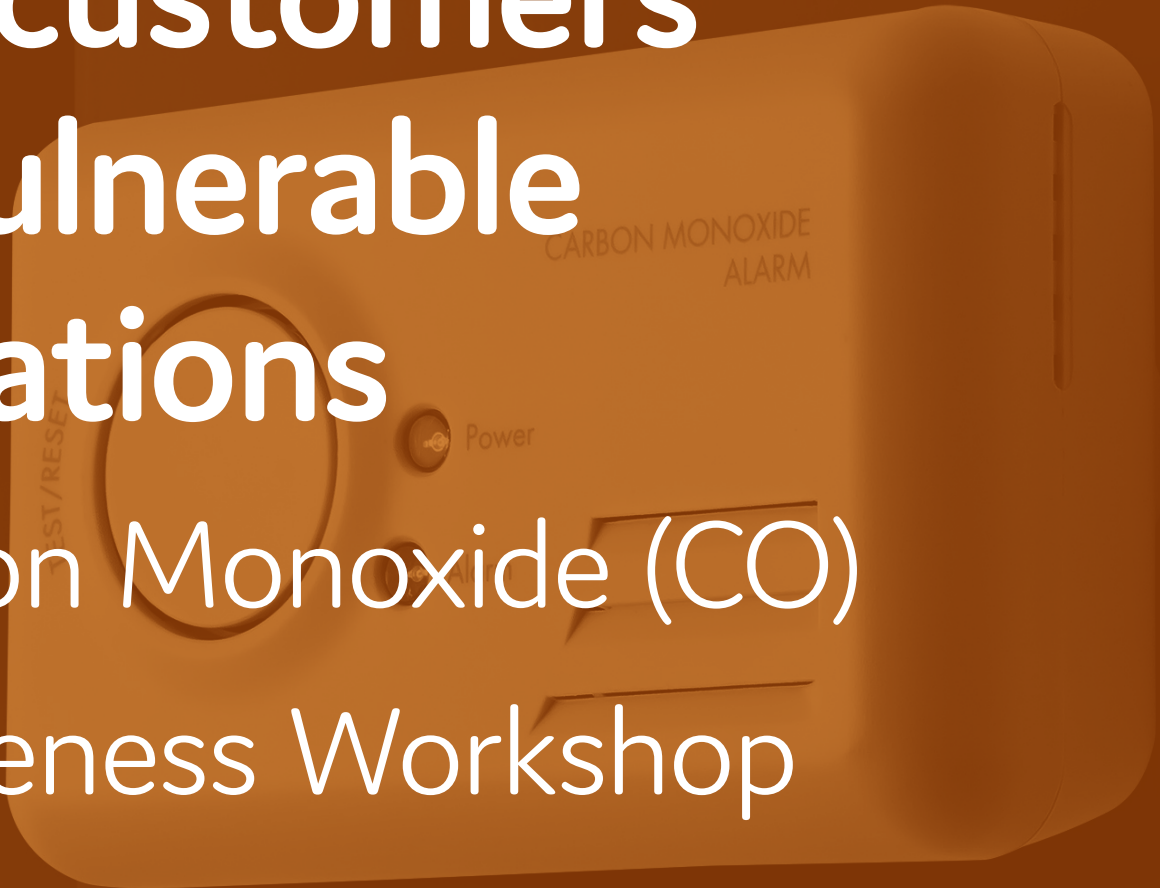


Supporting our customers in vulnerable situations

Carbon Monoxide (CO)
Awareness Workshop



together
we are
the network

1st February 2022

Thank you

Thank you again to those of you who joined us for our Carbon Monoxide (CO) Awareness Workshop on Tuesday 1st February.

Myself, Jill, Steve, Steph, and our facilitators thoroughly enjoyed seeing you all again. A special thank-you to our guest presenter Simon Main from our partner organisation Think CO, who provided an excellent insight into their Think CO programme, which is funded through the Gas Safe Charity. Simon provided an insight into how the programme raises awareness of the sources, signs, and symptoms of CO poisoning. The programme is particularly aimed at front line staff and volunteers, who work in the homes of vulnerable people.

Eileen Brown

Customer Experience Director

Purpose of the workshop



delegates



overall satisfaction with the event (out of 10)

- **You said / we did** – update from our Energy Crisis / Partnership Working workshop in November 2021
- **Partner spotlight session** - Simon Main, Think CO
- **NGN and Carbon Monoxide** - research and NGN approach
- **Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide**
- **Allowance (VCMA) & Network Innovation Allowance (NIA)** – project spend 21/22 on CO specific projects
- **Plan on a Page** - summary of CO Strategy
- **Breakout session** - discussions around Plan on a Page CO Strategy review

Think CO spotlight session – Simon Main

Simon provided an overview of the Think CO programme. It started in 2016 and is funded by the Gas Safe Charity. It aims to raise awareness of the sources, signs, and symptoms of CO poisoning risks, particularly aimed at front line staff and volunteers who work in the homes of vulnerable people. The learning outcomes of the programme are to enable people to:

- Understand CO and how it is formed;
- Be aware of the sources, signs, and symptoms of CO;
- Know how to help prevent CO poisoning, servicing and maintenance & CO detectors;
- Be aware of key legislation;
- Know what to do if they suspect someone they are visiting, is at risk of CO poisoning

Think CO - free resources



NGN and Carbon Monoxide – research and NGN approach

Steve provided a high-level overview of CO statistics in the UK. Steve went on to explain that NGN carried out further research on CO in our area, with over 1825 participants. The findings were:

- Only 36% of respondents recognized that CO kills
- Only 22% recognized that CO is not detectable by human senses
- Only 21% identified it as a dangerous gas
- 27% of respondents did not have a CO detector
- 27% of respondents only tested their alarm annually

The research findings helped NGN develop our Plan on a Page - CO Awareness Strategy.

To access the full report and findings, please scan the below QR code:



Over the course of the CO and NGN sessions, Slido was used to assess the audience's understanding of a number of issues - questions below.

Q1 – On a scale of 1-10 are you more worried about the dangers of CO now than you were before Covid?

Average score was 6.5

Q2 – Can you explain why you've given that answer? A snapshot of comments is detailed below.

With living costs going up, it feels like more people will resort to measures previously not taken to lower bills e.g. no money to buy a CO monitor, nor getting appliances service or repaired. Potentially not letting engineers into the house to service boilers due to covid risks. Since covid, people are more interested in keeping safe

- I've become more aware of the dangers so being more aware has made me more worried about vulnerable families. More vulnerable people isolating and receiving fewer visitors e.g.. shielding / clinically vulnerable. Energy suppliers putting off servicing too due to pandemic
- More time at home and vulnerable people being much more isolated and means greater exposure time. Vulnerable people are more likely to be indoors more than before. Fuel poverty means safety is on a back burner, compared to heating and eating.
- More support being given remotely

Q3 – Do you think the energy crisis has impacted on Carbon Monoxide Awareness?

Yes - 25%
No - 25%
Stayed the same - 50%

Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) & Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) – project spend 21/22 on CO specific projects

Steve talked about the annual Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA) spend for NGN, GDN Collaborative VCMA spend and the spend for Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) projects, that are all focused on CO awareness. This was circa 25% of NGN's overall annual allowance, circa 50% N-GN collaborative annual spend and circa 30% total annual £800k NIA fund.

The audience were made aware of two VCMA projects focused on CO awareness:

NGN specific projects - Durham County Council's GP Partnering Pilot. The project is a significant step forward in making direct contact with households at risk of cold-related ill health and CO poisoning. The project targets GP patients with COPD or asthma, through GP practices within County Durham. Partnering with Clinical Commissioning Group GP practices allows the council's Warm Homes Team to make direct contact with vulnerable patients, as well as provide advice around fuel poverty and associated issues.

Collaborative GDN project - Identifying and Protecting Pregnant Women from CO Exposure. This project aims to bring together information on expired CO levels in women recruited into the study, with information collected on exposure in their home. Recruitment into the study will trigger a Home Safety Visit with an additional aspect on CO, conducted by the local Fire and Rescue Service, and a two-week period of CO monitoring using a CO

alarm, data loggers and CO breathalysers in the participant's home. To date, no study to assess environmental exposure of pregnant women to CO has been undertaken in the UK. Projects will take place within one NHS locality in England for each GDN.

The audience were also made aware of a Network Innovation Allowance project, focussed on CO identification technology:

NIA project -, Project Helix, in association with Brunel University. The project is to develop a wearable device (a ring) which will measure:

- Heart rate
- Blood pressure
- Respiratory rate
- Blood oxygen level
- Carboxy haemoglobin
- Atmospheric CO



Figure 1 - Artist impression of Helix Ring

Over the course of this section, Slido was used to assess the audience's understanding of the level of spend - questions below:

Q1 - Our total spend on CO projects from our overall VCMA allowance is around 30%. What do you think of this level of investment?

Just about right - 67%
Too much - 0%
Not enough - 33%

Q2 - Can you explain why you have given that answer? A snapshot of comments is detailed below

- CO issues have to "compete" with other related health/social issues
- We need to raise more awareness to new groups of people, hard to reach, vulnerable new families, i.e., refugees settled in new towns.
- CO feels the poor relation when it comes to home safety with high levels of poor awareness remaining
- Limited understanding but seems proportional given other vulnerabilities that need investment too
- Spend needs to be balanced across lots of needs and vulnerabilities
- Happy with the spend but overall awareness needs to be increased
- Need to see results from year 1 projects before understanding if we invest more
- More money equals more projects equals less deaths and injuries
- Awareness levels are still too low

Q3 - Our total spend on Network Innovation Allowance (NIA) CO projects is around 30%. What do you think of this level of investment?

Just about right - 83%
Too much - 0%
Too little - 17%

Q4 - Can you explain why you have given that answer? A snapshot of comments is detailed below

- Funding takes time for its impact to be felt and measured. Ongoing investment is needed for real change
- Innovation takes time, I would think by years 2-4 you may catch up on spend. Huge growth area that hasn't really been touched since the original CO monitors when talking specifically about innovation, it is hard to do
- Increase of spend to raise more awareness for vulnerability in harder to reach communities, e.g., language barriers, refugees etc
- We need to involve, encourage more organisations to participate in innovation
- Good evaluation of innovations and their impact is key before investing more

Plan on a Page - Summary of CO Awareness Strategy

12 months ago, we built and launched our CO Awareness Strategy using network wide research and stakeholder feedback. The Plan contains 4 key areas: Technology and Data; Internal Colleague Awareness; External Awareness Campaigns; Reporting and Accreditation.

The audience were shown an extract of the Plan on a Page, in order to inform the breakout session discussions.

For the breakout sessions the delegates were asked to focus on two areas specifically:

- Technology and Data
- External Awareness Campaigns

Breakout session – discussions around Plan on a Page - CO strategy review

- Four questions were posed, and each facilitator took each question for discussion as detailed below:
- What more could NGN and our partners be doing to raise awareness?
- What other data should NGN be looking at to influence our strategy?
- Are there any links with our strategy to work you are already doing?
- Are there any emerging risks issues that we need to consider?

Overall stakeholder feedback, in relation to all of the questions posed, was as follows:

What more could NGN and our partners be doing to raise awareness?

- Fuels other than gas needs to be considered
- Private landlords need to be engaged with
- Link-workers / new schemes coming to NHS. Social prescribers and wider referrals from different organisations can be introduced and linked up
- Visually impaired communities now being engaged with by strategic partner in Bradford. Visually impaired community said it was the first time that they had been introduced to CO awareness
- Need to reach people not on social media i.e., consider the age of people living on their own
- Use hard media / local paper / local radio – all good routes in. Consider national comms
- Using experiences of people – use personal stats / case studies not just stats in comms
- Communities who speak different languages- using community radio.
- Little knowledge of what NGN / other

GDN's do in terms of CO in smaller organisations

- Is there any data on people with respiratory / lung problems that British Lung Foundation can share on their help lines?
- Do we know prevalence of CO alarms / geographical areas? Target action plans on gaps
- Look at under reporting of CO deaths
- Schools – tell kids who tell parents. Get back into Safety Seymour
- Childcare and nurseys groups to target
- Fire & rescue – person centred approach around heating around Safe & Well checks – opportunity of signposting
- Issue CO alarms at foodbanks as well as fire stations
- Joint approach – APPCOG – this needs to be resurrected and joined up with as many organisations as possible. Small organisations can't be left behind

What other data should NGN be looking at to influence our strategy?

- Deprivation scales can be used
- Over 65 group / GP's can be targeted
- Outside targeted response areas (fire services) – rurality not supported as well
- Public Health England – suggested using 'Fingertips' to gather data / integrated care systems. Data from food banks and food delivery services could be used
- Data could be gathered from integrated care systems
- Encourage coroners to check for CO related deaths. Use this data for more weight behind the issue
- Gas servicing organisations – 2-way comms. They could collect information but also hand out information about CO

Are there any links with our strategy to work you are already doing?

- Ofgem are planning to make a change to the Warm Home Discount (WHD), but we don't have the information on what this will be yet. They should extend the warm home payment to all households that have a registered vulnerability/ disability

Are there any emerging risks issues that we need to consider?

- Changing habits around holidays
- Air BnB and other lets – are they CO safe?
- Private sector landlords – raising awareness with them is key
- Pick up national comms when price cap removed. Stress the importance of boiler services still being essential
- Recommended to take CO alarms on holiday

As services open back up and people are getting more routine visits, the level of vulnerability being reported is going up significantly, whilst it's great to know this, services can be stretched and it's important that services can act on information given to them and offer help

Event Evaluation and Future Engagement – 15 feedback responses

Summary:	Customers in Vulnerable Situations – Carbon Monoxide (CO) Awareness Workshop	Tuesday 1 st February 2022
Event Evaluation		
Q1	What do you want to get out of today?	
Q2	Choose 2 words from this list below to describe this event	Interesting, Insightful, Useful
Q3	Overall, how satisfied were you with the event?	8.7
Q4	How would you rate the discussions?	8.6
Q5	How would you rate the event contact and speakers?	9.2
Q6	How would you rate the networking opportunities?	7.4
Q7	Is there anything you think could be improved / changes for future workshops?	<p>More time to discuss issues</p> <p>Be able to read the questions that are going to be asked in the breakout room</p> <p>No, it was great</p> <p>Longer allocated time for breakout rooms. Enough time to answer all questions</p> <p>Be good to have maybe like a round robin networking session afterwards or like a business card drop where we can share contact details</p> <p>Maybe have a couple of workshops - would be useful to know more about the other attendees</p> <p>An update from the Fire and Rescue Service</p> <p>No, thought it was a well-run session that provided opportunities to input into the NGN strategy</p> <p>Better facilitation of the breakout groups</p> <p>Chance to do more networking</p>

Q8 **Is there anything else you would like to tell us?** This is the best one I've been to
 Very helpful session, interesting and highlights how our organisation can do better in CO awareness
 Really useful session, many thanks.
 My first time joining the workshop, I enjoyed the session, and it was interesting to hear about some new (to me) organisations
 These workshops are essential to move forward with raising CO awareness across the NGN region.
 No, thank you.
 Enjoyed it. Learnt about projects. Made connections
 Lots of players in this arena so it's good to have an opportunity to meet others from the industry

Q9 **Thinking of yourself as a stakeholder of NGN, how satisfied are you with the relationship that you have with NGN** 8.3

Q10 **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

NGN keeps me up to date on their business plans

Strongly agree	4
Agree	7
Somewhat agree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Somewhat disagree	1
Disagree	1

NGN provided me with clear information about their business performance

Strongly agree	4
Agree	6
Somewhat agree	3
Neither agree nor disagree	1
Disagree	1

NGN provided me with opportunities to give feedback on the topics that interest me

Strongly agree	5
Agree	7
Somewhat agree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	1
Somewhat disagree	0
Disagree	1

NGN allows me to give feedback through my preferred method

Strongly agree	6
Agree	7
Somewhat agree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	1
Disagree	1

NGN makes it clear how they have used feedback to change

Strongly agree	9
Agree	4
Somewhat agree	0
Neither agree nor disagree	1
Somewhat disagree	1
Disagree	0

Future Engagement

Q1 **How else would you like to engage with NGN in future?**

- Zoom, in person
- Meetings, emails
- Face to face engagement as I have now is perfect
- Workshops with partner networks seem like an appropriate method
- It would be great to have more case studies on successful projects
- "I've opted for a neutral response, purely because I have just met with you all for the first time and have no experience to gauge my answers upon, so please don't read anything into my response for q12. Thank you!"
- Perhaps a private catch-up meeting
- Current systems
- No additional engagement methods required. Engage across multiple channels and forums
- Involved in planning and prioritisation
- Attend workshops
- I'm happy with the level of engagement that I currently have with NGN
- Direct meeting to look at data sharing

Date of next workshop

Annual strategic workshop, Tuesday
22nd March 09:45 – 13:15 (this includes 15 minutes either side for networking opportunities)

Tell us what you think

Thank you for reading this report. We welcome any further feedback, thoughts or ideas you have. Please drop us a line on at stakeholder@northerngas.co.uk

For further information contact:
stakeholder@northerngas.co.uk

together.northerngasnetworks.co.uk

