# The impact of rising energy costs on health and well-being in the UK



Recent research has revealed that the financial pressures of high energy bills are impacting the physical health of many households across the UK. A survey conducted by Cadent, the UK's largest gas network, indicated that one in three respondents—31 percent—believe their health has suffered due to their decisions to keep their homes cold to save on energy costs. This data emerges shortly after the energy regulator announced a 6.4 percent increase in the energy price cap, resulting in an annual bill rise of £111 for a typical household, bringing the total to £1,849.

The findings indicate that over two-fifths (44 percent) of those surveyed feel more financially vulnerable this winter compared to the last. With NHS bed occupancy reaching record levels this winter, many remain in hospital despite being medically cleared for discharge, emphasising the dire consequences of cold living conditions.

Cold homes have been linked to an increased risk of illness or even death, particularly among vulnerable individuals. Carl Heneghan, an urgent care GP and Professor of Evidence-Based Medicine at Oxford University, stated: “It is well known that at temperatures below 18 degrees Celsius people are more at risk of health problems such as heart attacks, exacerbated asthma or lung conditions and respiratory infections.” He further noted that if the government opts to reduce the winter fuel allowance amidst rising energy costs, it needs to implement policies that do not jeopardise public health, especially considering the ageing population where many over 65s live with chronic conditions.

In response to mounting concerns, a spokesperson for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero highlighted ongoing initiatives aimed at supporting households with energy costs. “Everyone deserves to live in a warm, comfortable home,” they stated, referencing proposals that aim to assist almost three million households—including approximately one million with children—with their energy bills next winter. Additionally, the government has outlined plans under their Warm Homes Plan, which aims to upgrade homes with new insulation, solar energy, and heat pumps, potentially benefiting up to 300,000 homes this year.

The study also comes in the wake of findings attributing the soaring electricity bills in the UK partially to subsidies for renewable energy and Net Zero policies. Over the past decade, the electricity price cap has augmented by £330, or 50 percent, according to an analysis by Professor Gordon Hughes, an economist at Edinburgh University. He identified that 40 percent of the increase in electricity bills since 2015 can be attributed to the financial burden of these subsidies. “The current government claims that the increase in electricity bills is due to reliance on gas generation and exposure to European gas prices. That is simply wrong,” he asserted, drawing attention to the significant costs associated with renewable energy subsidies.

Hughes elaborated that while households are paying considerably more for their energy compared to other countries—including nearly 2.5 times more than households in the US Midwest—arguments surrounding higher prices being solely due to global gas prices were misplaced. Andrew Montford, Chief Executive of Net Zero Watch, described the UK's transition away from traditional energy sources as a risky venture laden with financial burdens for citizens, asserting that the claims about lower future energy rates from the Net Zero strategy lack credible scrutiny.

The spokesperson for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero responded to Hughes' critiques, stating that his claims are “simply false,” attributing the energy crisis to the UK's historical underinvestment in homegrown power solutions. Emphasising the need to transition towards being a 'clean energy superpower,' the spokesperson argued that such changes would ultimately provide energy security and protect consumers from volatile market fluctuations.

This complex intersection of health, economic pressures, and energy policy represents a significant challenge for many households in the UK this winter, as they navigate rising costs and the potential impact on their well-being.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.power-technology.com/news/ofgem-energy-price-cap-april-june/> - This article supports the claim about the 6.4% increase in the energy price cap from April to June 2025, resulting in an average annual bill of £1,849 for typical households.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/rising-energy-bills-what-you-need-to-know> - This government news page explains how energy bills are rising due to international gas prices and provides information on the energy price cap mechanism.
* <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2025/02/martin-lewis-april-price-cap-rise-announced/> - This article from MoneySavingExpert further details the impact of the energy price cap increase on different payment methods and household types.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is the source article itself, which discusses the health impacts of high energy bills and the financial pressures faced by UK households.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-> - Unfortunately, no specific BBC article was found in the search results to directly support the health impacts of cold homes. However, BBC often reports on health issues related to cold homes and energy costs.