

BATHING, SHOWERING & HOT WATER



Customers who require assistance when bathing and showering within Advance services should have an assessment of their personal care and where required any associated moving and positioning support needs.



Support delivered with bathing and showering will consider the privacy and dignity of the customer at all times.



Supporting customers to bathe and shower in their own home should not be undertaken without a completed Risk Assessment and Support Plan.



Check the water temperature using a thermometer:

Maximum 44°C for baths and showers.



In the event of a customer being scalded, staff should administer first aid if trained to do so and where appropriate seek medical attention by dialling 999 (mobile 112 or 999). The incident must be reported and logged in line with the Incident and Accident Management Policy.

Key Changes (Summary):

- Refreshed
- Updates made to policy in line with current guidance, for example around water temperatures.
- Section on legionella has been removed as this is now covered in the Legionella Policy.
- Sections on Data Protection and Diversity & Equality have been added.

1. POLICY

- 1.1 Advance is committed to safe practices when supporting customers with bathing and showering. This policy covers both bathing and showering, and is particularly concerned with minimising the risks of scalding when caring for people in their own home. Other significant risks, such as drowning or slips and falls should, of course, be identified and controlled, but are not within the scope of this policy, nor are moving and handling issues.
- 1.2 HSE leaflet HSIS6 and UKHCA guidance, Controlling Scalding Risks from Bathing and Showering, explain the risks associated with hot water and hot surfaces in health and social care premises and sets out guidance to help control them.
- 1.3 When assisting a customer to bath/shower, staff should work within existing Personal Care, Moving and Handling, Infection Control and Personal Protective Equipment Policies/ Procedures.

2. PROCEDURE

- 2.1 Where a vulnerable person uses a bath at an unsuitable temperature it may be difficult to quickly remove them, cool the water, or drain the water from the bath, resulting in increased risk of injury.
- 2.2 The main principles to follow to control scalding risks when bathing or showering are:
- Assessment of risk on a case by case basis. This will include consideration of individual vulnerability and needs and any risk assessment already provided by the assessing or commissioning bodies
 - The assessment will also need to consider the physical environment such as the type of bath taps, including mixer taps, or type of shower to be used. For example, in a gravity-fed shower there may be a danger of the cold water failing or being diverted to other parts of the residence resulting in very hot water being emitted
 - Comprehensive, documented and accessible care plans, backed up by training and instruction for care workers so they are able to understand and comply with the care plans
 - Implementation, monitoring and periodic review of assessments and care plans
 - Provision of any necessary equipment and training for the workforce on how to use it according to the manufacturer's instructions. (All homecare workers involved in bathing or showering service users should receive training before they assist service users with bathing/showering, or perform checks)
 - Written policies and procedures for the care staff, especially for assessing risk and planning and delivering care
 - Compliance with the Mental Capacity Act and its Code of Practice in relation to service users' abilities to make decisions about their social care.
- 2.3 In Registered Care Homes and Supported Living schemes where temperature monitoring & thermostatic mixer valves (TMVs) are installed risks are reduced through weekly water temperature checks and checking the temperature by hand to make sure the water is not too cold or too hot. Where TMVs are not fitted the water temperature should be checked by a member of staff with a suitable (scoop, digital or strip) thermometer prior to bathing. (Maximum 44°C Baths & Showers).
- 2.4 Where a shower is being used, staff should ensure the water temperature is stable and at the customer's preferred temperature.
- 2.5 If it is necessary for an Advance staff member to assist a customer with bathing and showering in their own home or Supported Living scheme, then a risk assessment must be carried out and identify any suitable control measures that need to be implemented to prevent scalding.

3. CUSTOMER NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 Staff should discuss with a customer, and where appropriate their family or carer, the customer's personal hygiene needs and safe bathing procedures as part of their Needs Assessment and Support Planning.
- 3.2 In assessing risk of injury, it is important to understand why a service user requires assistance with bathing or showering.
- 3.3 Ultimately assessment should identify those users who require assistance to maintain their safety as opposed to those who merely need physical assistance with normal activities of everyday living.
- 3.4 High water temperatures may pose a scalding risk to certain vulnerable people.
- 3.5 This may be due to the following:
 - Limited mobility
 - Impaired sensitivity to temperature or inability to recognise if temperatures are too hot/cold
 - Inability to communicate if assistance is needed
 - Lifting equipment or other aids that may limit the customer's mobility in the bath
 - If unattended and the customer is liable to run a bath or water when unattended and there is clear guidance around control measures to provide specific support with bathing/showering.

4. TEMPERATURE MONITORING & THERMOSTATIC MIXER VALVES

- 4.1 As per the HSE's information sheet HSIS6 and also the UKHCA Guidance, Controlling Scalding Risks from Bathing and Showering, which both recommend that where customers are considered vulnerable to scalding, thermostatic mixing valves (TMV's) should be used to control hot water temperatures where there is potential for whole-body immersion and other outlets where people are especially vulnerable (e.g. basins where people have skin sensitivity impairment).
- 4.2 The Service Manager will ensure that hot water warning notices are installed in all areas where TMVs are not installed to identify to customers, staff & visitors of the presence of hot water.

Where TMVs are installed

- 4.3 Support staff are required to undertake weekly temperature checks and record these. Where the temperature falls outside the regulatory requirements, appropriate action should be taken to ensure remedial action is taken.

How to test temperatures

- 4.4 Of particular importance is the setting of temperatures once TMVs are installed. The following guidance should be followed where appropriate:

- Digital thermometers of known accuracy, with a minimum refresh rate of 4 times a second are recommended for use. Liquid filled thermometers must not be used.
 - Temperature readings should be taken at the normal flow rate after allowing for the system to stabilise.
 - The end of the digital thermometer probe must be fully submerged in the water that is to be tested.
 - When reading the discharge temperature of a spray fitting the water should be collected, as close to the discharge as possible, in a small container and the reading taken only after the container and all the contained water has reached a stable temperature.
- 4.5 On the weekly water temperature record sheet, record the date, time and temperature of each outlet. Include baths and showers that are out of use but still supply water, and specialist baths (e.g. Parker)
- 4.6 Record and date all remedial actions (e.g. bath taken out of use, bathroom door locked, repairs undertaken, etc) on the Water Temperature Checklist.
- 4.7 If a specialist bath e.g. Parker, has its own integral thermometer, check its accuracy by taking a reading with the thermometer and report any discrepancy to the Service Manager.
- 4.8 In the event of recording high temperatures at an outlet indicating a possible TMV failure, a risk assessment needs to be carried out to identify the risk to customers and any actions from this carried out. The TMV then needs to be reported to maintenance as a Priority repair.
- 4.9 **Where TMVs are not installed** and we are supporting with bathing and showering the temperature of the water should be checked prior to bathing/showering.
- 4.10 Recommended safe temperatures for adults can be found in the HSE's information sheet HSIS6.

5. GUIDANCE ON HOW TO SAFELY BATHE AND SHOWER

- 5.1 Customers who require assistance, whether on Advance premises or not, will be bathed in the following way:
- Run the bath – cold water then hot water
 - Mix the water thoroughly and check the temperature at both ends of the bath using a suitable non-glass thermometer (maximum 44°C for a bath)
 - Help the customer into the bath
 - **Never add hot water to an occupied bath.**
- 5.2 Customers who require assistance, whether on Advance premises or not, will be showered in the following way:

- Check the risk assessment for showering. Ascertain what level of support and supervision is needed for the customer including whether they can be safely left and how to deal with interruptions while showering. Also check the agreed safe water temperature for the service user (although it should never exceed 44°C)
- Prepare everything needed for the shower
- Run the shower to establish a constant temperature
- Check the temperature using an integral or a scoop thermometer (maximum 44°C for a shower). It is important to note that a scoop will only provide an estimate of actual spray temperature from the shower head
- Help the customer user into the shower
- Be aware of the potential for sudden water flow and temperature fluctuations even on modern showers. For vulnerable service users constant supervision will be required to ensure a rapid response in the event of any changes.

5.3 **Report** any incident in line with the Incident & Accident Management Policy and Procedures. Administer first aid or support as required in the event of an incident and contact emergency services if required.

6. CONTROLS FOR WASH-BASINS

6.1 In Registered Care Homes TMV should be fitted at wash hand basins if it is identified that customers are especially vulnerable. In non-registered services, Managers must risk assess the need for thermostatic mixer valves at wash hand basins used by customers.

7. INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

7.1 Any adverse incident which occurs in relation to bathing/showering customers will be reported and investigated in accordance with the Incident reporting and related policies. In addition, failure of any water temperature control device needs to be reported to the appropriate person.

7.2 Customers must not use any bath/shower equipment where the temperature control device may be faulty.

8. DATA PROTECTION

8.1 Where personal information of any individual is collected, shared or otherwise processed in pursuit of the objectives of or guidance within this policy, this must be performed in accordance with the Data Protection Policy, the Information Security Policy, the General Data Protection Regulations, and any other relevant guidance on handling personal data responsibly.

8.2 Any records made as a result of following this policy must be retained in accordance with the Retention of Records Policy.

9. DIVERSITY & EQUALITY

- 9.1 Advance will apply this policy consistently and treat all customers with fairness and respect.
- 9.2 We recognise that we have an ethical and legal duty to promote equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

Related Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Care • Manual Handling • Incident & Accident Reporting • Safeguarding Adults at Risk • Mental Capacity • Epilepsy • Infection Control • Legionella • Risk Assessment • Support Planning • Data Protection Policy • Equality & Diversity Policy • Retention of Records Policy • Information Security
Related Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessment • Risk Assessment • Water Temperature Log

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