



HOMEWORKING/HYBRID WORKING (HEALTH & SAFETY) POLICY (APPENDIX K)

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
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DOCUMENT INFORMATION

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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 either work from home or who work as hybrid workers and split their working week between working from home and also working in their base office and/or working remotely in another Trust premises.
- 1.2 The Trust recognises that working from home or remotely in another Trust premises may present risks to the health, safety and welfare of staff who are designated as 'homeworkers' or 'hybrid workers.' 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 ensure the health, safety and welfare of these staff.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to every department within the Trust which has designated 'homeworkers' or 'hybrid 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.
- 3.2 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 Human Resources (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 of designated 'homeworkers' and 'hybrid workers' within the Trust.

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

- the identification of 'homeworkers' and 'hybrid workers'
- the carrying out of risk assessments on 'homeworkers' and 'hybrid workers' and homeworking
- the regular review of these risk assessments
- the management and control of the risks to 'home workers' and 'hybrid workers' whilst they are carrying out Trust work at home, in the office and/or in a remote location.

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 'homeworkers' and 'hybrid workers' and for the assessment and management and control of the risks to them from the work they carry out at home and/or in a Trust premises 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 'homeworkers' and 'hybrid workers', and for the assessment and management and control of the risks from the work they carry out for the Trust either at home and/or in a Trust premises.
- ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources to maintain efficient and effective health and safety arrangements for 'homeworkers' and 'hybrid 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
- where applicable, discussing with those staff whose roles enable them to work from home and/or as a hybrid worker whether they would like to work from home and, where applicable, making arrangements for them to work from home
- where applicable, carrying out or arranging for the carrying out of all risk assessments, including office-based display screen equipment workstation risk assessments, for all homeworkers or hybrid workers within their area of responsibility; and any revisions to these assessments
- ensuring that, where applicable, the homeworkers or hybrid workers complete their display screen equipment risk assessments for their home base using the DSE Homeworking App on The Hub [DSE homeworking app](#)
- making arrangements to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all identified controls and further controls identified by the assessments and any subsequent reviews are put into place
- where necessary, designing suitable daily work routines for homeworkers and hybrid workers, including regular changes in activity, ensuring that appropriate screen breaks are taken
- making arrangements to ensure that all of the designated homeworkers and hybrid workers receive appropriate information, instruction and training about the significant hazards and risks associated with homeworking and hybrid working; and how to avoid such problems and what to do if problems occur
- where applicable, advising homeworkers and hybrid 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
- maintaining regular contact with their staff who are homeworking and/or hybrid working; and carrying out regular welfare checks on these employees
- arranging for the investigation of any problems which may be associated with homeworking by homeworkers and/or hybrid 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 homeworking and/or hybrid working
- where necessary, referring any homeworkers and/or hybrid 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
- to manage and address any recommendations following an Access to Work assessment on one of their staff.

5.6 Homeworkers

5.6.1 Staff designated as 'homeworkers' in accordance with this policy have the following responsibilities:

- to make themselves fully aware of this policy and to abide by it
- to read and digest the Trust's display screen equipment (DSE) guidance
- to co-operate with the Trust in relation to the completion of any risk assessments on the work they carry out for the Trust whilst in the office and/or home and or remote location. (Please note, more than one risk assessment could be required, for instance a display screen equipment risk assessment will be required but depending on circumstances a new or expectant mother risk assessment and/or any other risk assessment relevant to the specific, individual circumstances could also be required)
- to complete a display screen equipment (DSE) workstation risk assessment using the Homeworkers DSE assessment App on The Hub (but only if they regularly work from home and it is not a 'one-off' arrangement) [DSE homeworking app](#)
- 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 <https://scas.datix.thirdparty.nhs.uk/Live/>
- to report any incidents arising from the carrying out of work at home using the Trust's incident reporting system, Datix <https://scas.datix.thirdparty.nhs.uk/Live/>
- to have a look at the Health and Wellbeing portal if they are experiencing any problems and want information on further sources of support <https://www.sca.nhsbenefits.net/>
- to ensure that they work in accordance with the Trust's Acceptable use of information and technology policy and the Trust's Code of conduct for employees in respect of confidentiality
- to attend the Occupational Health department, if they have self-referred and/or if they have been referred by their manager because of possible work-related problems associated with home working
- where necessary and where identified, to make a referral to Access to work.

5.7 Hybrid Workers

5.7.1 Hybrid workers are employees who work from home for some days of the week and work in a Trust premises (base location) and/or remotely in another Trust premises on the other days of the week. The split between the three can vary from week to week and/or month to month. Their responsibilities are to:

- to make themselves fully aware of the policy and to abide by it
- to read and digest the Trust's display screen equipment (DSE) guidance
- to co-operate with the Trust in relation to the completion of any risk assessments on the work they carry out for the Trust whilst in a Trust premises (base location) and/or home and/or remote location in another Trust premises. (Please note, more than one risk assessment could be required, for instance a display screen

equipment will be required but depending on circumstances a new or expectant mother risk assessment and/or any other risk assessment relevant to the specific, individual circumstances could also be required)

- to complete a display screen equipment (DSE) workstation risk assessment using the Homeworkers DSE assessment App on The Hub (but only if they regularly work from home and it is not a 'one-off' arrangement) [DSE homeworking app](#)
- to ensure that a DSE workstation risk assessment is also completed on the DSE workstation that they regularly use in a Trust premises (base location)
- to ensure that a DSE workstation risk assessment is also completed on the DSE workstation that they use in a remote location in another Trust premises, but only if they are based at this remote location on a regular weekly basis and it is not a 'one-off' arrangement; in which case, they should carry out a dynamic risk assessment. Please note, that wherever DSE users are based they should, where possible, set up their workstation in accordance with the DSE guidance
- 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 either in their base location, at home or remotely in another Trust premises; 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 <https://scas.datix.thirdparty.nhs.uk/Live/>
- to have a look at the Health and Wellbeing portal if they are experiencing any problems and want information on further sources of support <https://www.sca.nhsbenefits.net/>
- to ensure that they work in accordance with the Trust's Acceptable use of information and technology policy and the Trust's Code of conduct for employees in respect of confidentiality
- to attend the Occupational Health department, if they have self-referred and/or if referred by their manager because of possible work-related problems associated with hybrid working
- where necessary and where identified, to make a referral to Access to work.

5.8 Risk Team

- 5.8.1 The Risk Team will carry out or assist with the carrying out of risk assessments on homeworkers and home working and on hybrid workers. They will also advise managers and homeworkers and hybrid workers on the types of hazards associated with their work and what should be considered in any risk assessment on homeworkers and/or home working and/or hybrid working.
- 5.8.2 Where necessary, this will also include reviewing and making recommendations on the DSE assessments completed by the Trust's DSE assessors and also the DSE self-assessments completed by DSE users (who are homeworking and/or hybrid working) using the Homeworkers DSE assessment App on The Hub [DSE homeworking app](#)
- 5.8.3 The Risk Team will keep and maintain a record of all of the display screen equipment risk assessments carried out within the Trust for homeworkers and

hybrid workers in a financial year and provide details of the number of DSE risk assessments to the Head of Risk and Security.

5.8.4 The Risk Team will provide an annual report to the Health, Safety and Risk Group on the number of display screen equipment (DSE) workstation risk assessments carried out in a financial year and this will include the DSE workstation risk assessments for homeworkers and hybrid workers.

5.8.5 The Risk Team will, upon request, assist managers with any Access to work assessments required for their staff.

5.9 Occupational Health

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

6. Definitions

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

6.2 Homeworking 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.

6.3 Hybrid workers are employees who work from home for some days of the week and work in a Trust premises on the other days of the week, be it either at their base office or a remote location in another Trust premises. The split between the three environments can vary from week to week and/or month to month.

6.4 Hybrid working is a form of flexible working where staff spend part of their time working from a Trust premises (their base office) and part of their time working at home and in a remote location (in another Trust premises), although the split between the three will vary according to an employee's role, responsibilities, personal circumstances and the requirement to fulfil business demands. The split between the three environments can also vary from week to week and/or month to month.

7. Homeworking and hybrid working

7.1 Where their role enables them to, staff will be able to work from home or as a hybrid worker. The decision about whether a member of staff can work from home or as a hybrid worker will be assessed in accordance with all of the circumstances,

such as the reasons why they can work from home and/or as a hybrid worker and the Trust's financial position and the need to maintain performance.

8. Risk assessment on homeworkers and homeworking and hybrid working

- 8.1 Wherever homeworking and/or hybrid 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 ([link to be added](#)) and any other risk assessment forms that are applicable; for instance, the display screen equipment risk assessment form in the Trust's DSE policy (for office-based assessments) ([link to be added](#)) and/or the DSE form on the Homeworking DSE App for home based DSE assessments [DSE homeworking app](#), the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) risk assessment form in the COSHH policy.
- 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 and/or as a hybrid worker.
- 8.3 The assessment(s) should identify hazards and the existing controls in place (if any) to protect homeworkers and hybrid workers from those hazards and from this evaluate the level of risk. 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 additional control measures to manage and control the risks effectively. The significant hazards, risks and the existing and further additional control measures 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 and/or the hybrid working involving lifting loads? If it does then 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 homeworker and/or the hybrid 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 and also the one on the DSE Homeworking App on The Hub [DSE homeworking app](#).
 - 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 homeworker or the hybrid 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.

This list is not exhaustive.

- 8.5 The risk assessment should be reviewed periodically by revisiting the home of the homeworker or hybrid worker to check that all of the controls that are in place are working effectively. The visit/re-visit should only be done if it is safe and practical

to do so, otherwise it could be done using Teams and/or photographs or videos of the DSE equipment and the homeworking environment.

8.6 The risk assessment should be reviewed and revised periodically, for instance, following any recommendations/actions/changes to any aspect of the content of the risk assessment. Therefore, if the initial risk assessment or any subsequent risk assessment makes recommendations/actions to be addressed, then the risk assessment should be reviewed at a suitable time directly after the date that any recommendations/actions should have been completed. If all recommendations/actions have been completed, then the risk assessment should be amended to reflect this and if everything is in place then the risk assessment does not have to be reviewed for a further 12 months. All revisions to the risk assessment should be recorded. The risk assessment should also be reviewed if:

- there have been any changes to any aspect or content of the risk assessment, for instance, if because of technological developments there has been a change in equipment being used
- staff carrying out the work using the DSE workstation equipment provided are experiencing any problems.

9. Training

9.1 Managers and supervisors who have to carry out a risk assessment on homeworkers and/or hybrid workers, other than the DSE self-assessment that homeworkers and hybrid workers carry out, must obtain training in how to carry out a risk assessment from the Risk Team prior to undertaking any risk assessments as per this policy.

9.2 Homeworkers and hybrid workers who are designated display screen equipment users will receive information on:

- The existence of this policy
- Arrangements for display screen equipment and workstation risk assessments to be completed for the home environment and the office environment
- Display screen equipment guidance, which includes information on:
 - The 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 initial equality and diversity impact screening assessment has been carried out on this policy and, as per, appendix 3, is available on request.

11. Monitoring

11.1 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Risk Team who will provide an annual report to the Health, Safety and Risk Group which will include details on:

- a) The number of risk assessments and display screen equipment and workstation

risk assessments on homeworkers and hybrid workers completed, and the actions taken to address issues in a financial year.

- b) The findings of an audit on 10% of the display screen equipment and workstation risk assessments completed on homeworkers and hybrid workers in a financial year.

12. Consultation and review

- 12.1 A consultation exercise on the policy will be carried out with the stakeholders every three years, or less 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 policy
- Risk management strategy
- Acceptable use of information and technology policy
- Trust's code of conduct in respect of confidentiality.

16. Appendix 1: Review

- 16.1 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.

17. Appendix 2: Responsibility

- 17.1 The responsibility for this policy is shared between various Policy Groups, Lead Director/Officers, Working Groups and Committee members.

17.2 A full list of all responsible parties can be made available upon request.

18. Appendix 3: Equality impact assessment – section one – screening

18.1 An initial screening equality impact assessment has been carried out and has identified that the policy does not have an adverse or detrimental impact on any of the proscribed equality groups as the policy is designed to protect all homeworkers, including hybrid workers, working for or on behalf of the Trust.

18.2 The initial screening element of the ‘equality impact assessment’ is available on request.

19. Appendix 4: Equality impact assessment – section two – full assessment

19.1 Due to the outcome of the initial screening equality impact assessment, it has not been necessary to carry out a full equality impact assessment.

20. Appendix 5: Ratification

20.1 A ratification checklist has been carried out on this policy and is available for internal use by SCAS Staff and can be accessed internally via our [Staff Intranet](#).