on the session I was able to give some information about the scheme and how to apply
- Yes, I have organised for the income maximisation team to come and do a group talk and also talk to individuals on their needs.
- I had an invention with a woman in her 50's who was struggling with her fuel bills if informed her there was an organisation locally that could assist her at looking at it so she could use her fuel more efficiently and be able to read her meter properly so she could keep a check on it.

- My client had a build up of standing charge on his meter. Upon attending his property I noticed that there were two rates showing on the meter. I telephoned the supplier and noted that this meter (electric) was a 2 rate meter as in dearer at night and cheaper during the day, due to his storage heating. I advised them that the heating was gas and new radiators installed. They did not know this and the meter was therefore the wrong meter. My client then received a change of meter free of charge and saving of about 90p per week on his electricity standing charge. I would not have known this re the meter had I not attended this training session.
- I assisted a Tenant who wanted to manage their outgoings better and to do that wanted their credit meter changed to pre-payment for their storage heating so achieved that for them. Also have made calls for Tenants to get clarification that their WHD had been put on their utility account – which it had been.
- Case recently where individual has split with husband he has left the property cancelled all direct debits for dual fuel she was left with debt, applied for Charis grant to request debt is written off
- I am the first contact for many of our clients but I then hand them on to Energy Advisors so I don't have any case studies but I feel much more confident in answering basic questions.
- A family member expressed concerns over an elderly council tenant. I visited the property to inspect the current heating system and to discuss how they use it. With their authorisation I discussed their usage/tariff with the supplier whilst referring to my colleagues re. the current system that seemed outdated storage heaters and open fire place. An option plan was offered re. current tariff. DD payments, paperless billing and possible replacement heating system.
- Elderly couple who's boiler had broken passed their details on and they are getting replacement boiler and thermostats. They are delighted with the quickness of the referral and the way they were dealt with when someone viewed their property.
- I work with clients with mental health problems and have signposted many of them to the Priority Services Register as they are not always able to deal with issues when they arise without support.
- We had a visit from Home Energy Scotland to speak with carers. Those who attended said it was useful information and I felt able to contribute effectively.
- As a result of the course I researched different services available to older people, the client group that I serve. This revealed the 'affordable warmth payment' made to tenants of Glasgow, aged over 80, to assist with fuel costs. I advertised this to our 80 tenants aged over 80 in Glasgow and had a considerable response. Some tenants had already claimed the payment, however, others were unaware of same, or just turning 80 before cut off date of 31 March 2014. One lady had completed form and sent off for consideration, however, I realised that it would not be received on time therefore reprinted the form on her behalf and delivered it personally to the closest Housing Benefit office on 31 March, to ensure that she would be within the timescale for issue. She has now received her cheque.
- I was working with a parent that had just been able to claim DLA for her son. I informed her and others in my parents group how to claim electric discount.
- Young person (16), first home was assisted to apply to Scottish Gas Energy Trust Fund due to accrued arrears and Warm Home Discount
- After attending the training we had one to one chats with each of our clients to enable us to implement our learning. As a result we were able to signpost our clients to get additional checks done for the warm home discount, checking tariffs and the insulation measures that can be done free of charge for them. We don't have individual case studies to attach to this question, however is something that we can look to do in our future practice.

- Not a case study just having the knowledge about where to signpost people to.
- Checked statement, got refund of £645 and reduced annual cost by £653
- Helped individual we support to claim warm home discounts/grant.
- A resident had recently run up a large fuel bill was able to advise and support to arrange repayment that was suitable and arrange a card meter for them to manage their bills
- A group i work with are in the process of applying for funding for a renewable energy project for those living in fuel poverty.
- I'm more aware of resources out there to help people and I've signposted people to organisations that can help them access these resources. I'm also more aware of my own energy use at home and I've reduced this, reducing my bills.

### **Question 5**

***Please give any additional information you think might be useful in terms of reviewing the training and/or the SWSW project*** **13**

- None, I think the training was pitched just right, not too long or technical but packed with useful practical things we can do for clients in need.
- This is very informative training and some folks might think why they would want to do this however i think it should be something that should be mandatory ..... you think you know things about this but don't excellent.
- Both the trainer and content were of a high standard
- Training was comprehensive and informative considering the broad subject and time available.
- Found the course to be very useful. The areas covered in the course are very relevant to the client group that I work with. I did not feel there were any areas that were missed within the course I found the content on the course to be very thorough.
- Quarterly or bi annual update on new initiatives if appropriate
- I cant think of anything offhand. I thoroughly enjoyed training and found it both useful and informative.
- I had a great time at the training. The course for me was perfect, a lot to take in five days, but it worked for me.
- The was a very informative day and training events like this should be done more regular as societal changes happen all the time to individuals/families/ groups/communities.
- Although this training was informative, perhaps this is not the most useful for health staff. Occasionally clients will approach staff for financial advice however these cases are few and far between.
- May not be easy but a bit of practical exercises would add variety
- I learned more to use all knowledges from that training.Thank You!
- Found being able to read the bills and look at the unit costs very helpful and will certainly use this in the future

### **Question 6**

***If you were unable to attend the 3 day C&G Energy Awareness Course previously offered, would you be interested in attending a course in the coming months in the event that we secure funding?***

**Yes 41**

## Summary of Follow-up Evaluation

From the responses to Question 1, it is clear that front line workers are more confident in supporting their clients – 98% responded positively. Almost half of those responding commented on the aspects of the training they found most useful. However, the responses cover most aspects of the course: meters; billing; tariffs; condensation and dampness; health issues; appliance running costs; energy efficiency; high fuel bills and debt. Probably the most frequently-mentioned aspect was sources of help and support.

Based on responses to Question 2, over 98% of those responding have made use of what they learned from the SWSW training, with the majority using their knowledge to support clients. Most of those responding have also made use of the knowledge gained on a personal basis.

Front line workers are providing advice and support on a wide range of topics. More than 70%<sup>5</sup> have advised clients on fuel bills and paying for fuel. Warm Home Discounts, Winter Fuel Allowances and Cold Weather Payments proved 'popular', with 55% advising/supporting clients on these. More than half provided advice and support on understanding cold homes and health related issues as well as dealing with condensation dampness. Fuel debt and understanding meters were also areas where a significant proportion of clients received advice and support (46% and 43% respectively).

Responses to Question 3 show that front line workers have signposted many of their clients for a broad range of services and additional support. Almost half of respondents have referred clients for benefits health checks/income maximisation. EAS believes that this is due in part to front line workers being more aware of the importance of certain benefits in terms of potential entitlement to other forms of support, including energy efficiency/insulation measures, Warm Home Discount and access to supplier priority services registers.

Almost a quarter of respondents provided examples of how they had been able to provide support to clients, with some providing brief case studies. In addition, some SWSW participants have phoned EAS regarding specific cases, looking for further information/confirmation of actions to take. From this and update calls we know that:

- One health visitor was able to assist a client, who has learning difficulties, with fuel debt and disconnection issues. The client had had a prepayment meter installed and was consistently self-disconnecting, primarily because he was unable to understand the meter and the need to buy 'top-ups' regularly. The advisor arranged to have some of the debt waived, have the prepayment meter removed and have the client placed on Fuel Direct.
- One advisor has a client who had been unable to identify her gas supplier (new gas supply installed as part of refurbishment by housing provider). This has now been done and the client has been provided with information about dual fuel and payment methods.
- The same advisor (above) has a client – a single elderly lady – who was struggling with fuel bills. The client was aware that a family with three children living in the adjoining house were paying considerably less than she was for fuel. The advisor checked the meter reference number and discovered that her client has been paying for the neighbour's fuel. She is in the process of ensuring that this situation is resolved and that her client is reimbursed.

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<sup>5</sup> 109 SWSW participants completed a questionnaire. Percentages are based on the 107 respondents who indicated that they were making use of the knowledge gained.

- One tenant support worker identified that one of her clients was paying for an off-peak electric tariff, in a home with new gas heating. This has now been resolved. The client's home is in a four-in-a-block building in a small housing scheme. Gas heating systems were installed as part of a capital investment programme. The support worker has accessed a list of all properties where gas central heating replaced storage heating and she/her colleague will visit all of these in the next few weeks to ensure that the tenants have an appropriate tariff.

EAS intended to use feedback from Question 5 to help tailor future training content, context and delivery. However, all of the responses were positive (clearly a good thing!). One front line worker suggested that 'more practical exercises would add variety'. This was a participant on the second session that was delivered. Later participants benefited from the training being adapted in early January 2014 to incorporate a more hands-on approach, with participants actively taking part in appliance running cost calculations, meter reading exercises and fuel bill 'interpretations'.

30% (125) of the SWSW participants initially expressed an interest in undertaking one-week City & Guilds level III Energy Awareness training. Many of those who were keen to attend were ultimately unable to do so because of the demands of their jobs and the tight timescales for delivery. However, 30 people applied and 24 were allocated places (8 places maximum available per course). The follow-up evaluation also asked for an expression of interest if EAS was able to secure funding for these courses in the future. Almost 38% of respondents indicated that they would be interested – 24 of these 41 had also responded positively before.

### **Conclusions from Follow-up Evaluation**

EAS believes that the follow-up evaluation further demonstrates the real value that SSE's investment has provided, and further proves that the original SWSW project's intended outcomes were met and exceeded:

- improved understanding amongst participants of energy efficiency, tariffs and the impact of cold, damp homes on the health of vulnerable clients
- a trained, confident workforce, better able to support and advise their client group on the main aspects of domestic energy use and fuel poverty prevention (bills and prices, grants, access to additional support, etc)
- capacity-building and a more sustainable solution for vulnerable clients - underpinning for a service model that remains responsive to the identified and specific needs of its users
- improved access to and uptake of support
- effective referral and signposting

The SWSW project targeted those with a responsibility for the health and social welfare of vulnerable people. NHS services and other health professionals were amongst those targeted first. Based on job titles/organisation names provided, more than a quarter of respondents have a very specific health-related role in terms of the support they provide. One Health Improvement Practitioner felt that the SWSW training was 'something that should be mandatory .... you think you know things about this but don't ... excellent'.

EAS intends to submit an application to SSE with a view to extending delivery of SWSW (one day training and City & Guilds Energy Awareness training) to a wider audience.



## STAY WARM, STAY WELL

### Questionnaire

1. As a result of attending SWSW training, do you feel more confident about supporting your clients?

Yes  If yes, please note any aspects of the training that were particularly useful

No  If no, please give a brief explanation

2. Have you made use of what you learned from the Stay Warm, Stay Well training?

Yes  No

If yes, have you used your knowledge?

- on a personal basis
- with clients
- with groups (including clients and their families)
- other (e.g. to assist colleagues)

Please indicate which of the following you have given advice and/or support about (tick all that apply)

- cold homes and understanding related health issues
- fuel bills/paying for fuel
- fuel debt
- understanding meters (including pre-payment meters)
- reading meters
- energy efficiency grants and schemes
- condensation dampness
- insulation measures
- Warm Home Discount/Winter Fuel Allowance/Cold Weather payment
- using heating/hot water systems effectively
- other

If no, please give a brief explanation (i.e. no opportunity yet, not sufficiently confident, etc)

3. Have you signposted/referred clients to, or arranged any of the following? (please tick all that apply)

- insulation measures
- energy efficiency grants and schemes
- priority services register/additional help from energy company
- energy company funds/trusts/foundations
- Warm Home Discount
- benefits health check/income maximisation
- additional help with fuel debt/high fuel bills
- change of supplier/tariff/payment method
- other (please describe)

4. Do you have an example/brief case study you can provide?

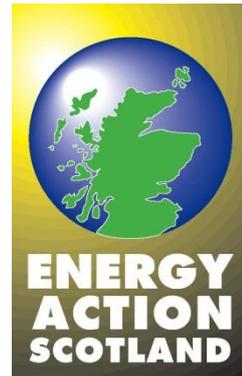
5. Please give any additional information you think might be useful in terms of reviewing the training and/or the SWSW project

6. Have you used the EAS Advisors Toolkit Yes  No

7. If you were unable to attend the 3 day C&G Energy Awareness Course previously offered, would you be interested in attending a course in the coming months in the event that we secure funding?

Yes  No

If yes please provide contact details



BA/RAP

19 May 2014

Suite 4a  
Ingram House  
227 Ingram Street  
Glasgow G1 1DA  
Tel: 0141 226 3064  
Fax: 0141 221 2788  
Email: [eas@eas.org.uk](mailto:eas@eas.org.uk)  
[www.eas.org.uk](http://www.eas.org.uk)

Dear Colleague

**STAY WARM, STAY WELL – EVALUATION**

Energy Action Scotland (EAS) identified the need to raise awareness of fuel poverty and related issues for front line staff with a responsibility for the health, wellbeing and social welfare of vulnerable people. Accordingly, EAS secured funding from SSE to deliver the Stay Warm, Stay Well project.

We want to make sure that the training we provided was relevant and useful. We also want to let our funders know about the positive impacts their money has made! In addition, evaluation is an important part of EAS's quality management process. You recently took part in one of the Stay Warm, Stay Well sessions and we would really appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the attached form and return it to [rose-ann.porteous@eas.org.uk](mailto:rose-ann.porteous@eas.org.uk).

The Stay Warm, Stay Well project was over-subscribed so we know there are more people out there who want to provide appropriate and effective advice and information for their clients, helping them to obtain all the help and support that is available. Your feedback will help considerably when we look to secure additional funding that will enable us to offer training to your fellow front line workers out there.

Thank you in anticipation. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara Atterson'.

Barbara Atterson  
**Development Manager**