SAEB Safeguarding Ambassadors

‘Think Fire’ this Winter

Safeguarding Adults Executive Board

November 2026

A message from the SAEB Safeguarding Ambassadors

Be alert • Share the message • Act early



We want everyone in our communities to feel informed, confident and supported to reduce fire risks this winter. As the colder months approach, increased use of heating, electrical equipment and candles can add to existing risks from smoking, reduced mobility, emollient creams, telecare needs or changes in health. A friendly conversation and early action can make a real difference.

Important winter message from Helen Christmas

“Please help us raise awareness of the fire risks associated with emollient creams and ensure that people receive the right advice and guidance.”

Helen Christmas, Borough Commander for the City of Westminster, London Fire Brigade, shared the Merton flyer for use across London following a number of fire deaths.

What to do this winter: display and share the flyer with people who use emollient creams, families, carers, care workers and frontline practitioners. The QR code on the flyer links directly to London Fire Brigade advice.

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Emollients are creams, sprays and lotions that may contain paraffin or other products like butters and oils.

Both paraffin and non-paraffin emollients can act as an accelerant when absorbed into clothing and exposed to naked flames or other heat sources.

Stay aware of the risks and take precautions to keep you and your loved ones safe!

Scan the QR code to find out more or speak to your pharmacist about the risks.

Reduce the risks:

- Never smoke in bed.
- If your clothing, bedding / blankets are affected by emollients:
  - Be cautious when smoking
  - Take care when cooking with gas or electric hobs
  - Do not sit too close to any open fires, gas fires or halogen heaters
- Wash your clothing and bedding daily at the highest temperature recommended. Although this will lower your risk, washing fabrics does not completely remove all fire risks.

LFB LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

In partnership with Hampshire & Isle of Wight FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

From us to you

As Safeguarding Ambassadors, we are asking everyone to help this winter. Start a conversation about fire risks, share trusted advice, encourage timely referrals and make sure information is clear and accessible. If something does not feel right, speak up and help connect the person with support.

Key messages to reinforce

- **Notice changes:** look for changes in mobility, health, smoking, heating use or living circumstances.
- **Ask about emollients:** residue on clothing, bedding and furnishings can make them easier to ignite.
- **Keep heat away:** keep heaters, candles and other heat sources away from emollient-treated fabrics and flammable materials.
- **Check telecare:** make sure equipment and linked smoke alarms meet the person's needs and alerts reach the right responder.
- **Review risk:** reassess after hospital discharge, a deterioration in health or a change in care and support.
- **Act and share:** refer for a Home Fire Safety Visit, share information and escalate when serious risks remain.

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Easy-read learning and support

Start here
For Top Fire Safety Tip's read the SAEB Safeguarding Ambassadors Think Fire bulletin and learning briefing here Fire Safety and Safeguarding learning briefing
Emollient Creams and Smoking - Read the 7-minute briefing on emollients and smoking here
Learning and training **Read the Fatal Fires Thematic SAR learning briefing** **View London Fire Brigade fire-safety training** **Telecare and Fire 7-minute briefing**

SAEB fire-safety webinars and recorded learning

Watch, revisit and share the learning **Aimed at frontline practitioners and managers; covers home fire risks, early intervention, mental capacity and support for adults at risk.**
Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews: Fatal Fires Thematic Review
Fire Safety Awareness Training **Watch this short video on Home Fire Safety produced by our Safeguarding Ambassadors**
Bite-size learning: Mental Capacity and Fire Safety

Your winter action

Start one short conversation:

- **What has changed?**
- **What is the fire risk?**
- **Who needs to know?**

Download the emollients and fire-safety flyer here and share it with your local communities and partnerships, commissioning colleagues, care homes and home-care services. Please display it wherever people who use emollient creams, their families, carers and frontline staff can easily see it. Acting early could prevent a serious fire.