**HR Guidance – Managing working time during business continuity – COVID 19 Pandemic**

**Guidance for Managers**

Whilst we are in business continuity and reacting and responding to the pandemic situation it is recognised that it is important to ensure that the working hours of our staff do not become overly excessive or demanding which could adversely impact on wellbeing, resilience, patient care and safety. It is acknowledged that ensuring there are safe levels of staffing across inpatient services is extremely challenging and we are redeploying staff from other services to support and increase capacity across those services. This guidance is intended to provide clarity on our position relating to working time.

**Working Time Regulations for Staff**

As at the time of writing this guidance there is no change to the current working time procedure and no relaxing of the rules so that staff should not work beyond 48 hours per week on average, which is normally averaged over a17 week reference period. Rest breaks and rest periods should be adhered to wherever possible and there may be additional need for more rest breaks especially in those clinical areas where PPE is being worn following the guidance in (include the link to PPE).

**E-Roster**

Our e-Rostering system manages our working time based on the working patterns and rotas for all staff across the Trust. Built into the system are warnings where the working time regulations are going to be breached. These have been relaxed during this period and will show an amber warning rather than a red warning. There is central visibility of this by the e-Rostering team and they can provide support to managers if needed.

It is recognised that there will be critical times when managers will need to flex the working time regulations to meet patient or service need staff. When this happens managers should be aware of the impact on this and offer appropriate rest time when they can to staff.

No member of staff should be required or feel under pressure to work in excess of their contractual hours. The wishes of any individual who wishes to only work their contractual hours must be respected.

**Monitoring your staff’s wellbeing**

As a line manager it is even more important during this time to monitor your staff and teams wellbeing and ensure they are aware of the support on offer by the Trust and colleagues. Regular supervision and support is maintained. More information regarding the wellbeing support offered by the Trust can be found [here](http://staffnet2/employees/HealthandWellbeing).

**Annual Leave**

Supporting staff to take periods of annual leave is important to allow staff to recover and recuperate in these extremely busy and stressful times and Managers should proactively encourage staff to book and take leave during this time, even though we know we are limited in what we can do and where we can go. There may be occasions during critical times of staffing shortages that we may ask staff to cancel leave but we haven’t reached that position yet.

This also applies to those staff that are working from home as it is equally important to maintain work/life balance and for staff to book leave to have time away from work.

**Time owing**

Again wherever possible, whilst maintaining safe and optimum staffing levels, time owing should be taken and that continues to be a decision made at a local level. We are relaxing the rules regarding the period in which time owing can be taken by staff until the end of the calendar year.

However, managers need to be cautious about time owing building up and then causing/storing up staffing issues later in the year. If there is a build-up of time owing or this becomes unmanageable managers should decide whether this time should be paid time and this should be agreed with Head of Operations.

**Rest Facilities, accommodation and food provision**

All services and teams have been asked locally to identify rest areas where staff can have a quiet space to relax and rest. If any support is needed around this please contact the HR advice line and we support where we can with this.

Food provision is also available to staff in the form of meals and grab bags with snacks and drinks.

Hotel accommodation is available to staff who are working and want to shield family or other household members. If you want further information on this contact xxx

**You as Managers and role models**

It is as important that you as Managers role model behaviours and take opportunities where you can to take rest breaks, rest periods and annual leave as staff will follow your example.

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