

Let's all stay safe, warm and connected to our energy supply





Empowering communities with clean, local and affordable energy



Meet the Community Support Services Team



020 3674 7519

communitysupport@repowering.org.uk

**Stay warm, stay well,
stay supported**

Charlotte Lawes, Community Support Services Manager
Fran Lobel, Community Champion and Trainee Advisor
Ali Hammoud, Advisor

What's your current level of understanding about fuel poverty and it's impact on your work?

Poll 1: I understand how fuel poverty can impact the families that I am trying to support

Poll 2: I know where to get support for families who are struggling with their energy bills

(Scale of 0-5)

Introduction to fuel poverty

Simple definition: Can't afford enough gas and electricity to meet basic needs for warmth and powering home

Causes: Low income, high fuel costs, energy inefficient homes

Poll 3: How many households in the UK are experiencing fuel poverty?

Poll 4: How many people die each year as a result of living in a cold home?

Poll 5: How much is spent each year on health services in England on treating illness caused by cold homes?

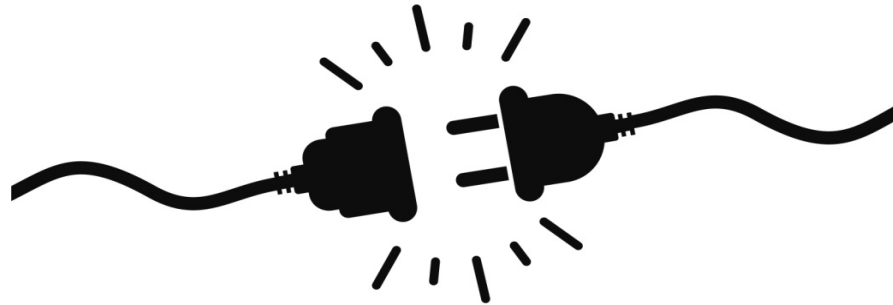
What do we mean by self-rationing and self-disconnection?

Self-rationing is when a consumer reduces their energy use or spending on other essentials, such as food, to save money because otherwise they would not be able to keep their PPM topped up or afford their energy bills.

Self-disconnection is when a consumer using a PPM experiences an interruption to their energy supply due to the credit running out.

From [Christians Against Poverty](#)

PPM = prepayment meters



Who self-disconnects and self-rations? Are your parents and families at risk?



Characteristics include:

- ❄ Families with Children (including 0-3 years)
- ❄ Claiming benefits
- ❄ Monthly household income of less than £900
- ❄ Having extra costs due to ill health or disability
- ❄ Long-term health issues (including mental health)
- ❄ Lone parents
- ❄ In debt

From Citizens Advice and Christians Against Poverty

Why might your families self-disconnect and self-ration their energy supply?

Fuel poverty factors:

- Low income
- Fuel costs
- Energy inefficient homes and appliances

Other factors:

- Practical difficulties in topping up meter or paying bills
- Not knowing about supplier obligations and unable to ensure these are fulfilled
- Not knowing about other support available and not being able to access it

Impact of Covid19

Reduced income

Higher bills from staying at home

Health – physical and mental

- Hard to get out to top-up
- Winter has bigger impact – cold homes
- Covid / Respiratory issues
- Increased anxiety – harder to deal with financial problems
- More going on – children at home

Accessing support

- Child care
- No face to face appointments for help / drop-ins
- Harder to speak to neighbours about help available
- No credit on phone or internet– can't contact suppliers or support organisations
- Shame etc. around poverty and asking for help

In May 2020, during lockdown, Citizens Advice reported 47% of Pre-payment meter respondents self-disconnected.

How does fuel poverty effect LEAP families?

Thinking about your role and the people you are supporting, how would not having access to heating, gas, or certain electrical appliances affect.....

Pregnancy?

Mental and physical health?

Learning?



Choose one of these icons as a prompt....

Heating, lighting, appliances to refrigerate, heat or cook food, refrigerators to keep medication chilled, mobile phone, hot water, internet / television

Repowering's Community Support Services Programme 2021

Target beneficiaries: Mum's in LEAP wards, at risk of self-disconnection and self-rationing, particularly those whose health is being impacted severely

Energy Advice

- Short term: accessing credit functions from suppliers and fuel vouchers
- Longer term: tariff checks, hardship funds for debt etc.
- Referrals to other organisations for non-energy related issues

Co-production

- 10 mums to be paid London Living Wage rates for involvement in approx. 80 hours each: service design, delivery and review

Local organisation training and support

- Focused sessions on particular topics
- Help-desk

Influencing policy at local and national levels

- Identify and address systemic issues e.g. with housing providers, Council policy and supplier practices

New regulations for energy suppliers from 15th December: More protection for customers

- ❁ Suppliers have new obligations to monitor all PPM accounts, identify self-disconnection, make proactive contact and offer appropriate support through additional forms of credit
- ❁ Customers in debt will be put on realistic and sustainable repayment plans under “Ability to Pay” principles – guidance since 2010 but now obligatory
- ❁ New protections: its going to take some time to implement everything properly....People will need help to talk to their suppliers and ensure their rights are protected



Working together

We would love help with....

- Tips / learning for **providing advice** and setting up **co-production activities** with target group – including digital access and safeguarding considerations..?
- Understanding needs of and strengths/opportunities for training and supporting local organisations

Working together

Poll 6:

As part of my role, with guidance/materials I could..

- Signpost information and support available (e.g. give a leaflet)
- Make a referral for support (e.g. send an email to Repowering)
- Provide basic 1:1 support (e.g. help call a supplier)
- Become an Energy Champion – could include awareness raising with team/parents, providing more advanced or continuous 1:1 support
- Develop Energy Champions within my team and/or parents

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