

“A fire retardant bedding pack may have saved a life”

Malcolm

Malcolm was 78 years old lived alone in his flat on the 9th floor of a tower block. Due to his poor mobility and history of falling, he was confined to his flat and spent most of his time in his living room, either on or in his bed. Malcolm liked to smoke hand rolled cigarettes and carers noted he had a habit of flicking spent matches across the room to a waste bin. Carers also noticed that there were burn and scorch marks on the floor around Malcolm's bed, and on his coffee table.

In July 2011, Malcolm's monitored alarm system was alerted to a fire in his flat by the linked smoke alarm. However, because of Malcolm's mobility difficulties, he was unable to escape. The fire was caused by either a lit cigarette or a smouldering match dropping accidentally on to his bedding.

Malcolm was unknown to the Brigade, but if we had been invited to carry out a home fire safety visit, we would have been able to provide advice specific to Malcolm's needs including the provision of fire retardant bedding. A fire retardant bedding pack costs in the region of £75 and may well have saved Malcolm's life.