HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
HOME WORKING POLICY

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
Unit 7 & 8, Talisman Business Centre, Talisman Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 6HR

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 The South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust recognises its duty to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 1974 and all subordinate regulations, such as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 1999). Therefore, the Trust is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all of its employees, including all those who work from home for the Trust.

1.2 The Trust recognises that working from home may present risks to the health, safety and welfare of staff who are designated as 'homeworkers'. As a result of this, the Trust will fulfil the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and, more specifically, the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 (Amended 2002) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 1999) and the Provision and use of work equipment regulations 1992 (Amended 1998) and will do all that is reasonably practicable to protect these staff.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to every department within the Trust which has designated 'home workers'.

3. Equality Statement

3.1 The Trust is committed to promoting positive measures that eliminate all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, marriage and civil partnership, disability, race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity or any other basis not justified by law or relevant to the requirements of the post. The Trust will therefore take every possible step to ensure that this procedure is applied fairly to all employees regardless of the afore mentioned protected characteristics, whether full or part time or employed under a permanent or a fixed term contract or any other irrelevant factor.

3.2 By committing to a policy encouraging equality of opportunity and diversity, the Trust values differences between members of the community and within its existing workforce, and actively seeks to benefit from their differing skills, knowledge, and experiences in order to provide an exemplary healthcare service. The Trust is committed to promoting equality and diversity best practice both within the workforce and in any other area where it has influence.

3.3 Where there are barriers to understanding; for example, an employee has difficulty in reading or writing, or where English is not their first language, additional support will be put in place wherever necessary to ensure that the process to be followed is understood and that the employee is not disadvantaged at any stage in the procedure. Further information on the support available can be sought from the HR Department.

4.   Aim

4.1   The aim of the policy is to set out the arrangements for the identification, assessment and management of the risks to the health and safety to designated 'home workers' within the Trust.

4.2   The objectives are to ensure that the Trust has clear and defined arrangements for:

- the identification of 'home workers'
- the carrying out of risk assessments on 'home workers' and home working
- the regular review of these risk assessments
- the management and control of the risks to 'home workers' whilst they are carrying out Trust work at home.

5.   Roles and Responsibilities

5.1   Trust Board
5.1.1   The Trust Board will ensure that there suitable and sufficient arrangements and adequate resources for the identification of 'home worker' and for the assessment and management and control of the risks to them from the work they carry out at home for the Trust.

5.2   Chief Executive
5.2.1   The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for:
- the effective implementation of this policy within the Trust and for ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for the identification of 'home workers', and for the assessment and management and control of the risks from the work they carry out at home for the Trust.
- ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources to maintain efficient and effective health and safety arrangements for 'home workers'.
- ensuring that policies are reviewed to secure compliance with existing legislation and any changes to this legislation.

5.3   Executive Directors
5.3.1   Executive Directors are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their directorates and for ensuring that there are adequate resources available to fulfil the requirements of this policy.

5.4   Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation
5.4.1   The Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation is directly accountable to the Chief Executive and will advise and assist the Trust Board in fulfilling its duties under the relevant statutory legislation. In particular, the Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation is responsible for:

- ensuring that workplace health, safety and welfare procedures are constantly reviewed

- ensuring that there are arrangements for liaising with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- ensuring that the Trust Board are kept abreast of relevant new legislation and guidance in order to ensure on-going compliance with the law.

5.5 Managers and Supervisors

5.5.1 Managers and supervisors' responsibilities include:

- attending any training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities outlined in this policy
- considering and deciding upon requests from staff to work from home
- carrying out or arranging for the carrying out of all risk assessments, including display screen equipment workstation risk assessments for all home workers within their area of responsibility; and any revisions to these assessments
- making arrangements to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all identified controls and further controls identified by the assessment and any subsequent reviews are put into place
- where necessary, designing suitable daily work routines for home workers, including regular changes in activity, ensuring that appropriate screen breaks are taken
- making arrangements to ensure that all of the designated home workers receive appropriate information, instruction and training about the significant hazards and risks associated with home working; and how to avoid such problems and what to do if problems occur
- where applicable, advising home workers of their entitlement to eye and eyesight tests and corrective appliances (spectacles or lenses) and about the documentation that needs to be completed and provided to the Trust
- arranging for the investigation of any problems which may be associated with home working by home workers within their area of responsibility; including arranging for the carrying out any revisions to the risk assessments
- notifying the Risk Department immediately of any staff who inform them that they are any experiencing health related problems that can be attributed to home working
- where necessary, referring any home workers to Occupational Health for assessment
- ensuring that all equipment provided by the Trust for an employee's home workstation is assessed and that procedures exist for rectifying faults promptly.

5.6 Home workers

5.6.1 Staff designated as 'home workers' in accordance with this policy have the following responsibilities:
- to make themselves fully aware of the policy and to abide by it

- to co-operate with the Trust in relation to the completion of any risk assessment on the work they carry out for the Trust whilst at home and the home environment that they do this work in
- to carry out visual inspections on any electrical equipment or work equipment provided by the Trust for them to use whilst working from home
- where applicable, to ensure they take regular breaks/changes of activity as identified by any display screen equipment workstation risk assessment
- to notify their manager of any work-related problems they are experiencing whilst working at home; and if it cannot easily be resolved to report any health and safety related concerns using the Trust's incident reporting system, Datix
- to report any incidents arising from the carrying out of work at home using the Trust's incident reporting system, Datix
- to attend the Occupational Health department, if referred by their manager because of possible work-related problems associated with home working.

5.7   Risk Team

5.7.1   The Risk Team will carry out or assist with the carrying out of the risk assessment on home workers and home working. They will also advise managers and home workers on the types of hazards associated with their work and what should be considered in any risk assessment on home workers or home working.

5.8   Occupational Health

5.8.1   The Occupational Health Department, commissioned by the Trust, have the following responsibilities:

a) To advise the Trust of all aspects of health in the workplace, including working from home, in order to assist the Trust in complying with legal requirements.
b) To assess any home workers who have been referred to Occupational Health with suspected work-related ill-health due to working from home and to advise the Trust of the action that should be taken.

6.   Definitions

6.1   Home workers are defined as: those people who are required to work at home for either personal or organisational reasons to maintain the performance of the Trust.

6.2   Home working is defined as working from home as part of a pre-agreed arrangement with the Trust for a significant and continuous designated period of time. This does not have to be on a permanent basis but it is to be distinguished from someone who is working whilst at home on an occasional basis.

7.   Home working

7.1   Home working can only be undertaken following the approval of the employee's line manager. The decision about whether to allow a member of staff to work from home will need to be assessed in accordance with the Trust's financial position and the need to

maintain performance. For example, there may be a cost incurred for Information and technology equipment. Likewise the home worker could incur costs from an increase in energy bills. However, this cost could be offset against the savings made in not having to travel to work by car.

8.   Risk assessment on home workers and home working

8.1   Wherever home working takes place on a regular basis it should be supported by the carrying out of a risk assessment using the Trust's generic risk assessment form and any other risk assessment forms that are applicable; for instance, the display screen equipment risk assessment form or the control of substances hazardous to health risk assessment form.

8.2   As to what risk assessments are carried out will largely depend on the type of work carried out by the member of staff who works from home.

8.3   The assessment(s) should identify hazards and the existing controls in place (if any) to protect home workers from those hazards and from this evaluate the risks. The level of risk should be reduced to the lowest level so far as is reasonably practicable. Therefore, it may be necessary to introduce further measures to manage and control the risks effectively. The significant hazards, risks and controls should be recorded on the risk assessment form.

8.4   When carrying out the risk assessment the following should be considered:
- Does the work at home involving lifting loads? If it does a manual handling assessment would have to be carried out.
- Does it involve using work equipment provided by the Trust?
- Does it involve using display screen equipment and would the home worker be classed as a designated display screen equipment user? If it does and they are then a display screen equipment assessment would have to be carried out using the DSE risk assessment form in the Display screen equipment policy.
- Whether the work involves any information governance risks and whether these are suitably controlled?
- Does it involve using electrical equipment provided by the Trust? If it does, have arrangements been made to inspect and test this equipment?
- Does it involve using chemicals? If it does then a control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) assessment would have to be carried out.
- Whether the home worker was a new or expectant mother? If they were then a specific new or expectant risk assessment would have to be carried out, using the risk assessment form in the New or Expectant Mothers policy.
  - o The requirements for first aid would also have to be considered.

This list is not exhaustive.

8.5   The risk assessment should be reviewed periodically by revisiting the home of the home worker to check that all of the controls that are in place are working effectively.

8.6   The risk assessment should be reviewed and revised following any significant changes to any aspect of the risk assessment. For instance, if there is a change in working practices or changes in work equipment used to do the work at home. All revisions and changes to the risk assessment should be recorded.

9.   Training

9.1   Managers and Supervisors who have to carry out risk assessment on home workers, including any display screen risk assessments, must obtain training in how to carry out a risk assessment and a display screen equipment workstation risk assessment from the Risk Team prior to undertaking any risk assessments as per this policy.

9.2 Home workers who are designated display screen equipment uses will receive information on:

- The existence of this policy
- Arrangements for display screen equipment and workstation risk assessments
- Risks associated with display screen equipment use
- Measures to take to avoid those risks
- Adjusting chair and positioning of display screen equipment
  - Reporting any problems with display screen equipment use
  - Changes of activity/rest breaks.

10.   Equality and Diversity

10.1   An equality and diversity impact assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request.

11.   Monitoring

11.1   The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly.

12.   Consultation and Review

A consultation exercise on the policy will be carried out with the relevant stakeholders and will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there are any relevant changes to legislation or best practice.

13.   Implementation (including raising awareness)

13.1   The policy will be implemented and communicated to managers and staff within the Trust via the weekly newsletter, Staff Matters. Emails will also be sent to senior managers and area managers asking them to bring the existence of the policy to their staff.

14.   References

- Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Management of Health Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 1999)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.

15. Associated documentation

- Health and safety policy
- New or expectant mothers policy
- Display screen equipment policy
- Adverse incident reporting policy
- Reporting of Injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations (RIDDOR) policy
- Control of substances hazardous to health policy
- Risk management strategy

Appendix 1: Review Table

- This policy is regularly reviewed and updated with information in line with relevant national guidance and legislation.
- A full 'Review Table of Contents' is available on request.

Appendix 2: Responsibility Matrix – Policies, Procedures and Strategies

A full responsibility matrix for this policy is available on request.

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment Form Section One – Screening

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request to the public and internally via our [Staff Intranet.](#)

Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment Form Section Two – Full Assessment

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request to the public and internally via our [Staff Intranet.](#)

Appendix 5: Ratification Checklist

A Ratification Checklist for this policy is available on request.