

# Caring for people who use paraffin-based creams, airflow or oxygen equipment



**ADVICE FOR  
HOME CARER  
PROFESSIONALS**



West Yorkshire  
Fire & Rescue Service

Making West Yorkshire Safer  
[www.westyorkshire.gov.uk](http://www.westyorkshire.gov.uk)

## Advise the person you are caring for

- About the potential fire risks of smoking or being near naked flames when using oxygen, dynamic airflow mattresses and paraffin-based creams.
- To change bedding and clothing daily if using paraffin-based creams. The creams soak into fabrics and can potentially be a fire hazard.
- Not to place heated appliances such as electric blankets, hairdryers, heated rollers and tongs on or near their airflow mattresses and cushions.
- Not to use any naked flame or potential cause of ignition such as matches or candles when their clothing may be contaminated with paraffin-based cream or saturated with oxygen.
- In the event of fire and if it is safe to do so, to turn off pressure relieving equipment using the control - not at the plug. This is because if the equipment has been punctured and is losing air, the pump will react by pumping air faster which could fuel a fire and make it spread more quickly.

## What else can you do?

- Where relevant, consider requesting or prescribing alternative prescriptions such as water-based skin products and gel or foam mattresses and cushions.
- When applying paraffin-based cream, take care to ensure that it does not soak into seating and soft furnishings.
- Does the person have, or are they developing memory or concentration issues, have a diagnosis of dementia and have a previous history of smoking? Be extra vigilant looking for unsafe practices. Record in the care plan and refer to us.
- Inform relatives, carers, partner agencies and ourselves if the person does not follow the advice given so that they can offer further support or take action.
- Regularly remind person about the fire safety information you have given them and check they have remembered and understood.
- Contact us for a Home Fire Safety Check via the partnership referral system or visit our website [www.westyorksfire.gov.uk](http://www.westyorksfire.gov.uk).

