

Manager's Guidance

Supporting Staff Working in the Office and Remotely

Last updated: 7 August 2020

1. Office working

Adjusting to the new ways of working in a Trust site may be a challenge for many managers and employees, and it can be easy to forget the measures the government and the Trust have implemented. Here, we share some guidance for managers on the people management aspects of supporting office workers and maintaining an effective working relationship.

1. Managers should complete a well-being assessment with staff in order to ascertain what measures/ steps should be taken to support staff.
2. Managers should encourage staff to work from home, where possible and only in the circumstances where staff are unable to operate at home should the return to an office be discussed following a wellbeing assessment. Occupational health can provide further guidance if needed. Please refer to the site plans for further guidance.
3. Across 9 of our sites (excl. Inpatient areas) we are making changes to our office settings to allow for social distancing, minimise the risk of infection and promote safe working practice. Below is a checklist to assist managers in having conversations with their direct reports if they are returning into an office and managers should look to go through this detail in a 1:1.

Checklist

Activity	Date completed
<p>Staff must not attend work feeling unwell with COVID19 symptoms. They must inform their manager and follow the guidance on NHS 111.</p> <p>Staff who become unwell at work must be sent home immediately.</p>	
<p>Test and Trace will identify any work contacts of staff who test positive: a risk assessment carried out by infection control will identify if any work contacts need to isolate to prevent virus transmission and the line manager will be informed</p>	
<p>When working in an office a 2 meter distance should be kept between people at all times</p>	
<p>Masks provided by the Trust must be worn in all locations. The only exception to this is when a person is alone in a room/office; however the mask must be worn whilst walking to and from such an area.</p>	
<p>Hands should be washed thoroughly throughout the day, especially before eating. Hand sanitiser used in between washes; particularly after you have come into contact with high touch points such as door handles, keyboards etc. Always clean your hands after removing your mask.</p>	
<p>DO NOT use work areas that are not assigned to you. Desks should be booked to one person for the day and you should clean touch points cleaned before and after use. Daily cleaning of desk space will occur at the end of each working day therefore it is vital that if a desk has been used by someone else during the day it is not used until the following day.</p> <p>Where it has been identified that weekend working occurs and staff are working in the management suites/ offices, there will be a daily clean in these sites at the end of each day.</p>	
<p>Prior to your working day you should wipe down the desk, phone, keyboard and other office equipment with the disinfectant wipes provided. Concentrate on any frequently touched points such as desk drawer handles. Wipes should be disposed of immediately in household waste.</p>	
<p>At the end of your working day you should wipe down all the office equipment you have used during your time in the office with the disinfectant wipes provided including but not limited to; phone, keyboard, monitors and desk. Concentrate on any frequently touched points such as desk drawer handles and dispose of the wipe immediately.</p>	
<p>Any kitchen supplies used throughout of the day should be returned to the kitchen and placed in the dishwasher. If you notice that the dishwasher is full please start the wash.</p>	
<p>IF you notice other colleagues utilising 'red' zones or not complying with the requirement to wear a mask you should remind the colleague politely of the requirements. Then escalate this to your manager and complete a Datix submission.</p>	
<p>Large meetings should be avoided with internal and external participants, instead video conferencing should be used</p>	

2. Supporting Remote Workers / staff working from home

Adjusting to homeworking may be a challenge for many managers and employees, particularly if they're used to working together face-to-face. Here, we share some guidance for managers on the people management aspects of supporting remote workers and maintaining an effective working relationship.

1. Maintain regular contact - managers should check in regularly with employees and their teams through phone calls or virtual meetings.
2. Set clear expectations - make sure that everyone working from home knows what is expected of them. This should include agreeing when employees will be available to work, how they will keep in touch, how performance will be managed, and who they should contact if they have any problems.
3. Provide regular updates - staff working remotely with need regular updates and communications in line with the rest of the workforce, which can be accessed through our regular staff bulletins, chief exec video conferences and more localised briefing sessions.
4. Use video calling as much as possible – video technology helps to maintain face-to-face contact with colleagues; this is an important part of how we relate to others.
5. Be flexible about when work is done - allow staff to work in the most productive way for them and the team, which may enable people to undertake both work and caring commitments.
6. Have longer one to one meetings - people at home can miss having a daily chat with colleagues and feel they are missing out on what is happening at work. Make up for it by setting aside more time for them to catch up.
7. Make time for non-work conversations – just as you would usually do in the workplace.
8. Be mindful of staff feeling isolated, lonely or experiencing a lack of team camaraderie - encourage team get-togethers and frequent interaction via face-to-face technology to build trust and rapport.
9. Talk about how work-life balance is managed - remote working can risk blurring the line between work life and home life, be mindful of this, be clear about expectations and refer to guidance on supporting employees to manage their health and wellbeing.

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