



North East North Cumbria Regional Approach to Rehousing for Children with Severe Asthma

Poor indoor air quality can be a significant source of ill health. Poor housing quality and social deprivation are strongly associated with asthma morbidity. A study from Sweden found that moisture-related problems in buildings are a risk factor for asthma and allergic symptoms among pre-school children (Indoor Air. 2005;15 Suppl 10:48-55. doi: 10.1111/j.1600-0668.2005.00306.x.).

Damp or mould in the house can be detrimental to all children, in particular those with respiratory illnesses. Indeed, in January 2023 a coroner found that Awaab Ishak's death was caused by prolonged exposure to black mould. Therefore, every effort should be made to remedy damp and mould in houses in a timely manner (21 days or any such shorter period that may be defined by relevant guidance and legislation), especially if there is a child with a chronic respiratory problem living within in the household.

In the case of children and young people with severe and difficult to treat asthma it maybe that health professionals feel that their environment is having a significant impact on their condition and the medical team looking after the child or young person would recommend re-housing. The majority of these children will be cared for in the Severe Asthma Service at GNCH (run by Dr Moss & Dr Mckean), with a minority being cared for solely at Sunderland Royal Hospital or James Cook University Hospital (Dr Murad & Dr Hegab). If this is the case the health professionals involved will write to the housing providers directly.