

Homeworking Code of Practice

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Summary of key points in this document:

- Applies to the whole Trust
- Works in conjunction with the Trust's Health & Safety Policy
- Guidance on the legal requirements for employees working at home.

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Homeworking Code of Practice

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HASAWA) places duties on employers, self-employed people and employees. Under HASAWA, employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees, including homeworkers.
- 1.2 Most of the Regulations made under the HASAWA apply to homeworkers as well as to employees working at an employer's workplace. These include, for example the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992, the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended).
- 1.3 Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are required to do a risk assessment for the work activities carried out by homeworkers. Completing a risk assessment involves identifying the hazards relating to the homeworkers' work activities and deciding whether enough steps have been taken to prevent harm to them or to anyone else who may be affected by their work. A risk is the chance, great or small that someone will be harmed by a hazard. A hazard is anything that may cause harm.
- 1.4 A homeworker risk assessment should be completed (see Appendix A and associated documents). This should be reviewed at least annually or if there are any significant changes to the working practice/environment.

2. Purpose of the document

- 2.1 The Trust is legally required to comply with all Health and Safety Legislation.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This code of practice applies to:
 - All employees, including temporary staff and volunteers of North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust irrespective of their place of work.
 - All patients, visitors, contractors and other persons whilst on Trust property.

4. Common Hazards

4.1 *Load Handling*

Handling loads can cause serious injury, particularly to the back. This checklist highlights some activities that may increase the risk:

- 4.2 If possible employers should avoid the need for hazardous manual handling. However, if homeworkers must handle loads as part of their work, employers are responsible for assessing and reducing the risks, for example by providing training and/ or lifting aids to prevent injury.

For further advice and guidance contact the Senior Moving & Handling Advisor.

4.3 Using Work Equipment at Home

- 4.3.1 The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 cover the use of work equipment in the home.
- 4.3.2 Equipment must be fit for purpose and should be maintained regularly as per Trust equipment.

4.4 Using Electrical Equipment for Work at Home

- 4.4.1 If homeworkers use electrical equipment provided by the employer as part of their work, the employer is responsible for its maintenance. Employers are only responsible for the equipment they supply. Electrical sockets and other parts of the homeworkers' domestic electrical system are their own responsibility.
- 4.4.2 Employees must ensure that there are no water sources that may endanger the equipment i.e. kettles, fish tanks.
- 4.4.3 Visual checks on equipment should be carried out by the user at least 6 monthly.

4.5 Using Substances and Materials for Work at Home

- 4.5.1 The use of hazardous substances for work by homeworkers should be avoided where possible, especially if children or vulnerable adults are present in the house.
- 4.5.2 If absolutely necessary advice should be sought from the Health, Safety & Security Team.

4.6 Working with VDUs

- 4.6.1 The use of VDUs is covered by the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.
- 4.6.2 Employers have a duty to make sure that the display screen equipment used by homeworkers is safe and does not affect the user's health.

4.6.3 The minimum legal standard that is required within the Trust must also apply to a workstation in the home. The DSE e-learning package needs to be undertaken, a DSE Workstation Assessment must be completed (See COP12) and employees should be given a copy of the 'DSE User Guide' – see associated documents

5. Other Considerations

5.1 *Young Persons*

5.1.1 In the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 In addition to the employers' duty to [assess the health and safety risks](#) there are particular responsibilities towards young people:

- to assess risks to all young people under 18 years of age, **before** they start work;
- to ensure the risk assessment takes into account their psychological or physical immaturity, inexperience, and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks;
- to introduce control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- take account of the risk assessment in deciding whether the young people should be prohibited from certain work activities, except in specified circumstances.

5.2.1 In addition, young workers have special rights under the Working Time Regulations and further guidance should be sought if this is an issue, from your HR Advisor.

5.2 *New and Expectant Mothers*

5.2.1 New legislation required to implement the European Directive on Pregnant Workers was introduced in 1994 and is covered by the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

5.2.2 When assessing risks to the homeworker, the legislation requires the employer to pay attention to homeworkers who are new and expectant mothers. Risks include those to the unborn child or to the child of a woman who is still breast feeding – not just risks to the mother herself.

5.3 *First Aid*

5.3.1 Employers should consider any first-aid needs for the homeworkers. This is likely to depend on the nature of the work activity and the risks involved.

5.4 *Adverse Events*

5.4.1 Any accident/adverse event that occurs whilst the homeworker is working should be reported to their line manager and a Datix should be completed as normal. Any adverse event that results in the individual not being able to carry out their full

duties or results in more than seven days sickness should be reported the Health, Safety, & Security Department immediately.

5.5 Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Inspectors

5.5.1 HSE inspectors enforce the HASAWA and the regulations made under the HASAWA, that apply to homeworking. Inspectors visit employers and also have the right to visit homeworkers to ensure that risks from work and working at home are properly managed.

6. Endorsement

6.1 This code of practice will be approved and endorsed by the Health, Safety, Security and Environment Committee.

7. Distribution

7.1 Following endorsement this code of practice will be circulated to members of the Health, Safety, Security and Environment Committee by the author.

7.2 It is the author's responsibility to ensure that the document is published on Sharepoint.

8. References

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Manual Handling Operations Regulations
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992

9. Associated documents

9.1 Homeworking Risk Assessment

9.2 Risk Assessment Matrices

APPENDIX A

HOMEWORKING RISK ASSESSMENT

A homeworking risk assessment should be carried out for any individual working for North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust.

Load Handling

Handling loads can cause serious injury, particularly to the back. This checklist highlights some activities that may increase the risk:

	Yes	No	N/A
Handling loads that are heavy, bulky, difficult to grasp, or unstable			
Awkward Lifting, reaching or handling			
Pushing or Pulling			
Repetitive handling that does not allow enough rest time between loads			
Twisting and stooping			
Detail any other handling activities:			
If you have identified any load handling hazards what controls are in place to ensure the safety of the individual :			

If there is a tick in any of the **YES** boxes above, using the Trust Risk Assessment Matrix (see associated documents) and taking into account the current controls evaluate the risk:

Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H
Is this an acceptable risk: YES/NO		If NO what further controls should be put into place				
Further Controls:						
Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H

If possible employers should avoid the need for hazardous manual handling. For further advice and guidance contact the Moving & Handling Team.

Using Work Equipment at Home

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 cover the use of work equipment in the home.

	Yes	No	N/A
Is equipment correct for the job that is being done			
Has proper information and training been given on how to use the equipment, so that the job can be done properly and safely			
Is the equipment being used checked regularly and kept in a condition that does not cause harm to the homeworker or others			
Are the people testing the equipment or training the homeworker properly trained themselves so that they can provide the correct information and training			
Is the necessary personal protective equipment provided for using the work equipment safely; for example gloves are provided when working with needles.			
Detail any other equipment issues:			
If you have identified any work equipment hazards what controls are in place to ensure the safety of the individual :			

If there is a tick in any of the **NO** boxes above, using the Trust Risk Assessment Matrix (see associated documents) and taking into account the current controls evaluate the risk:

Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H
Is this an acceptable risk: YES/NO		If NO what further controls should be put into place				
Further Controls:						
Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H

Using Electrical Equipment for Work at Home

Most of the faults that can cause harm can be prevented just by looking for any damage to the electrical equipment . The safe use of electricity at work is covered by the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

Any damage to equipment must be reported to the Line Manager Immediately.

	Yes	No	N/A
Are the plugs damaged in any way			
Are the cables damaged in any way			
Are the domestic electrical systems adequate for the equipment			
Are all plugs correctly wired and maintained			
Is the outer covering of the cable or wire gripped where it enters the plug or equipment			
Is the outer cover of the equipment damaged in any way, check for loose parts or screws			
Are there any burn marks or staining that suggests overheating			
Are there any trailing cables/wires that could cause a tripping hazard or potential damage to the equipment			
Detail any other hazards associated with electrical equipment:			
If you have identified any electrical equipment hazards what controls are in place to ensure the safety of the individual :			

If there is a tick in any of the **YES** boxes above, using the Trust Risk Assessment Matrix (see associated documents) and taking into account the current controls evaluate the risk:

Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H
Is this an acceptable risk: YES/NO		If NO what further controls should be put into place				
Further Controls:						

Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H
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Using Substances and Materials for Work at Home

If hazardous substances are being used at home employees must have access to the product data sheets and a COSHH assessment must be completed.

	Yes	No	N/A
Are hazardous substances used for work purposes at home			
Are the flammable, toxic or corrosive			
Do they give off fumes			
Are they accessible by other members of the family i.e. children			
Have any of the following symptoms been suffered by any member of the household: Dizzy spells, Nausea, Headaches, Skin irritation, Shortness of Breath			
Detail any other issues relating to hazardous substances:			
If you have identified any hazardous substances what controls are in place to ensure the safety of the individual :			

If there is a tick in any of the **YES** boxes above, using the Trust Risk Assessment Matrix (see associated documents) and taking into account the current controls evaluate the risk:

Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H
Is this an acceptable risk: YES/NO	If NO what further controls should be put into place					
Further Controls:						
Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H

Working with VDUs

	Yes	No	N/A
Is the screen clear and readable and without flicker			
Is the screen free from glare and reflections			

Are the 'brightness' and 'contrast' controls properly adjusted to prevent eyestrain			
Is there suitable lighting so that the fine detail on the screen can be seen and read			
Is the keyboard placed in the right position to allow the homeworker to work comfortably			
Is the screen and computer clean: is it free from dust and dirt			
Can the chair be adjusted to the right height so that work can be done comfortably			
Is the VDU placed at the right angle on the work surface to allow work to be done comfortably, for example without having to make any awkward movements			
Is there enough space under the work surface to allow free movement			
Is there enough space in general so that the homeworker can move freely between the work on the work surface and the VDU			
Detail any other Workstation hazards:			
If you have identified any workstation hazards what controls are in place to ensure the safety of the individual :			

If there is a tick in any of the **NO** boxes above, using the Trust Risk Assessment Matrix (see associated documents) and taking into account the current controls evaluate the risk:

Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H
Is this an acceptable risk: YES/NO		If NO what further controls should be put into place				
Further Controls:						
Likelihood:	Severity:	Risk Rate:	L	M	S	H

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		Y/N/n/a	COMMENTS (where necessary)
1	Title of document Homeworking Code of Practice		
2	Type of document (e.g. guidance, code of practice) Code of Practice		
	Is it clear whether the document type is (e.g. guideline, procedure)?	Y	
3	Introduction		
	Are reasons for the development of the document clearly stated?	Y	
4	Content		
	Is there a standard front cover?	Y	
	Are the key points identified?	Y	
	Is the document in the correct format?	Y	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heading 1 (for main headings): Arial Bold 16 point; paragraph spacing 12pt before and 6pt after 	Y	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heading 2: Arial Bold Italic 14 point; paragraph spacing 12pt before and 3pt after 	Y	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body text: Arial Regular 12pt; align left; paragraph spacing 6pt after single line spacing 	Y	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraphs numbered consecutively 	Y	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footers: on every page except front page 	Y	
	Is the purpose of the document clear?	Y	
5	Approval Route		
	Does the document identify which committee/group will approve it?	Y	
6	Review Date		
	Is the review date identified?	Y	

If answers to any of the above questions is 'no', then this document is not ready for endorsement, it needs further review.

Compliance Team:			
1.	Date of Compliance Team approval	3rd August 2020	
2.	Comments to author for any amendments	28 th July 2020	
3.	Name of compliance lead	William O'Brien	
Approval Committee: HSSEC			
If the committee/group is happy to approve this document would the chair please sign below and send the document and the minutes from the approval committee to the author. To aid distribution all documentation should be sent electronically wherever possible.			
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Signature			
Ratifying Committee: HSSEC			
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