

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Quarterly Report

Organisation	Durham County Council
Project start date (indicate if the start date has been delayed)	June 2021
Time remaining on project from this quarter	12 months
Funding stream	VCMA – GP Pilot
Report date	31/3/2022

Northern Gas Networks (NGN) are keen to know how the VCMA funding makes a difference to their partners and communities and understand the impact.

Quarterly reporting is referenced in schedule 3 of the services agreement that was signed by your organisation. Please therefore ensure that a quarterly report is submitted by the deadline provided by NGN. If you realise there will be a delay in submitting this report, please contact Stephanie Ord sord@northerngas.co.uk / 07704 545200 ASAP. Under VCMA, NGN needs to demonstrate compliance with the governance requirements set by Ofgem.

You will need to refer to your original Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA) document when completing this form, in order to ensure that the funding is being used specifically for the purpose originally intended. Please inform NGN if there is a problem, as we may be able to agree some changes under certain circumstances however, **you must** speak to us in advance.

The timely submission and standard of your reports is likely to affect any future applications to Northern Gas Networks under VCMA.

If you have any problems or need assistance completing this form, please contact Stephanie Ord in the first instance or Jill Walker JWalker@northerngas.co.uk, 07773 390967

Once you have completed this form, please return it to: sord@northerngas.co.uk

1b. Progress update - tell us about achievements to date

- Delivery against the outcomes and associated actions
- Progress made against success criteria as set out in the PEA / proposal
- Challenges in achieving any of the above
- Are there any changes you have had to make? (for example, slippage in dates etc.)

Delivery against the outcomes and associated actions:

Mail outs have taken place with nine GP practices across County Durham and patients received Warm Homes promotional letter from their GP surgery and warm homes questionnaire from Durham County Council to promote CO and PSR awareness alongside fuel poverty grants and energy saving advice.

Warm Homes letters, questionnaire and information was sent to 11,327 patients with health conditions including COPD, Asthma, Long Covid and parents of premature babies.

Patients receive a letter promoting the project from their Doctor / GP surgery asking them to complete DCC's questionnaire which is returned to the Council in-order for the patient to receive advice on carbon monoxide safety awareness, the Priority Services Register and other services including ECO grants, fuel tariff advice, referrals to fire service etc. Patients are input onto the NGN portal for carbon monoxide awareness and the Priority Services Register. Patients are referred to the Councils Managing Money Better Service and ECO grants. Promotion of CO awareness and PSR also is an important feature in all Managing Money Better home visits and phone/email enquiries from the public, staff and partners. When home visits take place, the client receives a CO awareness leaflet and an energy saving advice leaflet that includes a CO safety advice message.

The Councils Warm Homes Newsletter has been developed in partnership with NGN to include info / advice on carbon monoxide awareness. This newsletter is being distributed to residents in targeted promotions. Also our Warm Homes 20 top tips A5 flyer has been developed with NGN which includes info / advice on carbon monoxide awareness and is being distributed to patients and residents.

Progress made against success criteria as set out in the PEA / proposal:

Officer recruited to deliver project

Mail outs have taken place with nine GP practices

Letters, questionnaires and information sent to 11,327 patients

Warm Homes A4 Newsletter being developed by our Design Print Service which will include info / advice on carbon monoxide awareness

Warm Homes 20 top tips A5 flyer being developed by our Design Print service which will include info / advice on carbon monoxide awareness

Patients contacting the project are receiving advice on carbon monoxide awareness and the Priority Services Register

111 Referrals to the Fire and Rescue Service for fire safety awareness visits

Patients are referred to the Councils Managing Money Better Service and ECO/FPNES grants

Challenges in achieving any of the above:

GP Practices are still under a lot of pressures due to Covid related issues. We take this into account when contacting the GP Practices and are flexible in our work with them to assist wherever we can. The project relies on the GP surgery sending our letter and questionnaire to their patients and we fully reimburse them for all costs incurred.

Are there any changes you have had to make? (for example, slippage in dates etc.):

GP Practices are under a lot of work pressures due to Covid related issues. We have been very pleased with the number of GP Practices that are working with us on the project, we feel this shows they consider the CO and PRS and ECO Grants message is very important to their patients to stay safe and warm especially over the cold winter period. The increase in the energy price cap is resulting in more enquiries than anticipated.

1c. Case studies

Tell us about a particular individual who has been significantly impacted by this grant (anonymise names if required.) If your project has yet to start work with customers, please state this.

Ms Q was struggling to pay for her gas and electricity usage on her prepayment meters. Her house is solid brick and has a room built in the attic so no loft insulation installed. Energy efficiency advice was given on reducing her gas consumption. Advice was given to claim the warm homes discount. Ms Q currently has no carbon monoxide monitor and does not know how old the boiler is or when it was serviced. We arranged for a free boiler service and will supply her with a carbon monoxide monitor when they are received. She had no previous knowledge of carbon monoxide poisoning and is now very aware of the dangers. We also registered Ms Q on the Priority Services Register.

Section 2: Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

NGN / Ofgem require updates on performance, to understand the difference made and impact of this project. A number of metrics set by Ofgem are specific to VCMA, therefore we need to measure performance around these areas. Please enter the appropriate numbers / details in the boxes below, to show the direct impact of your project within the different categories. We **do not** expect you to enter a number in every box, only those relevant to your project. If it is not possible to count the exact numbers directly impacted, please provide a reasonable estimate. Please also include the target number that was stated in your PEA document (if applicable), so that a comparison of target v actual can be made.

2a. How many people have directly benefitted from this project to date against target declared on PEA?	546
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2b. How many people have benefitted indirectly?	317
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Please indicate:

	Target from Proposal/PEA:	Actual to date:
2c. Number of people signed up to the Priority Services Register	40	497
2d. Number of CO pre and post awareness surveys completed		439
2e. Number of people reached through CO awareness (leaflets, social media)	n/a	2,100
2e. Number of CO alarms provided to vulnerable customers		10
Please indicate:		
2f. Number of new volunteers	n/a	
2g. Number of additional grants/donations secured, as a result of this funding including amounts:	296 ECO grants and 80 MMB home visits	

2h. Number of people more informed (e.g. attendance at events, workshops)	No events due to covid
2i. Number of people trained	
Please indicate the number of people in the following categories, who have directly benefitted from this project:	
2j. People with physical disabilities	151
2k. People with mental health conditions	37
2l. People living in rural isolation	25
2m. People living with a temporary vulnerability	5
2n. People facing poverty or financial hardship	277
2o. People in education	51
2p. Number of people this project has reached	546

Section 3: Additional Information

3a. Description of any new learning achieved – please include in here how the learning has been disseminated if appropriate and also add any stakeholder engagement that has taken place.

All team (120 staff) have watched the video on carbon monoxide awareness and a small number were able to attend a NGN carbon monoxide training session in November.

3b. If you have any additional comments about your project, please state here (otherwise leave blank.)

It has been noticed that clients are very willing to be referred to the PSR but the majority were not aware of the PSR before we contacted them about it.

3c. Have you publicised the VCMA project in any way? Please provide details (social media, newsletter etc.)

We have a Warm Homes newsletter in development which includes carbon monoxide awareness. If NGN would like VCMA mentioned in future newsletters etc this could be possible.

If you have any photographs, leaflets, additional case studies etc. that you would like to send to us, please attach them to the email with this report. Please ensure they are anonymised if required

All of the information contained in this report is factually correct to the best of my knowledge. I confirm that the data contained within the report is accurate and understand that it may be used as part of NGN's project progress reporting to Ofgem. Please see my authorising signature below.

Name / Signature		
Organisation / role	Durham County Council / Housing Project Manager	
Email Address	Cliff.duff@durham.gov.uk	
Phone Number	03000 265262	
Date	31/3/22	