# AGILE WORKING POLICY

| Authorship | HR Humber |
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| Approved By | ICB Board (28.01.22) |
| Review Date | January 2024 |
| Supersedes: (Please List) | N/A – New Policy |
| Equality Impact Analysis Date | 25.01.22 |
| Target Audience | All Staff |
| Version Number | 1.0 |

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# AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the policy may be issued from time to time.  A new amendment history will be issued with each change.

| New Version Number | Issued by (department) | Nature of Amendments | Approved by and Date | Date on website |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | HR Humber | New Policy | CCG Board | 2/2/22 |
| 1.1 | HR | CCG replaced with ICB – review dates remain unchanged | Remuneration Committee – 01/07/2022 | |
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Agile Working Policy January 2022

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## Contents

Agile Working Policy January 2022

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The ICB is committed to providing an appropriate working environment to enable staff to undertake their role effectively. In order to support the increasingly diverse needs of the ICB and its workforce the following policy sets out the requirements relating to agile working.

Agile working is the term used to describe how employees can work flexibly from any location; whether it is home working, from the ICB HQ building, other buildings e.g. NHS, Local Authority, etc. or a combination of these. The concept of agile working is giving employees the ability and the equipment to undertake their role in different locations across the area, efficiently and successfully.

The ICB is committed to adopting agile working practices, where appropriate, in the context of business needs and empowering employees to maximise their performance. Increasing agile and flexible working in the NHS is also a key target within the NHS People Plan.

It is acknowledged that not all roles may be suitable for agile working and the extent of agile working will vary according to the job role. Consequently, each situation needs to be considered on its merits; applying the principles of fairness and consistency whilst ensuring the overriding business needs and other requirements can be appropriately met.

As part of the ICB's Emergency Planning and Business Continuity arrangements, in certain situations all staff who are able to work from home will be asked to do so, and in such situations individual approval from the relevant Line Manager/Head of Service will not be required.

# 2 ENGAGEMENT

This policy will be communicated to staff via team brief, individual team meetings, at local induction and will be available for staff on the ICB website.

## 3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all ICB employees. This policy does not negate or supersede the ICB's Flexible Working Policy and is not appropriate for instances where regular flexibility of working patterns is required for personal reasons e.g. term time working, increase/reduction of hours or where medical opinion is that the employee is unfit for work.

Whilst this policy applies to all employees, the ways in which agile working can be undertaken is dependent on the demands and needs of the service and the role. As some roles are more flexible than others, agile working will be adopted at varying levels within services and across the ICB as a whole and will be agreed between employees and their line manager.

## 4 POLICY PURPOSE AND AIMS

The Agile Working policy sets out an overall framework which provides a medium for consistency and fair practice when implementing and maintaining an agile working environment by understanding the basic principles, which can then be considered and applied to specific roles. The policy also sign posts managers and employees to other relevant policies, not unique to agile working that should be considered when making decisions about new ways of working.

Agile working provides employees with options with regards to where and when they undertake their roles by introducing an element of choice with line manager approval, which will ensure that the needs of the employee and ICB are best met. Agile working allows ICB staff to influence how they undertake their role and promotes varying levels of flexibility within the workplace.

Some of the key benefits of agile working include;
- Improved continuity and efficiency of services with greater resilience to unplanned events such as inclement weather, disruption to public transport and pandemic situations.
- Increased morale, motivation, engagement and commitment with employees feeling a greater sense of trust, ownership and accountability.

- Improve the recruitment and retention of skilled employees who may benefit from greater flexibility in their working arrangements and improved work-life balance.
- Opportunities for improvements in efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- Reduction of carbon footprint through reduced emissions from reduced travel.

## 5 NHS CONSTITUTION

The ICB is committed to:

Designing and implementing services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of its population and workforce, ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged.

With respect to this policy the ICB supports the Principles of the NHS Constitution as follows:

**The NHS aspires to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism** in the provision of high-quality care that is safe, effective and focused on patient experience; in the planning and delivery of the clinical and other services it provides; in the people it employs and the education, training and development they receive; in the leadership and management of its organisations; and through its commitment to innovation and to the promotion and conduct of research to improve the current and future health and care of the population.

## 6 ROLES / RESPONSIBILITIES / DUTIES

### 6.1 Chief Operating Officer (COO)

The COO has the overall responsibility for this policy and to ensure that the ICB complies with all relevant Health and Safety Legislation.

### 6.2 HR Humber Team

The HR Humber team will:
- Advise on the application and interpretation of this policy.
- Ensure there is a consistent application of the policy.
- Support employees and line managers on the content of this policy.

### 6.3 Line Manager

It is the responsibility of line managers to:

- Familiarise themselves with the content of this policy and ensure that it is applied fairly and consistently giving full consideration to the suitability and safety of the request.
- Ensure a culture of agile working is promoted and that barriers to agile working are reduced.
- Review the Agile Working Personal Plan for employees within their area of responsibility on a regular basis.
- Attend training as appropriate to support management of staff working remotely.
- Arrange for the provision of any appropriate equipment needed by the employee to ensure they can work securely, effectively and safely when working agilely.
- Ensure employees working in an agile way are clear of the expectations on them and that effective communication is maintained.

### 6.4 Employee

It is the responsibility of the employee to;

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and comply with the findings of all risk assessments, reporting any accidents or incidents to their line manager.
- Ensure that Agile Working Personal Plans are regularly reviewed and updated where necessary.
- Be accountable for delivery of their work within agreed deadlines wherever they may work.
- Keep up to date with issues or working practices within their work area by maintaining appropriate communication with their manager and other employees.
- Ensure they comply with the ICB's Information Security and equipment and Information Governance Policies.

Agile Working Policy January 2022

# 7 PRINCIPLES OF AGILE WORKING

Agile working is based on the concept that work is an activity that we undertake, rather than a place that we go. Agile working allows employees of the ICB to work smartly and take advantage of the opportunities available as a result of technology. It is not prescriptive in its application in that one size does not fit all, but it is underpinned by key principles and considerations (outlined below and section 8.2) which should be taken into account when making decisions about how the employee will work in an agile way.

Agile working must not affect the provision of services and therefore teams must ensure they have appropriate arrangements in place. Where the service and/or performance of an individual or team is negatively impacted by agile working arrangements, the manager should take appropriate remedial action such as reviewing the agile working arrangements or ensuring employees have the equipment and training they need to perform effectively in their role.

Agile working arrangements should be reviewed by employees and their line manager on a regular basis through 1:1s. This is to ensure that individuals use their learning and experience of agile working arrangements to identify changes that will increase the effectiveness of both the employee and the service.

When employees are working in an agile manner they become less 'visible' which can create some anxiety for some managers. Monitoring employee output must go beyond looking at the level of activity to focus on other measures such as the quality of the work and the progress against objectives. These measures reflect a much more accurate picture than an employee being present at a desk in the office for prescribed periods of time during the day. Therefore, clear expectations are required from employees and managers including clear objectives and timescales for work completion.

Effective communication is essential. Regular structured communication between all individuals within a team is required to make agile working a success.

Home working is only one element of the range of options available for agile working. Appropriate and effective home working will be supported, but it must be with line management approval and in consideration of flexibilities within the overall business needs of the ICB. Employees must be aware that the option to work from home is not a substitute for routine care obligations. Should an individual opt to work from home, it is the employee's responsibility to ensure adequate care provisions are in place.

Agile working is not a substitute for flexible working, nor is it considered a contractual right or a permanent arrangement. In instances where a permanent change of working patterns is required for personal reasons, the ICB's Flexible Working Policy should be considered.

## 8 CONSIDERATIONS FOR AGILE WORKING

### 8.1 Work Profiles

A work profile is assigned to each employee following discussion and assessment between the relevant line manager and employee using the Agile Working Personal Plan (Appendix 4). The ICB has adopted two work profiles as defined below.

### 8.1.1 Fixed Worker

- The need to spend the majority of their working time at one fixed site
- Seldom away from their desk except for meeting with colleagues in office
- Do not have an option to work from home or from other sites/locations

Example Role - Receptionist

### 8.1.2 Agile Worker

- Has a designated office base but spends most of their time working on the move across the geographical footprint coming into offices only for meetings or other specific events.
- Work is not location dependent.
- Spends a large percentage of their time attending meetings (virtually using Microsoft Teams or face to face) and/or delivering business virtually or across a range of sites.

## 8.2        Additional Considerations

In addition to the guidance in section 8.1 and 8.2, the line manager and employee should consider the following points;

- Whether the business need of the ICB can be best met if an agile working arrangement were to be agreed.

- How will working in an agile way impact the health and wellbeing of the employee and whether any reasonable adjustments would need to be made in order for the employee to be able to work safely and effectively.

- Whether working in an agile way is appropriate for an employee who needs additional support for example those new to the role, returning after an extended period of absence or where performance concerns have been identified.

- The personal circumstances of the employee.

### 8.3 Agile Working Personal Plan

Agile working is not a formal application for flexible working so does not require the employee to formally apply in writing.  Instead, line managers should use the Agile Working Personal Plan document in Appendix 4 as a framework to discuss, agree and record conversations with the  employee with regards to working arrangements.

Initially, the employee and manager should meet and explore together which work profile is most appropriate, how the option might work for both the employee and the ICB and how any challenges can be overcome.  Any expectations should also be agreed and documented.

Following the initial meeting, regular reviews of the document are to be carried out in line with section 9.1.

## 9. MANAGING AGILE WORKING

### 9.1 Reviews

Agile working arrangements should be reviewed between line manager and employee through regular 1:1 meetings to ensure the arrangements in place are working

effectively for both parties. Employees should highlight any concerns about their working arrangements promptly to their manager.

If a manager has concerns that agile working arrangements are resulting in a loss of performance, e.g. not meeting objectives for work completion, or that agile working is having a negative effect on an employee's health and wellbeing, then they should discuss this with the employee at the earliest opportunity and determine whether alternative arrangements need to be considered in line with the appropriate ICB policies.

9.2 **Communication**

Communication is essential to the success of agile working. Employees should remain in frequent contact with their manager and colleagues to ensure continuity of service delivery and to avoid feelings of isolation. Whist Microsoft Teams can supplement and replace some face to face meetings it is essential that time is built in to enable face to face communication in office locations.

**9.3 Hours of Work and Availability**

Although agile workers do not necessarily have to work "normal" office hours (traditionally 9-5), it is essential to plan and decide an agreed hours of work programme in advance, allowing employees to be able to separate their working and home lives and for the line manager and colleagues to know when they are available to be contacted. Any additional time worked should, where possible, be agreed in advance with the line manager, or as soon as is reasonably practical thereafter if this is not possible.

Agile working must not adversely impact on business effectiveness and it may be for that specific times of the day or week individuals need to be contactable to meet business need. Many employees are required to participate in meetings with external partners and consideration must be given as to how this requirement can be met given that other organisations do not work agilely.

Employees are responsible for working and managing their agreed hours. Where managers believe an employee's health is being affected by working long hours

(whether as a result of agile working arrangement or otherwise) they must discuss this with the employee, agree actions and refer them to Occupational Health if necessary.

Employees must ensure they are contactable by phone and/or MS Teams during the agreed working day. It is an employee's responsibility to ensure that their equipment allows this, for example, ensuring they have access to e-mails, MS Teams and that their work mobile phone is working. Electronic diaries should be kept up to date and shared with other team members.

There will be occasions where employees will be expected to change the location they are working from at short notice to meet business needs such as attending a meeting or deal with an urgent task although reasonable notice should be provided.

## 9.4 Sickness Absence

The ICB's Attendance Management policy applies to all employees. Managers are responsible for ensuring the ICB's reporting arrangements for sickness absence are adhered to within their service area and that employees within their team are aware of these and following them. Home working is not to be used as an alternative to sickness absence.

## 9.5 Equipment

The line manager and the employee will discuss and agree the equipment needed to work effectively in their workstyle. The ICB will supply the equipment, which must be returned when leaving the ICB or embarking on long periods of absence such as Maternity/Adoption leave. Equipment must not be used by anyone other than the employee.

Where employees have their own personally adapted equipment they will be able to keep this for their personal use and move it with them when working in any offices or remote sites. If an employee can't work safely from remote locations without specially adapted equipment they will be unable to do so.

Agile working does not require staff to work from home. Where an employee chooses to work from home, and this is agreed with their line manager, the ICB is not responsible for any costs associated with the environment an employee has in their home from which they choose to work, including furniture (except for personally adapted equipment) broadband/internet access, or utility costs.

### 9.6 Designated Base

An employee's designated base must be agreed with their manager and used in relation to mileage claims. The office base is an important distinction for travel expense purposes.

### 9.7 Expenses

Employees should claim for any additional miles travelled in excess of their usual home to base mileage, in line with the ICB's Travel and Expenses Policy and section 17 of the NHS terms and conditions of service handbook. It is important that all employees manage their travel and limit it where alternative options, such as MS Teams are available.

If you choose to spend some of your working week working from home, you will not be entitled to claim expenses relating to household costs such as heating, lighting or power incurred through home working, since this is the employees' choice and the cost is expected to be offset by savings on travelling to and from work, as well as providing a better work life balance. Please refer to section 11.3 for further detail on tax relief.

## 10. MANAGING THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH AGILE WORKING

### 10.1 Health and Safety

Health and Safety regulations need to be applied in the home in exactly the same way as they apply in a traditional office environment. When working away from the office employees may be lone workers depending on the chosen work location. It is important that employees diarise their location for health and safety purposes.

In line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the ICB has a duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all of its employees while they are at work. This responsibility extends to employees working from other premises including any private dwelling, whilst employed by the ICB.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to assess all significant risks which include risks to home workers. This should be undertaken via a self-assessment form completed by the employee (Appendix 5).

In addition, under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, employers are required to assess Display Screen Equipment (DSE) risks including ensuring that workstations meet the minimum requirements. All employees must complete a DSE workstation checklist (Appendix 6) to confirm the suitability of the equipment being used and once completed, a signed and dated copy must be sent to the line manager. This checklist should be reviewed annually or when:

- Major changes are made to the equipment, furniture, work environment or software.
- Users change workstations.
- The nature of the work tasks change considerably.
- It is thought the controls in place may be causing other problems.

If the self-assessment form or workstation checklist identifies any risks, the line manager may need to seek further advice from the Health and Safety / Risk Manager or Occupational Health department.

Employees working from remote locations, including home will be covered by the ICB's general insurances including employer's liability and public liability insurance. Employees must inform their line manager in the event of accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences. Initial reports should be made by telephone, followed by appropriate action such as entering the incident on the ICB's incident reporting system.

### 10.2 Domestic Violence or Abuse

The ICB has a responsibility to provide all employees with a safe and effective working environment. For some employees, the workplace is a safe haven and the only place that offers routes to safety. Line managers should seek to support staff by discussing individual circumstances so appropriate support and actions can be taken.

Further information, support and guidance to support staff who may be experiencing domestic violence or abuse can be found in the ICB's Domestic Violence and Abuse policy or by contacting the ICB's Designated Professional for Safeguarding Adults.

### 10.3 Security and Information Governance

Employees working from home or other office locations will be responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure the security of ICB equipment and for ensuring that no other person can access ICB information and systems.

All ICB employees have responsibilities and legal requirements to keep information safe, secure and confidential at all times. Work should be conducted away from others so that work-related conversations cannot be overheard or sensitive information read by others. Microphones can be muted when not speaking. Employees should ensure that confidentiality can be maintained at all times:

In order to comply with the current Data Protection legislation and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679", any data used must be secure and can only be accessed by the employee. Any documentation which may hold confidential or ICB sensitive information, should be stored in a secure manner. Do not dispose of any confidential paperwork at home with your normal household waste; collect and dispose of it in the ICB confidential waste bins or shredders when you visit ICB premises.

Employees have a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to safeguard equipment from loss or damage. When transporting electronic devices, and papers / notebooks by car, these should be stored out of sight and not be left unattended where possible. When travelling on public transport, care should be taken to ensure that items are

Agile Working Policy January 2022

carried securely at all times. Computer equipment must be transported in a secure, clean environment and must not be left in a vehicle overnight. Employees working from home should ensure that windows and doors are secured when the property is unoccupied.

Employees should, at the earliest opportunity, inform their line manager of any loss or damage to ICB property. All losses involving theft or malicious damage should also be reported to the Police and the Police Crime Reference Number obtained.

## 10.4 Working remotely at other office locations

When working from office locations other than the designated work base, the policies and procedures of the ICB will still apply. The host organisation is responsible for the health and safety of the building, but employees have a personal responsibility for their own health and safety. Employees must make themselves aware of the requirements at each site visited e.g. signing in/out, fire evacuation etc.

## 10.5 Working Time Regulations

Working Time Regulations which place restrictions on working excessive hours came into force on 1 October 1998 and must be considered in respect of agile working. It is important that working hours are not detrimental to an employee's health and wellbeing and that they comply with Working Time Regulations. The main points to be aware of are:
- Maximum weekly working time is not to exceed 48 hours per 7 day period averaged out over a 17 week period.
- A rest break of at least 30 minutes should be taken when working more than 6 hours per day.
- An average of 11 consecutive hours rest must be taken between each working day.
- A 24 hour break must be taken for every seven day's work.
- Annual leave must be planned, authorised and taken.

Agile Working Policy January 2022

## 11. INSURANCE AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

### 11.1 Insurance

Employees should discuss with their home insurer any changes that may need to be made to their policy to ensure that they are fully protected while working from home. Individuals are responsible for any additional premiums if any necessary changes mean an increase in their premium.

### 11.2 Mortgage and Tenancy/Lease Agreements

Employees are responsible for confirming that there are no restrictions on any lease, rental or mortgage agreement and for informing their domestic insurers of the home working arrangements, as failure to do so may render personal insurance invalid.

### 11.3 Tax Implications

The HMRC, generally, view working from home as being a matter of choice and it is therefore unlikely that, should you choose to work from home that income tax relief will be available, however, it is the employee's responsibility to seek specific advice on this matter through HMRC. Please visit https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home to see what you may be entitled to and how to make a claim.

As the equipment provided by the ICB is on loan to the employee and, providing it is not used by anyone other than the employee, the employee should not face any income tax liability.

### 11.4 Council Tax and Business Rates

It is extremely unlikely that there will be any change to an employee's Council Tax or any liability for business rates however, should they have any concerns they should contact their local council.

## 12 APPEAL

An employee who feels they are being treated unfairly under this policy may invoke the ICB's Grievance Procedure at the appropriate stage. Please refer to the Grievance procedure. Advice and guidance is available from the HR team and recognised Trade Union representatives.

## 13 IMPLEMENTATION

Breaches of this policy may be investigated and may result in the matter being treated as a disciplinary offence under the ICB's Disciplinary procedure.

## 14 TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Advice can be sought from the HR Humber team on the implementation and interpretation of this policy. The ICB is committed to delivering training and awareness sessions for employees and managers including managing and working remotely.

## 15 MONITORING AND AUDIT

The implementation of this policy will be monitored on an annual basis by the ICB and reported to the Senior Leadership Team.

## 16 POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed within 2 years from the date of implementation.

## 17 REFERENCES

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

## 18 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

To ensure that this policy is viewed in context, it must be read in conjunction with the Flexible Working Policy. Other associated documents include:

- Acceptable Computer Use Policy
- Attendance Management Policy

- Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Information Security and Equipment Policy
- Managing Work Performance Policy
- Mobile Working Policy and Guidelines
- Travel and Expenses Policy
- Enabling and supporting staff to work from home (NHS Employers) : https://www.nhsemployers.org/covid19/health-safety-and-wellbeing/supporting-staff-at-home-and-work/enabling-and-supporting-staff-to-work-from-home

## 19 IMPACT ANALYSES

### 19.1 EQUALITY

The ICB are committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated equitably and the potential for discrimination is identified and mitigated.

[add results of impact analysis]

### 18.2 BRIBERY ACT 2010

Due consideration has been given to the Bribery Act 2010 in the development or review of this policy document, further details can be found in Appendix 1.

### 19.3 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

The ICB is committed to ensuring that all personal information is managed in accordance with current data protection legislation, professional codes of practice and records management and confidentiality guidance.  More detailed information can be found in the ICBs Data Protection and Confidentiality and related policies and procedures.

If you are commissioning a project or undertaking work that requires the processing of personal data you must complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment. Please see the ICB's Data Protection Impact Assessment Procedure and Data Protection by Design and Default procedure available on the website for guidance.

# 20 APPENDICES

- **ANTI-FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION**

- **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- **AGILE WORKING PROCESS FLOWCHART**

- **AGILE WORKING PERSONAL PLAN**

- **HOME WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT**

- **DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT ASSESSMENT**

- **SETTING UP A HOME WORK AREA**

- **TIPS FOR LEADERS OF VIRTUAL TEAMS**

Agile Working Policy January 2022

**Appendix 1**

**ANTI-FRAUD, BRIBERY and CORRUPTION**

The ICB has a responsibility to ensure that all staff are made aware of their duties and responsibilities arising from the Bribery Act 2010.  Under the Bribery Act 2010 there are four criminal offences:

•        Bribing or offering to bribe another person (Section 1)
•        Requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a bribe (Section 2);
•        Bribing, or offering to bribe, a foreign public official (Section 6);
•        Failing to prevent bribery (Section 7).

These offences can be committed directly or by and through a third person and, in many cases, it does not matter whether the person knows or believes that the performance of the function or activity is improper.

It should be noted that there need not be any actual giving and receiving for financial or other advantage to be gained, to commit an offence.

All individuals should be aware that in committing an act of bribery they may be subject to a penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment, an unlimited fine, or both.  They may also expose the organisation to a conviction punishable with an unlimited fine because the organisation may be liable where a person associated with it commits an act of bribery.

Individuals should also be aware that a breach of this Act renders them liable to disciplinary action by the ICB, whether or not the breach leads to prosecution.  Where a material breach is found to have occurred, the likely sanction will be loss of employment and pension rights.

To raise any suspicions of bribery and/or corruption please contact the Chief Finance Officer.  Staff may also contact the Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) at – Audit Yorkshire, 01482 866800 email: nikki.cooper1@nhs.net  or mobile 07872 988939.

The LCFS or Chief Finance Officer should be the contact for any suspicions of fraud. The LCFS will inform the Chief Finance Officer if the suspicion seems well founded and will conduct a thorough investigation.

If staff prefer, they may call the NHS Fraud & Corruption Reporting Line on 0800 028 40 60 between 8am-6pm Monday-Friday or report online at https://cfa.nhs.uk/reportfraud  This would be the suggested contact if there is a concern that the LCFS or the Chief Finance Officer themselves may be implicated in suspected fraud, bribery or corruption.

**BRIBERY ACT 2010**

The ICB follows good NHS business practice as outlined in the Business Conduct Policy and the Conflicts of Interest Policy and has robust controls in place to prevent fraud, bribery and corruption.  Under the Bribery Act 2010 there are four criminal offences:
•        Bribing or offering to bribe another person (Section 1)
•        Requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a bribe (Section 2);
•        Bribing, or offering to bribe, a foreign public official (Section 6);
•        Failing to prevent bribery (Section 7).

Agile Working Policy January 2022

**Appendix 2**

| HR / Corporate Policy Equality Impact Analysis: | |
|---|---|
| **Policy / Project / Function:** | Agile Working Policy |
| **Date of Analysis:** | December 2021 |
| **Completed by:**<br>**(Name and Department**) | Jayne Taylor, Humber Human Resources |
| **What are the aims and intended effects of this policy, project or function?** | The CCG is committed to adopting agile working practices, where appropriate, in the context of business needs and empowering employees to maximise their performance. Increasing agile and flexible working in the NHS is also a key target within the NHS People Plan.<br><br>The Agile Working Policy has been developed to set out how employees can work in an agile way. The policy sets out an overall framework which provides a medium for consistency and fair practice when implementing and maintaining an agile working environment by understanding the basic principles, which can then be considered and applied to specific roles. The policy also sign posts managers and employees to other relevant policies, not unique to agile working that should be considered when making decisions about new ways of working.<br><br>This policy does not negate or supersede the CCG's Flexible Working Policy and is not appropriate for instances where regular flexibility of working patterns is required for personal reasons. |

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| **Are there any significant changes to previous policy likely to have an impact on staff / other stakeholder groups?** | N/A – New Policy |
| **Please list any other policies that are related to or referred to as part of this analysis** | Attendance Management<br>Equality and Diversity<br>Flexible Working<br>Health and Safety |
| **Who will the policy, project or function affect?** | Employees |
| **What engagement / consultation has been done, or is planned for this policy and the equality impact assessment?** | Policy has been shared with SLT, all staff and the SPF group with Trade Union colleagues for consultation. |
| **Promoting Inclusivity and the CCG's Equality Objectives.**<br><br>How does the project, service or function contribute towards our aims of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality and diversity within our organisation?<br><br>How does the policy promote our equality objectives:<br>  1.  Ensure patients and public have improved access to information and minimise communications barriers<br><br>  2.  To ensure and provide evidence that equality is consciously considered in all commissioning activities and ownership of this is part of everyone's day-to-day job<br><br>  3.  Recruit and maintain a well-supported, skilled workforce, which is representative of the population we serve<br><br>  4.  Ensure that the CCG is welcoming and inclusive to people from all backgrounds and with a range of access needs<br><br>  5.  To demonstrate leadership on equality and inclusion and be an active champion of equalities in partnership programmes or arrangements. | Under the Equality Act 2010 it is the CCG's legal duty to manage disability related issues effectively and without discrimination, therefore the policy aims to ensure this duty is met by considering the use of reasonable adjustments to support employees with a disability to work<br><br>This policy shows that the CCG is welcoming and inclusive of people with a range of access needs and is a really proactive policy which demonstrates leadership on equality and inclusion |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

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| Equality Data | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Is any Equality Data available relating to the use or implementation of this policy, project or function?**<br><br>Equality data is internal or external information that may indicate how the activity being analysed can affect different groups of people who share the nine *Protected Characteristics* – referred to hereafter as *'Equality Groups'.*<br><br>Examples of *Equality Data* include: (this list is not definitive)<br><br>1: Recruitment data, e.g. applications compared to the population profile, application success rates<br>2: Complaints by groups who share / represent protected characteristics<br>4: Grievances or decisions upheld and dismissed by protected characteristic group<br>5: Insight gained through engagement | Yes<br><br><br><br>No<br><br>Where you have answered yes, please incorporate this data when performing the *Equality Impact Assessment Test* (the next section of this document).  If you answered No, what information will you use to assess impact?<br><br>**Please note that due to the small number of staff employed by the CCG, data with returns small enough to identity individuals cannot be published. However, the data should still be analysed as part of the EIA process, and where it is possible to identify trends or issues, these should be recorded in the EIA.** | X |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

## Assessing Impact

**Is this policy (or the implementation of this policy) likely to have a particular impact on any of the protected characteristic groups?**
**(Based on analysis of the data / insights gathered through engagement, or your knowledge of the substance of this policy)**

| Protected Characteristic: | Neutral Impact | Positive Impact: | Negative Impact: | Evidence of impact and, if applicable, justification where a *Genuine Determining Reason[1]* exists (see footnote below – seek further advice in this case) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| It is anticipated that these guidelines will have a positive impact as they support policy writers to complete meaningful EIAs, by providing this template and a range of potential issues to consider across the protected characteristics below. There may of course be other issues relevant to your policy, not listed below, and some of the issues listed below may not be relevant to your policy. | | | | |
| **Gender** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |
| **Age** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |
| **Race / ethnicity / nationality** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |
| **Disability** | | ✓ | | Employees with disabilities may require reasonable adjustments to methods of working or their working environment under the provisions of the Equality Act. However, such reasonable adjustments apply equally regardless of the location the employee chooses to work from.  There is growing evidence showing the positive impact that remote working offers people with disabilities. E.g https://www.accessibility.com/blog/how-remote-work-impacts-employees-with-disabilities  *(The potential negative impact of withdrawing the option to work remotely needs to be considered, as there is more national pressure to return back to the office)* |
| **Religion or Belief** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |

1.     [1] *The action is proportionate to the legitimate aims of the organisation (please seek further advice)*

Agile Working Policy January 2022

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sexual Orientation** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |
| **Pregnancy and Maternity** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |
| **Transgender / Gender reassignment** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |
| **Marriage or civil partnership** | ✓ | | | This policy will be applied consistently and therefore should have no impact on this protected characteristic |

| Action Planning: | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **As a result of performing this analysis, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any risks of adverse impact or strengthen the promotion of equality?** | | | | |
| **Identified Risk:** | **Recommended Actions:** | **Responsible Lead:** | **Completion Date:** | **Review Date:** |
| The policy may not be accessible to people with communications barriers. | The ICBs internal 'portal' and external website signpost individuals to alternative formats such as large print, braille or another language. | CCG Communications | Updating of this facility is ongoing | Next Policy Review – Jan 2024 |
| As widespread remote working is a relatively new phenomenon, more learning and understanding is needed of the impacts, and who has access to this option. | Further engagement needed to learn about the impact of remote working on all staff, with a focus on equality of access and inclusion. (E.g. impacts on carers, pregnancy and maternity…) | Human Resources | Ongoing engagement | Next Policy Review – Jan 2024 |
| | | | | |

| Sign-off |
|---|
| **All policy EIAs must be signed off by Sue Lee, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement** |
| **I agree with this assessment / action plan** |
| **If *disagree*, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales:** |

Agile Working Policy January 2022
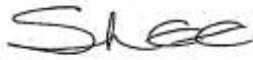
**Signed:**
**Sue Lee, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement**

**Date: 25.01.22**

If you have any comments or feedback about this equality impact assessment, please contact your line manager if you are a member of staff, or telephone 01482 344700, or email hullccg.stpcontactus@nhs.net.

**Appendix 3**

**AGILE WORKING PROCESS FLOWCHART**

```
┌─────────────┐                              ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ New Starter │                              │ Existing employee requests│◄─┐
└──────┬──────┘                              │ change of work profile    │  │
       │                                     └────────────┬─────────────┘  │
       │         ┌────────────────────────────────────┐   │                │
       └────────►│ Line Manager meets with employee to │◄──┘                │
                 │ discuss and agree work profile and  │                    │
                 │ any considerations using the Agile  │                    │
                 │ Working Personal Plan               │                    │
                 └──────────────────┬──────────────────┘                    │
          ┌─────────────────────────┴──────────────────────────┐           │
          ▼                                                     ▼           │
┌──────────────────────┐                          ┌──────────────────────┐ │
│ Line manager         │                          │ Line manager         │ │
│ identifies agile     │                          │ identifies fixed     │ │
│ work profile         │                          │ work profile         │ │
└──────────┬───────────┘                          └──────────┬───────────┘ │
           │         ┌──────────────────┐                    │             │
           └────────►│ Employee is       │◄───────────────────┘             │
                     │ supplied with the │                                  │
                     │ agreed equipment  │                                  │
                     └─────────┬─────────┘                                  │
┌──────────────────┐           ▼                                            │
│ For those         │   ┌──────────────────┐                               │
│ employees who are │---│ Employee          │                               │
│ working from home:│   │ completes DSE     │                               │
│ Employee also     │   │ self-assessment   │                               │
│ completes home    │   └─────────┬─────────┘                               │
│ working risk      │             ▼                                         │
│ assessment form   │   ┌──────────────────────────┐                       │
└──────────────────┘   │ Employee and Line Manager │────────────────────────┘
                       │ review arrangements       │
                       │ through regular 1:1s      │
                       └─────────────┬─────────────┘
                                     ▼
                       ┌──────────────────────────┐
                       │ Employee leaves employment│
                       │ with ICB or embarks on    │
                       │ period of absence e.g.    │
                       │ maternity / adoption leave │
                       └─────────────┬─────────────┘
                                     ▼
                       ┌──────────────────────────┐
                       │ All equipment supplied to │
                       │ the employee to be used by│
                       │ the employee covering the │
                       │ absence or returned to IT │
                       └──────────────────────────┘
```

Agile Working Policy January 2022

**Appendix 4**

**AGILE WORKING PERSONAL PLAN**

| Name | |
|---|---|
| Job Title | |

**WORK PROFILE**

| | Comments/issues identified and how any challenges could be overcome | |
|---|---|---|
| Is your work impacted by the location you work from? | | |
| How much of your working time do you spend attending meetings and/or delivering business across multiple sites | | |
| Can the ICB's business needs and/or service still be met if the work is carried out remotely? | | |
| Work Profile Identified | Fixed | Agile |
| | | |
| Additional Comments | | |

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR FIXED WORKERS**

| | Comments/issues identified and how any challenges could be overcome |
|---|---|
| How are you feeling at the moment?<br>You could think about:<br>• Your health and wellbeing<br>• Your work/life balance<br>• Any support you need to improve your health and wellbeing | |
| Do you have all the equipment / resources do you require to carry out your role? | |
| Do you require any reasonable adjustment to be made in order to be able to | |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

| | |
|---|---|
| work safely and effectively? | |
| Have you completed a DSE self assessment form? Were there any actions identified from this? | |
| How often will we keep in touch and through which communication methods? | |
| Is your ESR record up to date e.g contact details, next of kin etc. | |

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR AGILE WORKERS

| | Comments/issues identified and how any challenges could be overcome |
|---|---|
| Do you have any childcare or carer related issues which may impact on your role responsibilities at this time? | |
| What are your preferences in terms of where you work from? Would any of these locations have a negative / positive impact on the delivery of your role? | |
| How are you feeling at the moment?<br>You could think about:<br>• Your health and wellbeing<br>• Whether working in an agile way may impact on your health and wellbeing<br>• Your work/life balance<br>• Any support you need to improve your health and wellbeing<br>• How you will ensure you take regular screen breaks/physical breaks | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Do you have all the equipment / resources to work remotely? If working from home do you have a quiet space to work from? | |
| Do you require any reasonable adjustment to be made in order to be able to work safely and effectively? | |
| How often will we keep in touch and through which communication methods? | |
| Is your ESR record up to date e.g contact details, next of kin etc. | |
| Are there any personal circumstances which may impact on your ability to work in an agile way? | |
| Have you completed a DSE self assessment form? If so, were there any actions arising from this? | |
| If working from home, have you undertaken a home working risk assessment? If so were there any actions arising from this? | |

In maintaining this personal plan, please ensure that regular review dates are planned with your line manager. Actions or brief notes from each meeting may be recorded here.

**Employee Signature:**                                                    **Date:**

**Managers Signature:**                                                  **Date:**

Agile Working Policy January 2022

**Appendix 5**

**HOME WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, the ICB is required to assess the risk of work activities carried out by staff working from home. This risk assessment can be carried out by the employee themselves.

The assessment will be used to to ensure that your working conditions at home comply with current best practice. Completing a risk assessment involves identifying the hazards relating to work activities carried out in the home environment and deciding whether appropriate steps (control measures) have been taken to prevent harm to the employee or anyone else who may be affected by their work.

A risk assessment will:
- Identify hazards (a hazard is anything that may cause harm)
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Assess the risks (a risk is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard) and take appropriate action to remove or reduce them as far as possible
- Record the findings
- Be reviewed from time to time to see whether further action is needed.

The form should be completed prior to commencing home working and passed to the line manager. The line manager should be satisfied that there is low risk and where appropriate, that additional control measures are in place.

| Name: | | Date of completion: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Address where assessment was undertaken: | | Job Title & Department: | |

| Potential hazards and suggested control measures to reduce or eliminate risks | Home working checklist, comments and implemented control measures |
|---|---|
| **1. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)**<br><br>See Guidance and self-assessment form in Appendix 6<br><br><ul><li>In particular, you should use the guidance to:</li><li>Check the positioning and display of your computer screen/monitor</li><li>Check the positioning and suitability of your keyboard and mouse</li><li>Check the suitability of your chair and desk.</li></ul> | I have read the guidance and checked:<br><br><ul><li>The positioning and display of my computer screen/monitor;</li><li>The positioning and suitability of my keyboard and mouse;</li><li>The suitability of my chair and desk</li></ul><br>And am satisfied that they are suitable and safe.<br><br>Yes/No (Delete as appropriate) |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

| | |
|---|---|
| Laptop users should consider using a separate monitor, keyboard and mouse.<br><br>DSE users should also take regular breaks | I have made the following changes:<br><br><br><br><br><br>Risk is High/Medium/Low (delete as appropriate) |
| **2. Homeworking Environment**<br><br>See Guidance and self-assessment form in Appendix 6<br><br>• In particular, you should use the guidance to: Check that you have sufficient space on and around your desk/home work area<br>• Check that you have appropriate lighting for your home work area (eg do you need a desk lamp)<br>• Check that the temperature, humidity and ventilation of your home work area is comfortable for you | I have read the guidance and checked:<br><br>• The space on and around my desk/home work area;<br>• The lighting for my home work area;<br>• The temperature, humidity and ventilation of my home work area<br><br>And am satisfied that they are suitable and safe.<br><br>Yes/No (Delete as appropriate)<br><br>I have made the following changes:<br><br><br><br>Risk is High/Medium/Low (delete as appropriate) |
| **3. Other Hazards**<br><br>You should ensure that:<br><br>• Tripping and falling: you are able to safely walk between your home work area and other parts of your home without risk of tripping or slipping, for example on trailing electrical cables, mats, uneven work surfaces, steps, pets or children. Use good footwear.<br><br>• Fire: you are advised to have smoke detectors (regularly checked), a fire extinguisher or fire blanket and a clear escape route.<br><br>• Accidents: you should be clear about how to report an accident; you are advised to have a home first aid kit. During breaks, you should take particular care when making hot/cold drinks/snacks and using knives and other sharp objects. | I have checked the potential hazards in my home and am satisfied that they are suitable and safe.<br><br>Yes/No (Delete as appropriate)<br><br>I am aware of the procedures for reporting an accident<br><br>Yes / No (Delete as appropriate)<br><br>I have made the following changes: |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

| | Risk is High/Medium/Low (delete as appropriate) |
|---|---|
| • Electricity: your electricity supply and any electrical appliances used while homeworking should be well maintained and regularly checked; you are advised to use circuit breakers for your electrical appliances.<br><br>• Noise: the noise level in your home work environment should not prevent you from being able to concentrate and carry out your work. Avoid loud music.<br><br>• Manual handling: manual handling should not be necessary while homeworking; you should take care when moving/carrying your laptop and setting up your home work area.<br><br>• Harmful substances: it should not be necessary for you to come into contact with any harmful substances while homeworking.<br><br>• Lone working: you should maintain regular contact with your manager and colleagues while homeworking. | |
| **Overall Final Risk** | High/Medium/Low (Delete as appropriate) |

Employee Signature:…………………………………………

Date:…………………………………………………………

Name of Line Manager:……………………………………

Line Manager Signature:…………………………………..

Date:…………………………………………………………

**Appendix 6**

**DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT SELF ASSESSMENT FORM**

The purpose of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations is to safeguard employees by ensuring their working environment is comfortable, efficient and suits them and their job as required by Health and Safety legislation.

Please work through the assessment questionnaire checklist and ensure all equipment is properly positioned and adjusted for safe use.  If you find a problem **please refer to the recommendation boxes and see if you can fix it yourself** by making the suggested adjustments.

If you find a problem which cannot be fixed by simple adjustment, please record the issue on this form and discuss it immediately with your line manager. If you think your health is being adversely affected by your computer use (i.e. if you are experiencing headaches, eyestrain, discomfort in hand/wrist/forearm, numbness, pins and needles) or if you have a health problem that makes computer use difficult please contact Occupational  Health as soon as possible.

It is your responsibility to report any symptoms that persist for more than 3 days.

| Surname: | | First Name: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Location: | | Manager: | |
| Tel No: | | Date: | |

| OFFICE FURNITURE | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Have you adjusted your chair to be comfortable and supportive? | | |
| Is your workstation large enough for documents/holder/monitor/keyboard? | | |
| Are your feet flat on the floor or supported by a footrest? | | |
| Are you comfortable whilst sitting at your desk? | | |

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OFFICE FURNITURE |
|---|
| • The desk should be a minimum 80cm in depth.<br>• The chair should be stable and should be sufficiently adjustable to allow the user to achieve free movement and a comfortable position.<br>• Feet should be flat on the floor or use a footrest if needed.<br>• A height adjustable document holder may help to reduce awkward and repetitive head/neck movement. |

| COMPUTER SCREEN | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Are your head and neck in a comfortable position when viewing the screen? | | |
| Are the characters on the screen readable? | | |
| Is the image free from flicker and/or movement? (If no, please contact IT) | | |
| Are the brightness/contrast buttons appropriately adjustable? | | |
| Is the screen free from glare and reflections? | | |

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPUTER SCREEN |
|---|
| • Ensure screen surface is clean.<br>• Place the screen at a comfortable reading distance (should be approximately 45-75cm away from you).<br>• The screen should be directly in front of you read if most of the time or to the side if you refer to it occasionally. You must always sit straight to the screen, never twisted to one side.<br>• Ensure the keyboard is in line with the screen and you can do your main task without excessive twisting.<br>• Text should be large enough to read easily, if not consider changing the size of the font.<br>• Adjust brightness/contrast of screen so that characters are readable.<br>• The screen should be free from glare and/or reflection – use of blinds may be beneficial. |

| KEYBOARD & MOUSE | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Are your forearms horizontal and wrists straight when typing? | | |
| Do you have enough space in front of the keyboard for a wrist rest or to rest your hands? | | |
| Are the characters on the keys readable? | | |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Does your mouse feel comfortable in your hand? | | |
| Do you experience any physical difficulties or discomfort from using a mouse? | | |
| When using the mouse are your wrists and shoulders in a comfortable position close to the side of your body? | | |

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEYBOARD & MOUSE |
|---|
| <ul><li>It Is recommended that wrists are straight; this may be helped by the use of a wrist support, which will also provide support for the forearm.</li><li>Minimum distance between desk edge and front of keyboard – 5cm.</li><li>Do not grip the mouse</li><li>Mouse mats with gel mounds for wrist support may be of benefit.</li><li>When not using it, remove your hand completely from the mouse.</li><li>Position your mouse so that it is close to your body to keep correct alignment of the shoulder.</li><li>If you have a shoulder problem, use of a keyboard with separate number pad may help.</li></ul> |

| LAPTOP USE | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| If you use a laptop, are you free from upper limb, neck, lower back or other musculoskeletal discomfort? | | |

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LAPTOP USE |
|---|
| Portable DSE equipment such as laptops and notebook computers are subject to the DSE Regulations.  Advice for use with such equipment is as below. <ul><li>There may be inherent ergonomic disadvantages of using portable DSE equipment Use of a docking station or a laptop converter kit may reduce these problems.</li><li>When using portable equipment more frequent breaks and/or changes of activity are required than when using conventional PC.</li><li>Consider the manual handling aspects of your laptop use to reduce risk, such as using a backpack for transportation.</li><li>Think safety. Remember the risk of theft from your person or when the laptop is unattended.</li></ul> |

| WORK PATTERN AND PACE | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Does your work pattern and pace of work allow regular change in posture and time away from the VDU? | | |

Agile Working Policy January 2022

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORK PATTERN AND PACE |
|---|
| • Alternate your work tasks so you are not sat at the computer for more than one hour at a time.  Work pace should allow for this.  Varying work routine is important.<br>• Five minutes away from the computer every hour is advised as a minimum. |

| SOFTWARE | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Are you able to use the software on your computer and does it meet your needs at work? | | |

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOFTWARE |
|---|
| • The software should be suitable for the task and the user adequately trained in its use. |

| ENVIRONMENT | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| Is there enough room to change position and vary movement? | | |
| Is the lighting suitable? | | |
| Are levels of noise comfortable? | | |
| Are levels of heat comfortable? | | |

| RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENT |
|---|
| • Consider re-organising the office layout and check for obstructions.  Space is needed to move and stretch.<br>• Users should be able to control light levels e.g. by adjusting window blinds or light switches.<br>• Consider moving sources of noise such as printers, away from the user.<br>• Can heating be better controlled.  Circulate fresh air as possible.. |

| Signature: | | Date: | |
|---|---|---|---|

Agile Working Policy January 2022

If you have identified any negative responses to any of these questions you should bring these to the attention of your manager. You and your manager should identify solutions and repeat this self-assessment again.

Completed self-assessment form should be returned to your manager and placed in your personal file.

Sources of advice / support are available from:

- *Back Care Advisor*
- *Occupational Health Department*
- *Health & Safety Advisor/Risk Specialist*

**Appendix 7**

**PLANNING A HOME WORKING AREA**

When an employee is planning to work at home, it is important that the work area is planned giving thorough consideration to:

*Desk and Chair Requirements*

The desk and chair used when working from home must conform to Health & Safety Regulations. If the ICB is loaning equipment (where relevant/required e.g. specialist equipment), it will satisfy these requirements.

If an employee wishes to use their own furniture, it is mandatory that this furniture meets the minimum Health & Safety criteria, including dimension of the desk and adjustment ability of the chair.

*Dimensions of the proposed work area*

Although an employee doesn't need to have a room set aside specifically as a home office, the desk should be permanently sited along with sufficient space for lockable storage, easy access to the chair and a space of at least a metre behind the desk to allow sitting and moving comfortably.

*Location of doors and windows*

When planning a work area employees should be mindful of how the door opens (e.g. so that when opened it doesn't bang the desk or chair) and also should make sure that the position of the desk in relation to the window limits glare and doesn't allow easy visibility of the computer monitor. Ideally, the area used should have plenty of natural light.

*Position of electrical sockets and telephone points*

When planning where to have the desk it is important that employees ensure that there is easy access to wall sockets in order to avoid trailing leads and trip hazards. Electrical sockets must not be overloaded and a surge protector must be used.

*Display Screen Equipment (DSE) requirements*

The DSE requirement is to ensure that screens and keyboards are positioned correctly in relation to working posture. For example, the eyes should be level with an area between the top of the display and the top of the monitor casing, normally at a distance of 450mm - 750mm.

It is the employee's responsibility to notify the ICB of any changes to their home office environment or personal health that may affect their Health and Safety. Any changes require a review of the DSE self assessment and Home Working Risk Assessment forms.

Agile Working Policy January 2022

**APPENDIX 8**

**TIPS FOR LEADERS OF VIRTUAL TEAMS**

| CREATE A ROUTINE | <ul><li>Schedule regular meetings at consistent times</li><li>Encourage people to have a routine themselves – dress for work, allow time for breaks, etc.</li><li>Keep doing your regular 1:1s</li></ul> |
|---|---|

Team routines are important for reducing anxiety and improving trust in the team, and maintaining productivity and safety. For example, you can schedule meetings at regular intervals at consistent times and with consistent agendas. This could include daily or weekly catch ups and handovers. Employees need regular 1:1 conversations so they don't begin to feel isolated.

Personal routines can assist in maintaining a structured day, remain engaged and helping to improve ways of working. For people working from home for the first time, it can be disorientating not to have the same commute and dedicated workspaces. Some well-chosen routines can help to structure the day and reduce the unfamiliarity. It can help to get dressed in normal work clothes, leave the house and "walk to work" and turn off social media notifications. Some people like to set aside periods during the day for certain activities such as thinking time or for low level tasks. Try talking together as a team about what helps and find some common habits that you can agree on as a team. Notice and respect the differences amongst you.

Being in tune with your body and emotions helps to maintain a sense of perspective and focus, especially during any stressful times. All NHS staff have free access to a number of wellbeing apps. Visit the NHS Employers website for more information about signing up.

| ENCOURAGE SOCIAL CONNECTION | <ul><li>Recreate the 'water cooler effect' – encourage staff to have a break or connect with colleagues virtually.</li><li>Use Microsoft Teams to help recreate the face-to-face feeling people can miss out on when working remotely</li></ul> |
|---|---|

When working in the office people often have the opportunity to chat before and after meetings, during their breaks, and around the kettle/water cooler. Personal connections are important for getting work done and also for creating the trust that prevents unhealthy conflict. Think about how your team can create some of these ad hoc relationship-building moments remotely and discuss it together.

Some ideas for creating informal social connection:

- Do something together e.g. a quiz.

- If it's a special occasion, try to come together face to face as a team to celebrate.

- Invite people for a coffee break online and encourage others to do the same.

- Notice which informal groupings are arising and see how you can help to avoid some people from getting more isolated.

- Set up a chat group on platforms such as MS Teams or WhatsApp.

| | |
|---|---|
| **BUILD TRUST** | • Encourage openness and address any concerns they may be having<br>• Come to an agreement about a best way of working that suits you, them and the wider team |

Building trust starts with yourself – if you have a fear of trusting employees to work you need to recognise this. Follow through on promises you make, be reliable and be fair. If you fail to do this, it will erode trust. Communicate openly and as regularly as possible.

Get to know people your team personally. Listen to what is going on in people's lives to be able to support them and help them become their best. Building trust is a two-way process so model some openness yourself. Make sure you are inclusive which may mean focussing on getting to know those people with whom you do not have a natural connection.

| | |
|---|---|
| **INVOLVE EVERYONE** | • Make sure everyone feels equally involved in what is happening<br>• Pay attention to those who are quieter in real life |

Make sure that all of your team get their chance to have their voice heard. When starting virtual team meetings, make sure that everybody has the opportunity to say something near the beginning - check if people have items they want to raise or how everyone is.

It can be harder for introverts to get their voice heard in a virtual environment, so experiment with ways of helping everybody. You may want to experiment with creating a pause while people think before inviting contributions, especially if you notice that the same people always speak first. Or you can check in turn whether individuals want to say something.

When new people join, how will you help them become integrated? How about giving them a buddy within the team or wider group of people they will be working with that they can meet with informally from time to time?

| REFLECT | <ul><li>Take time for reflection – ask yourself, and others what is working well? Can things be done differently?</li><li>Share thoughts as a team.</li></ul> |
|---|---|

For a team to be effective it needs to give attention to how it is functioning. Make time to examine together what is working for the team and all its members. Consider using different meetings for different purposes e.g. one meeting on updates and tasks, and another on team development and nurturing of the team spirit.

Reflect on your leadership – identify what has driven you not just to do things but to think things – are you making assumptions about your team members? Consider your leadership style and what effect this might have on the individuals within your team – you may need to flex this style to get the best out of all your team members.

A team culture will form, whether or not we pay attention to it. This is true whether we are together in person, or work remotely, or a combination. People notice what you do, probably more than what you say, so be aware of the power of your own role modelling.

| BE CLEAR | <ul><li>Be clear about your expectations with regards to work outputs/performance and what is expected of your team members.</li><li>Aim to agree deadlines and results.</li><li>Avoid managing more closely than face to face.</li></ul> |
|---|---|

If a team is working remotely and you cannot see them all the time, you may feel the impulse to impose closer supervision. Generally speaking, employees will perform better when given clear outlines of expectations together with the autonomy to set their own work methods. This does not mean that you should not be clear about the expectations you have of your staff, and it is better to be clear in advance of issues otherwise you may become frustrated with your team unnecessarily.

Analyse what your core expectations are then discuss and agree these with your team, including any flexibility over when staff can carry out their work, how they make themselves available, channels of communication and attendance at team meetings.

Make sure you are continuously setting short term goals, clarifying what is needed in sufficient detail and by when. Ideally this is done on a team-level so all members have clarity on what each other is working on and can update on progress on a regular basis.

Agile Working Policy January 2022