

Wales & West Utilities Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) Registration Form

Information required	Description
Contact Name	Tom Robinson
Contact Number	07890 315438
Contact Email	Tom.Robinson@wwutilities.co.uk
Address	Wales & West House, Spooner Close, Celtic Springs, Coedkernew, Newport, NP10 8FZ
Project title	Maximising income and ensuing homes don't slip into fuel poverty for people with cancer and their carers across south Wales, and Cheltenham
Total VCMA funding required (£k)	£75,000
Problem	<p>A cancer diagnosis can have a devastating impact financially as well as emotionally. For many families, income is already stretched. Research by Macmillan Cancer Support indicates that 83% of people experience financial hardship as a direct result of their cancer through a loss of income and/or increased costs. The report found that on average, people are £570 a month worse off because of their illness. People with cancer were especially vulnerable to fuel poverty as income often falls at a time when they are facing increased costs, particularly utility bills. The latest research also conducted by Macmillan showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 in 5 people with cancer turned their heating off in winter even though they needed it on. 91% of these said it was because of money worries. - 73% of people undergoing active treatment had used more fuel since their diagnosis. - 75% of those who spent more on fuel attributed this increase to feeling the cold more since diagnosis. - 92% of social care professionals believed there is a link between feeling cold and mental wellbeing. - 85% of social care professionals believed that feeling cold can strongly affect a cancer patient's recovery.

Criteria

	<p>These financial consequences are amplified when spouses or partners reduce hours to take on caring responsibilities. Unfortunately, the coronavirus health crisis has had a significant impact on the finances of people affected by cancer. Countless people have lost their jobs or experienced a reduction in wages and are struggling to cope at a time when fuel bills are rising.</p> <p>This project looks to provide meaningful support for people with a cancer diagnosis, when dealing with fuel poverty.</p> <p>Maggie’s has been a constant throughout the pandemic when little or no other support has been available locally. Benefits advice has always been a vital element of our programme and the pandemic has only amplified its significance. This element of our programme is of particular importance at our two Welsh Maggie’s centres that cover the whole of south Wales, which contains many areas of severe deprivation and fuel poverty.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p>Maggie’s is an independent charity that delivers emotional, practical, and social support from its centres based in the grounds of major NHS cancer hospitals. Their programme is delivered free of charge to anyone, with any type of cancer, at any stage in the journey for as long as they need it, and they also support family and friends.</p> <p>In each of the three centres this project will provide funding to, there will be a benefits advisor that will provide direct, holistic support to people living with a cancer diagnosis that visit their centres. The support will range from benefit checks to ensure income maximisation, form filling for grant applications and bill reductions, energy efficiency advice, Priority Service Register referrals, and awareness around the dangers of Carbon Monoxide. In addition to this they will have free CO alarms to provide to those who need them.</p> <p>All these services are provided at Maggie’s purpose built, unique centres in Cardiff, Swansea, and Cheltenham, which are award winning for their architecture which are calm,</p>

Criteria

	<p>friendly, and welcoming places, full of light and warmth; have a kitchen table at their heart, offer glimpses and views of the nature that surrounds them, and provide thoughtful spaces to find privacy as well as places to come together as a group. However, given the pandemic, Maggie’s has developed their support to be provided virtually for those who feel more comfortable with this approach.</p> <p>Over the intended delivery period of this project, we expect to provide support to around 3,300 people, and see potential savings of up to £2m.</p>
<p>Expected outcomes and the associated actions.</p>	<p>Wales & West Utilities will fund this project at a cost of £50,000 for an initial one-year period. We expect there to be around 3,300 direct beneficiaries plus their direct family members and anticipate total savings of up to £2m over the term of the agreement.</p> <p>The expected outcome for each customer who receives support from Maggie’s are more financial, practical, and emotional support, increased awareness of benefits available and how they can be accessed, reduced stress, and improved wellbeing, in addition to more support with their diagnosis.</p> <p>Through additional support measures like the PSR and partnerships already cultivated by Maggie’s this project will also see longevity past the project period, in terms of support for customers.</p> <p>WWU originally funded the project at £50k. Following the success of this project to date, this has now been extended for a further 6 months (April 2023 – September 2023) with an additional £25k funding.</p> <p>In the first nine months of delivery, the programme helped around 1,527 individuals save £1,547,074 – an average saving of £1,623 per household.</p>
<p>Scale of VCMA project and SROI calculations</p>	<p>We have taken the forecast projects of support from Maggie’s as inputs into our SROI model. This project shows a net benefit of £22 for each £1 invested.</p>

Criteria

	Following the first 9 months of delivery, we have used the actual data provided by the Maggie's project and can demonstrate a £70.53 benefit per £1 spent for this period.
Project Partners and third parties involved	Project will be undertaken in partnership with Wales & West Utilities and Maggie's Cancer Trust centres in Cardiff, Swansea, and Cheltenham.
VCMA Project start and end date	This project will begin on 1 April 2022 and will end on 31st March 2023. Project has been extended an extra 6 months. It will now conclude at the end of September 2023.
Geographical area	The project will look to support customers living with a cancer diagnosis in South Wales and Cheltenham.

Please return all completed forms to: VCMA@wwutilities.co.uk

For further information on the VCMA please use the below link to the Ofgem guidance document:

[Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance \(VCMA\) Governance Document | Ofgem](#)