

## **1. Introduction**

The Covid-19 outbreak has necessitated a rapid switch for a number of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde employees to home working, on a temporary bases, so as to support the government's strategy to delay the spread of the virus. The move to home working and in some cases remote working from another location is enabling business continuity across a significant number of functions where such working arrangements can be accommodated.

For home working to be effective there are a number of approaches which both employers and employees can follow to ensure that individuals continue to be effectively supported whilst undertaking their roles from a different location and that vital work continues through to be undertaken.

This Guide has been developed in Partnership to support those staff who are working at home due to COVID-19.

## **2. What is Home Working?**

During the ongoing COVID19 outbreak, employers and individuals have been advised by the Government, to implement social distancing measures, to reduce social interaction between people, to reduce the transmission of the virus and to work from home where they can. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde are therefore extending the use of home working arrangements to an increased number of staff (where it is a viable option for the employee's role / circumstances) to enable and assist with the home working advice from the government and to ensure social distancing measures are adhered to.

## **3. Preparing for Homeworking**

There are a number of useful guides and support tools to help you work safely at home which are outlined and linked below for individuals reference:

ACAS have produced a comprehensive schedule of advice and guidance [Working from Home for employers and employees](#). The advice covers areas which need to be considered and addressed such as Health & Safety, Equipment and Technology, setting clear expectations and wider employment matters such as terms and conditions.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) have also published a series of tips ([Getting the most from remote working](#)) to help individuals and organisations make the most of remote working. The tips cover; online meetings, Managing remote teams and Working remotely.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde have pulled together a number of wellbeing resources and tools - <https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus/for-nhsggc-staff/staying-active-and-well-and-resting/> We want to encourage everyone to keep healthy during this unprecedented disruption to our daily life. This resource is to help with taking care of both your physical and mental health. This resource is intended to be organic and the content will be adapted as the situation changes and all staff are encouraged to visit the site and explore its content.

#### 4. Which employees should be considered for home working?

In line with the guidance issued from the Scottish Government, if you are able to perform your job from home you should do this - this is part of the Scottish and UK Government's measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

More specifically, home working, where viable, must be considered for the following employees;

- Those that work in either a critical or non-critical role but in accordance with the current Government Guidance and medical advice are advised to work from home or to be 'shielded' for a period of at least 12 weeks.

A list of these conditions can be found in the guidance for health & social care and emergency service workers with underlying health conditions via the following link:

<https://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/media/1701/guidance-for-health-and-social-care-and-emergency-service-workers-with-underlying-health-conditions-30-march-2020.pdf>

- Pregnant healthcare workers after 28 weeks' gestation or with underlying health conditions, and those aged over 70.

In addition to the above, all employees in critical roles must consider whether there are aspects of their role and working week, which can be undertaken from home. In such circumstances the normal pattern of the working week could be adjusted to consolidate such activity so as to reduce the number of days which they are required on an NHS site.

All managers must identify their critical and non-critical roles, within their department / function. In respect of the identified non-critical roles, managers will need to consider whether the role(s) are suitable for home working and if so what equipment and technology etc. is required and available to support it. If home working is not feasible then the staff member will be required to continue to attend work. If this is the case then social distancing measures will be put in place.

**Employees who are identified as working in non-critical roles and home working is a viable option, will be permitted to work from home on a temporary basis. These employees may be required to provide skeleton staff cover in their workplace and / or be deployed to work outside their normal role and / or in an unfamiliar department / workplace at another NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde site in order to maintain essential services. Training, induction and risk assessments will be carried out with employees who are deployed to another area.**

#### 5. What are the potential home working options for employees?

Managers will decide on the most appropriate home working model and arrangements for their employees working in non-critical roles and yet to be deployed to assist NHS GG&C to continue to provide essential services to our patients, donors and service users.

Managers must wherever possible enable and ensure that employees can continue to maximise their contributions, to meet the needs of the service and ensure, as far as is reasonably possible and practicable, that the NHS GG&C network can support robust workplace and home working arrangements during the COVID19 outbreak.

#### 6. Business Continuity

For business continuity, some employees may be required to work in smaller teams on a rotational bases (days, weeks - same working pattern and different places). This model will reduce to the minimum the number of non-critical employees required in the workplace, at any one time and support the government's aim to maximise working from home and social distancing measures.

Managers should ensure that, where it is essential for the support and delivery of core NHS services during the Covid-19 outbreak, that support departments / functions are required on NHS sites, that they have the minimum number of employees required to maintain a service on-site who are absolutely essential and who are providing services which cannot be delivered through off-site working. In these circumstances limited skeleton staff cover arrangements should be put in place.

The model will ensure that where it is essential for a department to remain open there will always be the smallest number of employees required to be working on a rostered basis in the department / function (skeleton workforce). This could, if required, enable staff from the wider team be deployed at short notice, to support other essential services across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

The model may help to reduce the feeling of social isolation that many employees may already be experiencing, at this time. It will also promote team working and the feeling of continuing to be part of a team at what is and will continue to be a very challenging time for our employees.

## **7. Logging onto the network when home working**

The following process should be adhered to, when logging onto the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde network to work from home, during the COVID19 outbreak;

- Log into the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde network via the FortiClient authentication process using your RAS token. This provides access to the NHS GG&C network through a Virtual Private Network (VPN)  
[http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Corporate%20Services/eHealth/BCS/RAS%20Documents/Remote%20Access%20\(Mar%202020\).pdf](http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Corporate%20Services/eHealth/BCS/RAS%20Documents/Remote%20Access%20(Mar%202020).pdf)
- eHealth has now given everyone access to Microsoft Teams, which can be used to help you stay connected to your team using a virtual office.

Microsoft Teams is a hub for team collaboration in Office 365 that integrates people, content, and tools you may need, particularly during the current situation when more of us are working from home.

The use of Teams will vary depending on your job role and department so please ask your line manager or team lead what meetings and functions they would like to carry out using this tool. To access guidance on the use of Teams:  
<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/media/259672/o365teamcomm201042020.pdf>

Employees do not need a VPN token to access Microsoft Office365, only access to home broadband.

## **8. Manager's responsibilities**

Managers have the following responsibilities where their employees are working from home during the COVID19 outbreak:

- It is appreciated that working from home may lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Managers must keep in regular contact with teams (wherever possible daily) and individuals are encouraged to access online assistance (Mind materials), organisational Employee Assistance Programmes and on-line resources etc. <https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus/for-nhsggc-staff/staying-active-and-well-and-resting/>
- Ensure that all employees who are working from home, complete a COVID19 Home Working Employee Risk Self-Assessment Form and where possible, address any identified issues. If the issue(s) cannot be resolved the employee should raise and discuss this with their manager
- Ensure the employee understands the agreed home working arrangement and whether they will be working alternate days/weeks at home;

- Ensure that the workload of employees is fair and equitable;
- Ensure so far as is possible that employees are provided with appropriate, safe and fit for purpose equipment and technology, to enable them to work productively from home e.g. a laptop (Microsoft Office365 and / or VPN);
- Ensure home working employees are allocated on a regular basis, appropriate work to undertake;
- Ensure that they monitor and review the performance and outputs of home working employees, against work plans on a regular basis, to ensure that the process is working effectively. The manager must be aware that there may be periods when an employee may not be able to work at home e.g. the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde network goes down for a period of time etc;
- Inform your line manager when an identified home working employee has recovered from a COVID19 related period of sickness, if they have been working while self-isolating.

## 9. Employee's responsibilities

Employee's will have the following responsibilities should they be working from home during the COVID19 outbreak:

- Inform their manager, if they do not have access to home Broadband or their Broadband cannot support home working, due to download speed or data allowance etc. The manager should consider what other types of work might be suitable, if IT systems are not accessible;
- Undertake their own COVID19 Home Working Employee Risk Assessment (**Appendix 1**)
- Take care of their own health and safety and that of other people in their home environment, during agreed home working shifts, days etc. (**Appendix 1, 2 and 3**);
- To adhere to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's IM&T, Data Protection and Information Governance policies and procedures;
  - Ensure that all NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde equipment / technology and documents are used correctly and appropriately at all times;
  - Ensure that equipment / technology and documents are properly secured in their home, at all times, to avoid theft, loss and damage.
  - Ensure when transporting equipment / technology and documents from work to home or home to work that these items are not left unattended and / or and unsecured at any time;
  - Ensure that any paper based data / information that is no longer required is appropriately destroyed e.g. using a cross-cut shredder or confidential waste disposal. If the employee is not able to shred, the documents must be appropriately stored and brought into the workplace to be shredded or destroyed as confidential waste at a future date.
- Employees should be aware that NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde regularly monitors computer usage, to ensure that it is not being misused.
- To maintain regular two way communication with their manager and team colleagues.
- To be contactable and available by telephone and / or email to their manager at all times within their agreed home working hours;
- To utilise their personal home Broad Band to access the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde network.

## 10. Health and Wellbeing Tips for Home Working

- ✓ Break up long spells of Display Screen Equipment work with rest breaks (at least five minutes every hour) or changes in activity
- ✓ Avoid awkward, static postures by regularly changing position
- ✓ Try to get up regularly and move
- ✓ Avoid eye fatigue by changing focus or blinking from time to time
- ✓ Telephone your colleagues instead of emailing them or use video calls for social interaction
- ✓ Leave your desk or working area at lunchtime
- ✓ Drink water regularly

**COVID19 HOME WORKING EMPLOYEE RISK SELF-ASSESSMENT**

<b>Employee's Name and Employee Number:</b>		<b>Department and Division:</b>			<b>Date of the Self-Assessment:</b>	
<b>Key: Level of Risk</b>						
 Of concern, early action needed  Acceptable but clear need for further action  Good but may need further action						
HAZARD	REGULATIONS		WHO MAY BE AFFECTED	CONTROL MEASURES IN PLACE	RECOMMENDATIONS	
<b>Display Screen Equipment</b>	The Health and Safety (DSE) Regulations 1992.	Upper limb strain from seating position or repetitive movement.	Home worker;	Machines provided are suitable for their intended purpose maintenance of machines is restricted to designated persons who have received adequate training;		  
<b>Work Equipment</b>	The Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER) Regulations 1998.	Trapping, entanglement, electrical risks, & musculoskeletal problems.	Home worker; family members; visitors;	Ensure work equipment is suitable for intended use; Ensure work equipment is safe for use, and maintained in a safe condition;		  
<b>Electricity</b>	Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.	Electric shock or fire.	Home worker; family members; visitors;	Plugs are correctly wired and maintained; Plugs, leads, wires and cables are checked regularly and kept in a condition that does not cause harm.		  
<b>Manual Handling of IT</b>	The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.	Musculoskeletal strain or injury,	Home worker; family members; visitors;	Avoid lifting heavy, bulky loads or materials; Avoid steps and steep ramp when lifting is necessary,		 

<b>equipment e.g. monitors</b>		particularly to the back.					
<b>Fire</b>	The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (The Order) See Health Board/Trust Fire Safety Policy for further legislation	Electric shock or fire.	Home worker; family members; visitors;	Smoke detectors fitted Exit is easily accessible from designated home working area			
<b>SECURITY</b>	<b>REGULATIONS</b>		<b>WHO MAY BE AFFECTED</b>	<b>CONTROL MEASURES IN PLACE</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
<b>Equipment</b>	General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act 2018 and associated legislation  The Computer Misuse Act 1990;		Your Health Board/ Trust	Individual can store equipment in a secure environment when not in use for business purposes			
<b>Documentation</b>	The EC Directive on Legal Protection of Databases 1996. Electronics Communications Act 2000 <u>Not exhaustive</u>			Individual can store documentation in a locked unit or similar when not in use  Ensure passwords are not disclosed to others			

**Important:**

**It is the responsibility of the employee to inform their manager of any issues / potential issues identified in the above Risk Self-Assessment and where circumstances change in respect of their COVID19 Home Working Risk Self-Assessment.**

**Employee's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The employee must retain their completed COVID19 Home Working Risk Self-Assessment Form for their personal records**

## The Health and Wellbeing of Ad Hoc Home Working Employees

### *Mental Health and Wellbeing*

#### *Why it's important?*

Working from home can be challenging and given the temporary but potentially significant duration of the changes in the national situation it is important that individuals are supported to look after their health and wellbeing.

High levels of anxiety, are somewhat to be expected due to the unclear and uncertain nature of what is occurring across the world as a result of the COVID19 outbreak. If you are worried, anxious, stressed or experiencing low mood etc. it can interfere with your ability to perform effectively in work.

#### *Helpful Tips*

If you are worried, anxious, stressed or experiencing low mood etc. and it is interfering with your ability to work (in the workplace and / or ad hoc at home), you should talk with your line manager in the first instance as would be the case in ordinary circumstances. It is also important to stay in contact with colleagues via the various means of communication i.e. telephone call, video calls etc.

Please refer to the following web-sites produced by NHG Greater Glasgow and Clyde which contain a range of health and wellbeing links and support:

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/your-health/health-issues/covid-19-coronavirus/for-nhsggc-staff/staff-support-and-wellbeing/>

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/working-with-us/staff-health/>

Mindfulness is a simple technique which can be used to alleviate stress and to calm down. It initially focuses on the breath and breathing helping to calm, moving on to trying to clear the mind. This is not always as difficult as it seems. We start slowly and build up the time after practice, trying to focus on one thing at a time. Here is a useful guide to a technique called Mindfulness Stress Reduction (MBSR). This technique has been used for years as a way to reduce stress and regain focus.

Click here for information on MBSR <https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/working-with-us/staff-health/mental-health-and-wellbeing/mindfulness/>

You will also find a number of blogs on mindfulness, sleep and anxiety here which might be useful / <https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/>

Mind have also produced a range of resources and tips on their website under the heading *Coronavirus and your wellbeing*, (<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>) which include how to plan and prepare for working from home or staying indoors:

Common themes in the available online advice to look after your mental wellbeing include:

- Limiting social media use;
- Getting fresh air and going for a walk (avoid contact with others and obey social distancing rules);
- Catching up with friends – perhaps you could try a video call every evening with a family member or friend so that you can have a chat over a cup of tea;
- Eating well;
- Getting enough sleep;
- Make sure you take regular rest breaks including a lunch break away from your home working environment, if possible.

## The Health and Safety of Ad Hoc Home Working Employees Musculo-Skeletal Disorders

Most home working will be undertaken using either a table or desk (if the employee already has one set up at home). It is important that home working work does not increase your risk of developing some kind of MSD. It is therefore very important that you assess your workstation before you start work, on a daily basis, to ensure that any adjustments required are made, to ensure you are comfortable, correctly and safely.

### *Helpful Tips*

Undertake a daily Workstation Assessment using the checklist below:

#### **Workstation Checklist**

- Is your seat back adjustable?
- Do you have good lumbar support?
- Is your seat height adjustable?
- Is there excess pressure on underside of thighs and backs of knees? If so a foot support is needed?
- Are you feel flat on the floor or on a foot rest?
- Have you sufficient space for postural change i.e.no obstacles under your workstation?
- Is your mouse close to the body?
- Are your wrists excessively bent (up, down or sideways)?
- Is your screen height correct and angled to allow a comfortable head position?
- Is your display screen at approximately arm's length, with the top of the screen at your eye level?
- Is your chair stable and ideally adjustable?
- Is your keyboard tiltable and separate from your, with sufficient space for hands and arms?
- Is your work surface large enough for a comfortable layout of screen, keyboard, mouse, documents and other related materials>.

**Please note** it is recommended that you undertake a workstation assessment on a daily basis, to support your COVID19 Home Working Employee Risk Self-Assessment.

#### **Eye Strain**

Long spells of computer work can lead to tired eyes and discomfort, caused by screen glare, poor image quality etc. Possible symptoms are soreness of the eyes and headaches.

### *Helpful Tips*

To avoid these symptoms, proper care needs to be exercised in your home working environment. Ensure your computer is well positioned and properly adjusted. Take frequent breaks your computer. Ensure you have adequate lighting levels with additional levels of light, if there is no natural light in the room you are working in.