

Considering Risks if there is a Power Shortage

For children dependent on Medical Technology the potential of a shortage of national power is almost certainly a worry. This letter is to help you plan and prepare in the unlikely eventuality that there are planned power cuts, and help you consider what you may need as a contingency plan on any day.

What we know

The National Grid feedback-

*Regarding the winter power cuts that you may have seen on the news, one of the licence requirements for National Grid’s Electricity System Operator and Gas System Operator are that each produce a Winter Outlook annually. This is normal course of business and a legal requirement. These Outlooks are not predictions of what may happen, rather they are scenario-planning exercises. It is their role to plan for every possible scenario. The base case, or most likely scenario, would see no disruption whatsoever to power supplies. The most unlikely scenario could lead to supply interruptions to customers for short periods. Should this be the case, it would be **communicated well in advance**. To be clear, this is not something we are forecasting, or that we believe is likely.*

We do have a priority service register that our customers can join if they might be more vulnerable in a power cut, such as if they use medical or mobility equipment, have a disability, or are over the age of 65 or have children under the age of 5. Our priority register is designed to keep our customers most vulnerable up-to-date in a power cut and provide additional support if needed.

Risk Assessment

Risk	Who will be affected	Likely hood of this happening	Risk without any planning (control)	Risk level with planning noted below	Control
Power cut unplanned	Technology dependent children and their carers at home/ community	Unlikely	Major	Low - Mod	Clinical team assessment and family contingency plan.
Power cut planned	Technology dependent children and their carers at home/ community	Unlikely	Major	Low	Clinical team assessment and family readiness plan.

Being power outage ready- Advice for families and care providers

Power outages although infrequent can occur at any time. We recommend that all families should be power outage ready in case of emergency or planned outages

- Ensure you have contacted North West Electricity (website or phone) to enrol for the Priority Service Register. There is information of how this can help you in a power outage.
- North West Electricity have social media accounts and they will send alerts of any known or planned power outages via these routes.
- Plan now, think where you would provide care – a clear and organised area is important, as you will be caring in reduced light in the event of a power cut.
- Consider your equipment and what you may need to use for the safety and comfort of your child. This may include hoist, feeding pump, bed mattress, ventilator, monitors, lamps, nebulisers, mobile phones and more..... It may help to list the things you use with your child through the daytime on a usual day and reflect what you couldn't do without. Consider the battery back-up or alternative.
- Lighting is important for you to be able to provide care. Chargeable lamps and headtorches are useful to allow your hands to be free for care such as suction. Get these now as there may be a shortage in the shops in the unlikely event a power outage is announced.
- Think about keeping warm, for any planned cut you could pre heat your home, prepare to stay in a pre-warmed room and ensure you have extra layers of blankets and clothing ready if needed. Please do not use heated products, such as hot water bottles with children that can't move off them if they get too hot or they are starting to burn.
- If you get notice about a power cut, collect everything you will need and have things to hand for the predicted power outage.
- Charge fully any equipment with batteries for any planned power cut and for unplanned make sure any items not in use are charging or charged.
- Consider extra help and assistance that your family and friends could offer in case your child needs medical support or transport to a hospital. It's possible that our already strained emergency services may be placed under more pressure. Phone lines may also be under additional pressure and connections affected.

Speak to your care team/community nursing team to see if there is extra local support on offer and ask them to help you plan for you and their staff.

Help with costs

We understand that there are significant financial pressures on you and asking you to purchase torches and batteries for home lighting may be an added pressure. Please find some charity links that may be able to support you

<https://www.frenkeltopping.co.uk/>

The charity will support families who don't have a compensation claim but have had a life changing event (can be from a few years ago and be medical) and are struggling financially. They can provide financial assistance for equipment, support with hospital visits, transport, and anything else that will help the family and patient.

Together for Short Lives – Technology Dependency Grants

<https://www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk/emergency-fund-created-to-support-children-with-short-lives/>

The new fund has been given a momentous start thanks to a generous contribution of £100,000 from Morrisons' partnership fundraising. The initial donation from Morrisons will allow us to support 400 families caring for a seriously ill child. However, there are many more families struggling with the soaring cost of living who have nowhere to turn.