

## HOME WORKING FAQs – JUNE 20

**Q 1. I have agreed with my line manager that I can work from home. However, they have asked me to take on different tasks, is this allowed?**

Anyone who is working from home should agree their workload and tasks with their line manager as they normally would. To allow for home working and social distancing in the workplace this may involve changing tasks within the team. For example, home workers may be asked to carry out more admin tasks while staff in the workplace or carry out more practical tasks. Any changes should be reasonable and ensure the health and safety of all are maintained. This should also be within the scope of the individual's existing job description.

**Q2. I can work from home but due to my childcare commitments, I am struggling to work my traditional office hours, what should I do?**

NHS Lanarkshire has a Flexible Working Policy. It is recognised that there are several factors at the moment which impact on an individual's work life balance. Where appropriate, employees should discuss and agree temporary flexible working arrangements in line with the policy. This could include a temporary reduction in hours or changing days of the working week or work patterns. Employees should not be disadvantaged in relation to childcare commitments, however, should have an open discussion in relation to temporary changes to working patterns to allow the needs of the individual and organisation to be met.

**Q3. What if I don't have all the requirements in place through the risk assessment. Can I still work from home?**

One of the aims of the risk assessment is to encourage a meaningful discussion between the manager and employee. It is recognised that the home working arrangements were put in place during an unprecedented pandemic. Where not all requirements can be immediately met through the risk assessment, a discussion should take place between the employee and manager to put reasonable adjustments in place.

Reasonable adjustments may include, but are not limited to, changes to the working week, allowing the individual to take home their monitor or desk chair, agreeing a different set of work or tasks than normally undertaken.

**Q4. I can evidence that I can carry out part or all of my work from home as per Government Guidance for COVID 19. Why has my line manager refused to facilitate this?**

Where a line manager and employee disagree on homeworking this should be discussed in detail to fully understand the concerns of both parties. If appropriate, reasonable adjustments should be put in place to support home working while continuing to deliver a service to patients.

**Q5. Can I claim back the cost of broadband, heating, etc while working at home?**

As working at home is deemed temporary in response to ensuring staff and patient safety, reimbursement of expenses is not applicable within the Home Working Policy. Should the temporary nature of the situation change, then this would be covered within the policy guidelines.

**Q6. NHS Lanarkshire Has a Home Working Policy. Does this now mean that I am a Home Worker or Teleworker?**

No. The arrangements put in place during this pandemic are temporary and subject to change as the situation changes and the guidance from the Scottish Government changes. There is no change to the individual's Terms and Conditions.

### **Q7. As a Manager of Staff Working from Home how do I best support them ?**

As a manager, here are a number of suggestions for supporting your staff:

- Maintain regular contact through 1:1s and team meetings- ask the question ‘how are you’
- When running virtual team meetings take the time to check in at the beginning- how is the team and allow that time for casual sharing and conversation that often happens at the beginning of meetings
- Set clear objectives / expectations
- Encourage self –care: ensure members of staff know it is OK to take breaks and to invest the time in taking care of physical and emotional wellbeing - you are not micro managing them
- Some further guidance can be found here



Homeworking -  
support for manage

### **Q8. What do I do if a home worker is not performing as they should ?**

Performance management of staff who work from home should be consistent with that of all staff regardless of site. It would be advisable to focus all assessments on work produced and whether or not objectives have been met. If a manager has concerns, they should have a supportive discussion first as this may clear up misunderstandings or help them understand the problem. The manager can then provide support if necessary. But, if the homeworker’s performance does not improve, the manager may need to act further in line with the organisation’s capability policy.

### **Q9. What do I do if I think someone is over working**

It is advisable for a line manager to monitor homeworkers to make sure they do not over-work. Some staff who work from home can feel the need to work too hard as justification for working from home. A manager who recognises that a homeworker is over-working should have a supportive discussion with them as a first step to establish the rationale for the increased workload and subsequently review in order that the individual has an acceptable workload. Reiterate the requirement to take breaks and avoid excessive hours if possible.

### **Q10. My staff members appraisal is due – will I have to bring them into the office for this**

You should ask your staff member to prepare for their appraisal as normal and if you and they are happy, you can carry out the appraisal remotely using Microsoft teams or on the phone if either of you don’t have access to Microsoft teams

### **Q11. What do I do if a member of staff requests to work at home for their own safety because of concerns around social distancing in the workplace?**

If they have the IT/ equipment to work safely and effectively at home should they be allowed to do this as long as appropriate contact/ clinical supervision is in place as per Home working policy. The manager should ensure the workplace is safe (PPE, social distancing etc.) and reassure the staff member accordingly.

**Q12. Is there training available to support me to manage my time while working from home?**

There are a number of digital learning resources available to all staff via online learning on the links below:

- [Learn pro](#) : Time Management module with the CPD tab
- [Academy 10](#) on line learning (2 certificate programmes, 27 tutorials plus e-briefings

[Good Practice site](#) on the [Knowledge Network](#) – 83 learning items on time management which include self-assessment, theory, hints

**Q13. Will there be general training and development to support me in career progression during COVID 19 pandemic period?**

There are a number of teams who deliver learning across NHSL, all teams are currently investigating and planning how we can continue to deliver learning in a safe environment, please contact the relevant team to find out more information on training available.

**Q14 I understand that there will be no changes to my terms and conditions of service while working from home. Is this the case?**

Yes, this is correct. Any amendments to working patterns, hours, location, etc should be agreed on a temporary basis and reviewed as appropriate.

**Q15. I need to attend manual handling/PaMoVA is it safe to do so?**

Manual handling and Violence and Aggression Face to face training is still going ahead for all essential training and up skilling where required, and appropriate PPE is provided for the training. All mandatory face to face training for both Manual Handling and Violence and aggression have a one year extension added to their expiry date as a result of the Covid -19 situation.

**Q16. Is it legal for me to still work if my training has lapsed?**

NHSL have a legal duty to ensure staff are safe at work. As per the Staff Governance Standards all staff should be appropriately trained and developed. Training and development will take many forms and NHS Lanarkshire has detailed information about Compulsory and Mandatory Training (<http://firstport2/resources/learning/Information%20for%20All%20Staff/The%20Learning%20Plan%2019%20-21.pdf>). Employees and managers should ensure that the relevant training is completed and up to date. Where Learnpro modules have lapsed, the manager should ensure that the employee undertakes the appropriate module and training at the start of their next working day to ensure compliance.

**Q17. Whilst home working can I still apply for internal jobs?**

Yes as normal. No worker will be discriminated due to the requirement of home working.