

Background:

Protection from fire and prevention of future deaths

The Fire Safety Order 2005 requires the identification of residents at risk as part of the fire safety risk assessment for the premises, this would include taking appropriate action to remove or reduce the risk.

Why it matters: A personal risk assessment for each resident is critical to their own safety and that of other residents and staff.

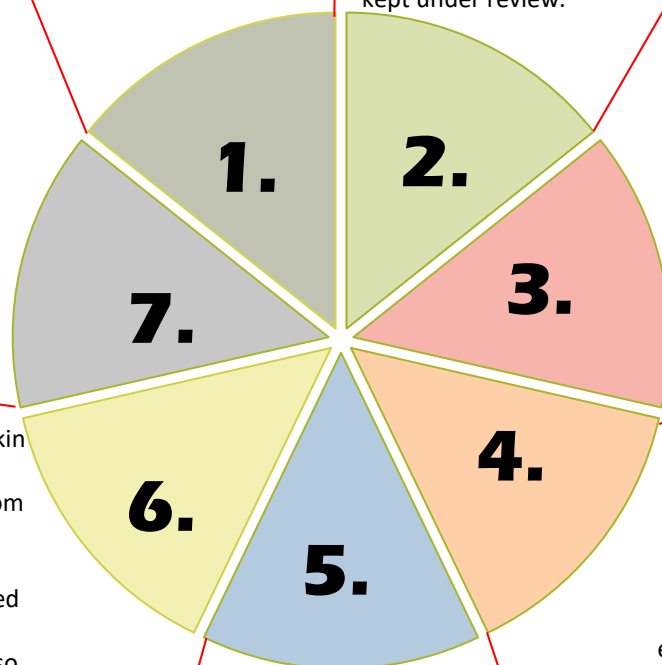
This will assess the needs of the resident in conjunction with care workers and family. It will consider their habits, their physical and mental capacity, and their environment. The risk assessment should be recorded and considered as part of their care plan, other assessments, and personal evacuation plans, and kept under review.

Information:

Consider the risk posed by residents smoking on your premises. This follows inquests into the deaths from burn injuries of high-risk client smokers with mobility problems as a result of matches or cigarettes dropping on to clothing or bedding.

Questions to consider:

1. Is the resident a smoker?
2. Are emollient or skin creams being applied?
3. Is the resident's mobility reduced? *If yes, share the risks with the resident, their GP, nurse practitioner and family members.*
4. ACT; consider an alternative



What to do:

- Anyone using emollients or skin creams regularly should be advised to keep well away from fire, naked flames or heat sources.
- The increased risk of fire posed by smoking whilst using emollient and skin creams is so significant that it must be avoided. The resident must be informed of these risks and advised not to smoke.
- Flame retardant covers, bedding or clothing for smokers must always be provided, however if they become embedded with emollient/skin creams, it will affect the flame retardant performance of the bedding. There must be sufficient numbers of these items to allow regular laundering at the correct temperature. This is the responsibility of the resident, the care provider, the care home or housing management provider and family members.

Emollient and skin creams

Emollients and skin creams alone are not flammable. However, a build up of emollient/skin cream residue (even from just one application) on fabrics such as bedding, clothing and dressings, can increase flammability. These are especially a fire safety concern when used by people who spend extended periods in a bed or armchair due to illness or impaired mobility. The fire risk posed by the use of emollient creams is significantly increased when the resident is smoking.

Fire Risk Assessment:

The use of emollient creams must be considered in your fire risk assessment to ensure that all reasonably practicable steps are taken to reduce the risk of a fire and its likelihood of occurring

Emollient and skin creams

It's important to be aware of the fire safety risks if you or a person you care for needs to use emollient and skin creams – [here's how to reduce potential fire risks](#)