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| **Home Working Policy** | |
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| **Post Holder Responsible for Policy:** | Directorate HR Manager |
| **Directorate Responsible for Policy:** | Human Resources |
| **Contact Details:** | Human Resources Department  Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust  Salisbury District Hospital  Salisbury  Wiltshire  SP2 8BJ |
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| 1.1 | Nick Child | 09/09/2011 | Minor changes to reflect new IT policies. |
| 1.2 | Nick Child | 17/07/2013 | Changes to sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 13. Addition of new Equality Analysis, Implementation Plan and Privacy Impact Assessment. |
| 1.3 | HR Advisor | 05/07/2016 | Rewrite, change of definitions, assessment criteria & amalgamation of appendices |

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| **1. Introduction** |
| The Trust is committed to supporting staff to work in ways that benefit both the individual and the organisation and as far as possible operates flexible working practices for eligible staff, and home working forms part of those flexible working arrangements.  The drivers for allowing certain staff to work from home can either be in response to an individual employees personal circumstances or to a need to produce a specific piece of work, or working in a way that can not be accommodated through attendance in the office whether on a single occasion or by way of an agreed regular pattern of working.    The benefits for the Trust and the individual can include:-     * Improved efficiency and effectiveness * Retention of trained employees who might otherwise have to leave for domestic reasons resulting in savings on the recruitment and training of new staff * Greater freedom to manage workloads * Greater job satisfaction and personal responsibility * May help reduce demand for parking on site and will support the Trust's Green Travel Plan * Greater flexibility for combining work and domestic commitments * Supporting the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy, for example home working may constitute a reasonable adjustment     This policy does not discriminate and applies to all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, specifically: age, race, sex, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, transgender, religion or belief, disability and gender reassignment. |
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| **2. Definitions** |
| The following terminology will be used throughout this policy:    **Homeworking:** This is where the prime location for the employee is at their home. The home, in part or as a whole is designated as a workplace.  The designation is such that a more stringent set of criteria is invoked.  Declaration to HMRC for tax purposes, planning permission from the local authority, notification to the individuals insurers, landlord or mortgage supplier is potentially required.    For homeworkers, an assessment of suitability is required prior to any agreement.  This would be completed jointly by HR/IT and Health and Safety in advance of any agreement.    **Occasional home working:** This is where work which is carried out, typically on an ad hoc basis, at home to do a particular piece of work or for a pre-agreed period.  The employee would retain a dedicated office workstation at their normal place of work or other desk sharing arrangement dependent on team arrangements. However, they would not be provided with the same level of IT and other support in the home environment.  The designation of their dwelling is still a private domestic premise.    **Small Communication Devices** : Lap tops and i-pads are expected to meet the full requirements of the DSE regulations.  Devices such as an i-phone or a blackberry are also subject to the regulations but have a degree of interpretation as technology rapidly changes.  It is recommended for these devices that more frequent breaks are taken and that they are used for a maximum of 20 minutes continually before resting. |
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| **3. Statement of Principles** |
| The Trust will facilitate and support home working where it meets the needs of both the individual and the Trust, and the work to be done, and where the role of the employee is suitable to be done from a home location.  To work from home, in whatever capacity, is driven by the needs of the individual and not as a requirement of the organisation.    All employees will be treated equitably, whether they are home or office based.    All home workers, whether contractual or informal arrangements exist, will be expected to comply with Trust policies and procedures in particular with regard to Data Protection, confidentiality including the secure disposal of waste and other documents, security and Health and Safety.    Computers and other electronic equipment will be used in accordance with the following Trust policies:    ·      Security policy  ·      Acceptable use of IT policy  ·      Data Protection and Confidentiality    ·      Whether the person is a homeworker or occasional home worker, the interactive assessment in the Trusts DSE policy must be completed and a copy sent to the manager.  The assessment criteria are low, very low, medium, high and very high.  Any assessment medium or above must be notified to H&S before proceeding with computer work.    ·       You must also complete the DSE computer based training package on the MLE in order to take the risk assessment at the end.    Patient data, or documents relating to identifiable data subjects, must not be processed on personal IT equipment. If this facility is needed, the Trust will supply suitable IT equipment which may be inspected or called in for inspection at any time.  When the equipment is no longer needed, it must be returned to the Informatics department in order to be securely "cleaned". |
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| **4. Eligibility for Home working** |
| Where home working on a permanent basis is under consideration, Line Managers need to address the following issues:     * The suitability and compatibility of the job, the person and the home work environment which will need to be inspected by the Manager; * Robust mechanisms for communication and progress reporting against objectives; * The health and safety, financial, HR and IT issues involved; * The impact on the level of service delivery, efficiency or effectiveness; * Confirm details of the home working arrangements agreed in writing to the employee by the Line Manager and the employee's employment contract will be amended; * Agree mechanisms to regularly monitor and review Home working arrangements to ensure their continued effectiveness, particularly in terms of service delivery and impact on colleagues, or to bring the arrangement to an end if it is no longer appropriate to continue the Home working arrangement or where there has been abuse of the privilege; * Establish with the employee the specific times when they will be working or contactable, specify the requirements for attendance on site for meetings, supervision sessions and the annual leave and sickness procedures to be followed     Managers will ensure the suitability of the workplace such as:    ü  Permanent residence with privacy and no distraction  ü  Guaranteed security of Trust property, information and data confidentiality  ü  No other work practices taking place unless it is in a segregated area with no impact on the employee or their work  ü  An implicit requirement from the employee to notify their manager if any of the above are compromised    Managers will ensure that home working employees do not become isolated and that they are helped to feel part of the work team. They will ensure that regular contact is maintained with the home worker and that this involves:-    (i) Regular contact and support, which may include visits from the Line Manager or meetings in the office or at other venues.  (ii) Keeping employees informed of all relevant section, departmental and corporate developments which impact on their work and them as Trust employees.  (iii) Formal supervision through management guidance and Staff Development Reviews  (iv) Providing training, personal development and other opportunities available to office-based staff |
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| **5. Eligibility for Occasional Home working** |
| There is no right for employees to work at home and any such working is entered into on a voluntary basis.  A home working agreement can be put in place following completion of Trust and local induction programmes at the Line Manager's discretion.    To work effectively, home working has to primarily meet the business needs of the service as well as those of the individual.  Whilst not all jobs are suitable for regular home working, any request will be considered on its own merits.  Jobs that involve project work, with an identifiable output may be suitable for working from home.  Jobs that are unlikely to be suitable or practical are those that provide a direct service to patients, for example staffing a reception area, daily direct management of or responsibility for a team and those that require specialist equipment provided at the workplace.    All home working must be subject to the prior agreement of the individual's manager, on the basis that clear outputs are identified in advance, which can be checked and monitored.  The manager should be able to contact the person working at home at any time of the agreed working day, which in some situations may differ from the usual working times.  Monitoring productivity of home working is the Manager's responsibility and both regular and occasional home working are linked to performance management practice.    All home workers will be required to sign a home working agreement and DSE Workstation Risk Assessment before being allowed to work from home.    Approved home working arrangements will be subject to an agreed trial period before final agreement. If thought necessary, the trial period may be extended. Any such arrangement may be brought to an end following a period of no less than four weeks at the Manager's discretion.    Where an application for home working is agreed following a successful trial period, it may be brought to an end following due consultation and an appropriate period of notice.  Such agreements to allow a member of staff to work from home whether on an occasional or regular basis should be reviewed by the member of staff's Line Manager on a regular basis and at least annually.    The final agreement to support regular home working will rest with the Executive Director responsible for the department, advised by Human Resources, who will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant issues are properly addressed. This will ensure a consistent approach across the Trust. |
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| **6. If a request is declined** |
| Reasons for any refusal to agree to a work from home request should be given to the employee in writing and the Line Manager may consider reviewing the request after a further period. |
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| **7. All Home Working** |
| The following guidelines should be considered for occasional home working:-    (i) Working at home will be authorised in advance by the employee's Line Manager or Head of Service for the purpose of carrying out specific tasks agreed with the manager.  Managers will monitor and check the work undertaken by staff working from home.  (ii) Employees will be contactable at home during their agreed working hours by the Line Manager/Supervisor and other Trust employees.  (iii) Employees will be available to attend meetings or training courses as required by their Line Manager.  (v) Working at home by employees should not create additional workloads for other employees or otherwise affect operational efficiency and effectiveness.  (vi) Normal time recording records will be completed.  (vii) Any specific health and safety issues should be identified and dealt with by the home worker, advising or escalating immediately to the Line Manager as appropriate. |
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| **8. Home Workers Insurance** |
| Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust will be not be responsible for employee liability insurance or the insurance of any equipment supplied and arrangements must be made to ensure that this cover is provided by the employee's own insurance.    It is the responsibility of the home worker to provide adequate home buildings and contents insurance.  The Trust will not accept liability for damage caused to the home or its contents arising from home working.    It is the home worker's responsibility to inform their insurers that they are working from home. |
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| **9. Information and Management Technology (IMT) Support** |
| Line Managers will ensure that each decision to allow home working is based on a sound financial and business case and that they have funding available.  IMT advice, equipment and systems will be subject to review or updating in the light of technical developments, availability, costs and other factors.  Where additional phone lines/broadband connections, hardware or software are required to be used in the Home worker's home, these costs will be borne by the Department and not by the Informatics or Facilities departments.    Data security is a particular concern for home working and this policy should be read in conjunction with the Security policy; Acceptable use of IT policy and Data Protection and Confidentiality policy.    If there is a theft of Trust equipment, the employee must obtain a police report.  If the police report highlights negligence on behalf of the employee, then the Trust is within its right to seek compensation for their loss.    If there is damage to equipment where the employee is considered to have been irresponsible or negligent with Trust equipment, then the disciplinary procedure will be followed.    Equipment must not be used for personal use, as this may make it a taxable benefit. |
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| **10. Health and Safety** |
| Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust is responsible for employees' safety at work and this applies to home working.  However, the employee also has an obligation to ensure that they take reasonable care not to harm themselves or others.    The Trust reserves the right to check the employee's work area, with prior consent from the employee at home, for health and safety purposes.  The need for such inspections will depend on the nature of the work undertaken or because of a reported incident. |
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| **11. Security and Confidentiality** |
| All employees who work at home are responsible for ensuring the security of Trust property and all Trust information, files, documents etc. within their possession.    They must adhere to Trust policies on the safe disposal of confidential material, including anything on headed paper, data and information stored on portable devices (CDs, memory sticks etc).  Any paper waste must not be disposed of with household waste. |
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| **12. Costs** |
| For regular homeworkers the Trust will reimburse reasonable expenses incurred on production of receipts and will provide appropriate equipment to enable staff to work at home.  It is the Home Worker's responsibility to ensure that Trust equipment is not used inappropriately for example for non-work related purposes. |
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| **13. Changes** |
| The home working agreement is not intended to confer any enduring contractual obligations in relation to the employment contract and may be amended, or withdrawn, subject to appropriate discussion with the employee and appropriate workplace resettlement. |
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| **14. References** |
| Health & Safety Guidance Note INDG226  ACAS Homeworking – A guide for employers and employees |
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| **15. Appendices** |
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