

Northern Regional Burns Service
The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundations Trust
Royal Victoria Infirmary
Queen Victoria Road
Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne & Wear
NE7 7QH

14th October 2022

Open letter

We are the Northern Regional Burns Service – we care for anyone in the Northern region (from North Yorkshire and North Cumbria up to the border with Scotland) who sustains a burn injury needing hospital care either on our wards or through our outpatient clinics. We are based in the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Every year we treat hundreds of adults and children who have sustained a burn injury. This includes scalds from hot drinks, hot water bottles, radiators or heaters, cooking pans or hot food, and baths. Sadly we anticipate that the frequency of these types of injuries could increase due to the cost of living crisis coinciding with the arrival of the cooler weather – fears about the cost of heating could cause people to use portable heaters, hot water bottles, hot drinks, or electric blankets that increase risk of injury. Because of this, we created a health promotion film to share safety tips around reducing the risk of burn injuries and provide basic but effective strategies in burn first aid.

“Every intervention from the point of injury affects the long term outcome”

Professor Fiona Wood, Consultant Burns Surgeon

Burn care begins before the person even reaches a burns service - effective and timely first aid can have a huge impact on their recovery. Once a burn happens, it can get worse (deeper) over the first 48 hours. Good first aid quickly takes the heat out of the injury to prevent it from becoming deeper, helps keep it clean to reduce the risk of infection and can half the likelihood that someone will need surgery to heal the burn, which will improve any scarring that might occur.

We have sent you the link to our film to ask if you could kindly share it with your staff teams and the people who use your service. Perhaps you have a social media page where you could place a link, it could support any first aid training you undertake, or you may have access to a rolling television screen in a waiting area where it could be shown. We are working hard to ensure that the film reaches as many people as possible in as many different settings as we can identify, and are very grateful for your support in achieving this.

If you have any questions, require any further information, or need a copy of the film as a stand-alone file, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via email.

Thank you once again for helping us prevent burn injuries where we can, and promote effective first aid if they do occur.

Kind regards

The Northern Regional Burns Service Team