



Title:	Interim Remote / Homeworking – Ambulance Service H&S Procedure		
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Ownership:	Dr Nigel Ruddell, Medical Director		
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1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Out of sight does not mean out of mind.

1.1 Background:

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) recognises that it can achieve its objectives and provide the highest quality of service, whilst providing greater flexibility for staff.

There are many benefits and opportunities for the Trust in the implementation of remote and homeworking. Benefits include improvements in motivation and health and wellbeing as a result of better work/life balance. There may also be productivity gains (due to fewer interruptions) and potentially even improved employee retention along with access to a wider pool of applicants. There are also financial benefits and opportunities with regards to reconfiguration of office accommodation and a reduction in requirements for car parking.

Working remotely and/or at home, either on a laptop, desktop PC or carrying out paper-based work is a low risk activity however there are some risks as the normal health and safety arrangements (for example Display Screen Equipment Assessments) may not be in place, and staff may feel disconnected and/or isolated. There may also be increased physical security and data security risks. Through this Procedure, the Trust aims to ensure adequate control measures are in place in order to mitigate these risks, i.e. workstation assessment, data security guidance and arrangements for regular contact and support.

1.2 Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to establish suitable arrangements for remote and homeworking for NIAS. It has been developed to allow the Trust to derive the benefits of remote and homeworking whilst ensuring the protection of its assets, the integrity of its data, effective health and safety arrangements for staff.

1.3 Objectives:

- Realise the opportunities associated with remote and homeworking.
- Define remote and homeworking.
- Identify accountability and responsibility for health and safety, equipment and data.
- Reduce where possible the risk from home working.
- Provide a clearly understandable procedure, templates etc.

2.0 SCOPE:

This procedure applies to staff whose roles are considered suitable for homeworking. Roles suitable for homeworking include those which require a high degree of concentration with very limited interaction and can be done at home in isolation from colleagues, also included are those roles which derive limited benefit from an office base. Roles not suitable for homeworking include those where there is a high element of face-to-face contact, such as patient facing roles, public interface roles such as receptionists, personal secretaries where there is a requirement to provide face to face support for management, and operational roles such as vehicle cleaning and fleet maintenance.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

3.1 Chief Executive:

The Trust's Chief Executive has, on behalf of Trust Board, overall responsibility for staff health and safety / working at home.

3.2 Directors:

Directors are responsible for ensuring that the necessary arrangements are in place for the Trust to be able to manage remote and homeworking activities.

3.3 Assistant Directors:

Assistant Directors are responsible for the implementation of this procedure within their areas of responsibility.

3.4 Assistant Director Information & Communications Technology (AD ICT):

The AD ICT has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of ICT related security measures, and ensure that appropriate documentation is in place to this effect, with regards to remote and homeworking, this includes:

- Advising users of information systems, applications and networks of their responsibilities.
- Creating, maintaining, giving guidance on and overseeing the implementation of ICT Security.
- Ensuring that risks to ICT systems are reduced to an acceptable level by applying security countermeasures identified following an assessment of the risk, or where risks are identified these are managed in line with the Trusts Risk Management Strategy.
- Ensure breaches of policy and recommended actions are reported in line with organisation's procedures.
- Procuring and providing suitable equipment for remote and homeworking.

3.5 Risk Manager:

The Risk Manager is responsible for:

- The development of suitable procedures and arrangements to ensure that risks to the Trust as a result of remote and homeworking activities are reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Providing specialist advice and guidance to the Trust on remote and homeworking in relation to the health and safety of staff.
- Making arrangements for governance and assurance around remote and homeworking, including providing information to the Health and Safety Committee, Safety, Quality, Experience and Performance Committee, Trust Board etc. as necessary.

3.6 Line Managers of Remote & Homeworkers:

Line managers with responsibility for remote and homeworkers must ensure:

- Appropriate consideration of the application for remote homeworking, taking into account the individual circumstances and the needs of the Trust. Advice should be sought from HR regarding staff with conduct, attendance, disciplinary or performance issues.
- That the staff member's absence from the workplace will not increase workload / create problems for other staff and / or mean that business objectives are not being met.
- That all staff are aware of this procedure and the appropriate provisions have been made for health and safety, including self-assessments, DSE assessments and risk assessments. **Assessments must take place within four weeks of the implementation of this Procedure, or prior to commencing a homeworking arrangement. All records should be held by the line manager.**
- Health and Safety Training and DSE Training is up to date as per NIAS Statutory/Mandatory Training Policy.
- Any electrical faults/concerns are addressed, and equipment which requires portable appliance testing (PAT) is returned for testing to the workplace as frequency dictates (frequently can be confirmed with the Estates Team).
- That staff are monitored to ensure that they take reasonable steps to reduce the risks from home working.
- Regular contact is made with remote and homeworkers and adequate lines of communication are maintained. This includes advice on any new/changed policies, procedures etc., reasonable access to all relevant information, etc. As a minimum, meetings/telephone calls/video conferencing should take place at least once a week.
- That individuals have the correct equipment to undertake their allocated work tasks.
- That individuals are suitably trained for the tasks allocated, including the use of any associated equipment (note that specific training may be needed for home and remote workers).
- ICT and Data Protection Policies and Procedures are adhered to.
- That effective procedures are in place for fault reporting, raising of concerns, etc. and that such are recorded and acted upon in a timely fashion.
- Clear expectations are set and any productivity measures are agreed (outcomes of work rather than hours worked, for example a particular task will be completed by Friday). For further information please see Appendix 3.

There may be occasions where the Trust cannot permit homeworking either operationally or based on the outcome of a risk assessment. There is however generally no need to visit a homeworker at their home unless a specific concern has been raised.

3.7 All Remote & Homeworkers:

All staff engaged in remote and homeworking must ensure:

- Permission is sought in writing in the first instance to work at home from the line manager.
- Suitable facilities are available to effectively carry out the role, and due consideration is given to any others who may be affected by the work (consider family, neighbours, etc.).
- Health and Safety Training and DSE Training is up to date as per NIAS Statutory/Mandatory Training Policy.
- Compliance with this Remote and Homeworking Procedure, the required Remote and Homeworking Self-Assessment completed and findings reported to line management. Assessments should be reviewed on a regular basis and when it is suspected that it is no longer valid (moving house, significant relocation of work equipment etc.). This must take

place within four weeks of the implementation of this Procedure or prior to commencing a homeworking arrangement. All records should be held by the line manager.

- Awareness of and adherence to all relevant H&S policies and procedures, including Display Screen Equipment and Incident Reporting (see SharePoint).
- Any equipment and/or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplied in association with work is use as appropriate, and in the correct manner.
- To report any electrical faults/concerns including equipment which requires portable appliance testing (PAT) to be carried out (stickers can be checked and frequently can be confirmed with line management who can link with the Estates Team if necessary).
- The line manager is notified of any changes in circumstances, whether physical or personal, that could impact on working conditions.
- Regular breaks are taken, and the work day does not regularly extend into the evening.
- Any faults, concerns or pain or discomfort arising are reported. For further information please see Appendix 2 and the NIAS DSE Procedure.
- Any underlying health condition affecting work are reported to line management urgently.
- Regular contact and communication with line management takes place, attendance at appointments/meetings etc. as required by the Trust. As a minimum, meetings/telephone calls/video conferencing should take place at least once a week.
- Arrangements for working hours/availability etc. is agreed in advance, (for example if childcare is required up until 9:30am, when the contracted hours will be completed).
- Domestic arrangements such as childcare/carer arrangements are in place during working hours.
- Trust HR Procedures, annual leave/flexi leave procedures etc. are adhered to.
- Any sickness must be reported in line with the relevant Policies and Procedures.
- ICT and Data Protection Policies and Procedures are adhered to.
- Contact is made with the home insurer, mortgage provider or landlord to make sure adequate cover arrangements are in place.
- That they are contactable during working hours and appropriate contact details are provided to the line manager. Contact details should also be clearly indicated in 'out of office' emails and calendars when not in the office.
- The agreed work objectives set out by the line manager are delivered on a timely basis.
- Any desk phone should be diverted to a mobile or landline number on home working days.
- Any equipment/mobile device(s) etc. is returned to line management or to ICT when employment ceases or there is a change in role.

It must be noted that NIAS, as an employer, does have statutory duties to ensure, so far as is practicable, a safe working environment and, failure to adhere to the relevant policies and procedures can result in the withdrawal of authority to work from home/remotely.

NOTE: the decision to permit a member of staff to work from home is a management decision based on the needs of the organisation and can be withdrawn at any time with immediate effect (in most circumstances however staff will be provided with four weeks' notice).

4.0 KEY PRINCIPLES:

4.1 What is Remote/Homeworking?

Types of remote and homeworking:

Remote / Mobile Working	This is work undertaken away from the main office base, which is enabled through the use of mobile devices/information and communication technologies, so that a member of staff may alternate between their main office base (contractual base) and other suitably equipped locations, e.g. nominated offices / establishments, shared facilities and on occasions from home.
Occasional (ad-hoc) working from home	This is defined as work undertaken at home on an occasional basis. The employee retains access to an office workstation at their normal place of work.
Regular working from home	This is where an employee spends a regular proportion of their contracted hours working from home e.g. 3 days out of 5. The employee retains access to an office workstation at their normal place of work.

4.2 Legislation:

There is no specific “home/remote working” legislation, but many aspects of health and safety legislation will apply, to both the employer and the member of staff. The following is a summary:

4.2.1 *The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978:*

The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 places a general duty on NIAS to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, its employees at work, including remote/homeworkers, whilst also placing a duty on employees to take reasonable care of themselves, and any others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, and to comply with reasonable policies and procedures implemented by the employer.

In relation to home/remote working greater responsibility is inherently placed on the individual employee(s) given that options for supervision, control etc. are generally significantly reduced.

4.2.2 *The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000:*

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 require that a suitable and sufficient assessment be undertaken by the employer (or line manager) taking into account the risks to the health and safety of their employees whilst at work, and the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking.

In the workplace, risk assessments are generally undertaken by line managers (in conjunction with the relevant staff) and they must be reviewed on a regular basis or if there is any reason to suspect they are no longer valid. However, with remote / homeworkers there are significant logistical problems with line managers assessing numerous individual workplaces which, when combined with the issue of the locations being private residences, it is more practical and effective for individual employees to complete their own risk assessments, which are duly monitored by line managers, with adequate support and assistance available as required (Risk Management Team).

4.2.3 The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (NI) 1992:

Setting up the workstation correctly at home is equally as important as in the office, and the same principles apply. Where a workstation is being used for Trust business then it must be assessed including use of an appropriate chair and surface/table, and ergonomic issues must be considered. **For further information, please see Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Ambulance Service Health and Safety Procedure.**

4.2.4 Fire & Electrical Safety:

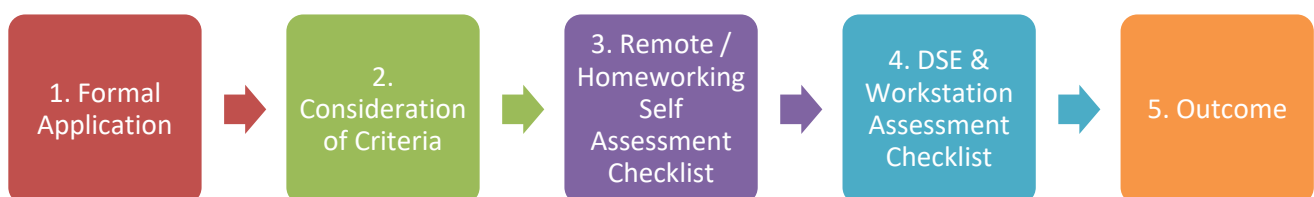
Domestic premises are not strictly covered by workplace fire and electrical safety legislation. Staff are responsible for fire and electrical safety in their homes. The following however is useful to consider:

- Working smoke detectors should be fitted, and subject to regular checks.
- Consideration should be given to fire extinguishers.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors should be fitted where appropriate;
- Heating appliances should be suitable for the task, and where any portable radiant heaters are used they should be positioned where there is no risk of causing a fire and/or burning people, including children.
- Gas and/or electrical appliances must be properly installed and maintained by competent persons, and equipment should be switched/turned off when not in use.
- All individuals should have an emergency escape plan; know how to exit quickly and safely in the event of a fire. Exit routes should be clear and unimpeded.
- Any equipment provided by the Trust should be regularly tested (PAT).
- Be aware of the fire risks associated with overloading electrical points and the usage of multi-block adapters.

Fire and electrical safety in the home is applicable to everyone, whether working from home or not. The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) is willing to carry out a home fire safety check, and competent electricians can be contacted. Please make contact with them if you feel this is necessary.

4.3 Application Process:

This procedure outlines the steps that should be taken by both employees and managers in consideration of working from home arrangements. For all employees who were permitted to and continue to work from home as a result of COVID-19 the appropriate line manager must complete and retain the pro-forma contained in Appendix 5. All future new working arrangements employees and managers must follow the below process.



4.3.1 STEP 1 – Formal Application:

Employees who wish to be considered for working from home should contact their line manager in writing with the request.

4.3.2 STEP 2 – Consideration of criteria to assess suitability:

A meeting should be held as soon as practicable between the employee and the manager to discuss the suitability of working from home arrangements. Where managers are extending current working from home arrangements which have been in place during COVID it is expected that they will hold regular meetings with their teams to communicate extended arrangements and where appropriate meet with individuals to discuss any concerns.

The line manager should take into account the following factors when discussing and considering home working applications:

The business need	The work task to be completed at home or in other NIAS facilities will fulfil business needs.
The impact on team workload	The absence of the individual from the workplace will not create additional workload for other employees or affect operational effectiveness.
The suitability of the job/work task	Working at or from home or other NIAS facilities will only be possible where the work can facilitate this.
The suitability of the home work area	The member of staff's home, when this is being used as a work base, should be a safe and secure working environment. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide assurance of this through their completion of the assessment.
The capability of the employee	The ability to deliver work effectively without supervision. Employees who are subject to either informal or formal conduct, attendance or capability proceedings will not normally be eligible for working from home arrangements, particularly if they require close supervision and coaching by their manager to make the necessary improvements. During the COVID-19 pandemic these requirements may be waved ensuring compliance with government guidance.
Caring responsibilities	The potential impact of the home environment and caring responsibilities should be considered. NIAS understands that employees may want to work from home because of caring responsibilities. Employees are expected to discuss any caring responsibilities with their line manager and demonstrate how they can deliver the agreed work objectives. Employees must be able to demonstrate that they can carry out the full duties of their post.
ICT requirements	Due consideration to ICT requirements should be given prior to agreement to working from home. ICT equipment are subject to a costed business case by the line manager, with advice from the Information Technology Services (ITS). It should be noted that all costs to be incurred will require approval from the budget holder responsible for the employee's cost centre.

4.4 STEPS 3 & 5 – Risk Assessment Checklists:

In order to provide maximum assistance to remote/homeworkers workers two checklists have been produced that facilitate self-assessment.

1. **Remote/Home working Self-Assessment Checklist (Appendix 1).**
2. **Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and Workstation Assessment Checklist (see Separate Display Screen Equipment Procedure).**

4.4.1 *Remote/Home working Self-Assessment Checklist (Appendix 1):*

- This assessment must be completed by all remote/homeworkers.
- Each question must be answered by ticking one of the three responses i.e. yes, no or not applicable.
- Each assessment must be signed and dated by the individual employee carrying out the assessment.
- Each assessment must be copied to the relevant line manager, who must scrutinise it, action as required, and countersign to confirm.
- Copies of the assessment must be retained by both the line manager and the employee, and a review date agreed.

4.4.2 Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and Workstation Assessment Checklist (see Separate Display Screen Equipment Procedure):

- This assessment need only be carried out by those who are using DSE at home and/or a remote working location.
- Each question must be answered by ticking one of the two responses i.e. yes or no.
- Each assessment must be signed and dated by the individual employee carrying out the assessment.
- Each assessment must be copied to the relevant line manager, who must scrutinise it, action as required, and countersign to confirm.
- Copies of the assessment must be retained by both the line manager and the employee, and a review date agreed.

In the event of queries, employees are encouraged to take photographs of home/remote working locations to supplement the self-assessments wherever possible. “Pictures paint a thousand words”, they are an excellent aid to hazard identification and can greatly assist line managers scrutinising assessments.

4.5 STEP 5 – Outcome:

If an employee has made an application for homeworking, the manager will inform the employee of their decision in writing within **14 days** of the date of the meeting. If the request is accepted, the manager will agree the following:

- Clear work objectives and arrangements with the employee.
- If required, discuss any potential issues arising from working from home (e.g. caring responsibilities, health and safety etc.).

If a line manager declines a request for home working they should provide the reasons to the employee in writing within the above timescale. In these circumstances, the employee can request for the decision to be reviewed by the Senior Manager / Assistant Director. The final decision will be conveyed in writing to the employee.

4.6 Withdrawal of Homeworking Arrangement:

Agreed homeworking arrangements can be withdrawn if it is demonstrated that:

- The business needs are not being met.
- The performance of the employee suffers as a result of homeworking.
- The effectiveness of the team in which the employee work is compromised.
- Government advice on working from home has changed.

In most circumstances, if regular homeworking arrangements are to be withdrawn, the employee will be given in writing, a minimum of 4 weeks' notice of this change.

However, if homeworking arrangements are reviewed due to the employee's performance, attendance or conduct, the manager reserves the right to immediately withdraw the homeworking arrangement and these may be dealt with under the appropriate NIAS Policy should this be necessary.

4.7 Wellbeing:

The Trust has a range of guidance and support for staff on wellbeing. Additional information can also be found on SharePoint and via page tiger including mental health support and Peer Support arrangements. Preventative work-related stress risk assessments should be in place and take remote and homeworking into consideration. Concerns relating to wellbeing at work should be discussed with your line manager. Refer to Trust work-related stress guidance and note the points set out in Appendix 1 and the Working From Home and Your Wellbeing Infographic in Appendix 6.

4.8 Digital Security, Physical Security & Data Protection:

Staff must ensure that Trust data and equipment is stored securely to maintain confidentiality of information at all times. The following points must be adhered to:

- Citrix keys/access codes/passwords etc. should be kept in a separate location to the portable computer device at all times. Passwords should not be written down or shared.
- Under no circumstances should confidential Trust information be emailed to a private email address.
- Sensitive material or personal data must be disposed of by recognised methods using office based shredding equipment or other means. Further information on data protection is held within the Trusts Data Protection Policy (see SharePoint).
- Inform ICT of any Trust owned portable computer device message relating to configuration changes.
- Trust data should be stored on the network drive and not held on the device.

- Portable computer devices should be switched off, logged off, or the keyboard locked when left unattended, even if only for a few minutes. It is not acceptable to lock the keyboard and leave the device unattended in a public place or conference/meeting area.
- Family members/friends etc. are not permitted to use any Trust provided equipment; the equipment is supplied for the staff members' sole use.
- User requests for upgrades of hardware or software must be approved by line management. Equipment and software will then be purchased and installed by ICT.
- All faults must be reported to ICT.
- Take extra vigilance if using any portable computing device during journeys on public transport, or in public spaces to avoid the risk of theft of the device or unauthorised disclosure of the Trust's stored information by a third party "overlooking" content displayed on screen.
- Take all reasonable care not to be eavesdropped upon when talking in public places e.g. while chatting in café's, on the telephone, talking with colleagues etc.
- Reasonable care must be taken of Trust equipment, in particular when moving between home and other locations. Laptops or other portable equipment must never be left unattended in cars or taken into vulnerable areas.
- Paper documents should be securely locked away in suitable facilities (e.g. secure filing cabinets) when not in use.
- Staff should seek advice from the Trust before taking any Trust supplied equipment outside the United Kingdom.
- Users must not remove or deface any asset registration number(s).
- Any equipment losses must be reported immediately to the Information Governance Team, ICT, and also via the Trusts Incident Reporting system DATIX. In the event of the portable device having been stolen, the incident must also be reported to the police and a crime reference number obtained. For further information please see Appendix 4.

NIAS ICT Policies and Procedures, Information Governance Procedures and Data Protection Procedures must be complied with at all times.

4.9 Information & Communications Technology (ICT) Equipment:

There are several ICT solutions to achieving a suitable working from home environment. The solution used will largely depend on the type and quantity of work that the member of staff will be undertaking at home. This decision will be made in consultation between ICT and the Line Manager and will be subject to a full business need assessment and in accordance with the budget of the Directorate.

- All ICT equipment supplied to users remains at all times the property of NIAS.
- All ICT equipment will be supplied and programmed by NIAS.
- Software must only be provided by NIAS.
- Equipment must be returned at the request of NIAS.
- No ICT equipment can be moved from NIAS premises without authorisation from ICT.

The Trust will maintain its own equipment, but will not be responsible for maintaining staff members' own computers and equipment e.g. electrical sockets and other parts of the home worker's domestic electrical system. This is the homeworkers own responsibility. Should a problem arise with personal or Trust loaned equipment, staff will be supplied with a replacement laptop, either temporarily or on loan, as required.

4.9.1 Mobile Phones:

The Trust will provide staff with a mobile phone where there is a business requirement. Staff should not use their personal mobile phone for Trust business.

4.9.2 Return of Equipment / Devices:

Any person leaving the organisation must return all equipment, portable and mobile devices to the ICT Department. Any person no longer requiring the use of a Trust issued equipment, portable or mobile device must return it to the ICT Department. Line managers are responsible for the devices used by their staff and for ensuring that any member of their staff using a device has returned it before they leave the employ of the Trust.

4.10 Travel & Other Expenses:

Staff designated as home workers will not be able to reclaim travel expenses to and from their Trust base, on days that they would normally work at home. When calculating distances travelled for travel and subsistence claims, the shorter mileage (between office and place visited/home and place visited) should be claimed. Refer to the Trust Travel and Subsistence Policy for further information.

- Expenses for heating, lighting etc. will not be reimbursed by the Trust (staff should seek advice from HMRC directly regarding tax relief for employees working at home).
- Stationery can be provided by the Trust, but staff should notify their manager of all stationery taken out of the office.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF PROCEDURE:

5.1 Dissemination:

With regards to dissemination this procedure will be:

- Issued to all Board Members, Chair, Non-Executive Directors, Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors.
- Disseminated to the required staff by Assistant Directors.
- Made available on the Internet and SharePoint so that all employees and members of the public/stakeholders can easily have access.
- Discussed during Corporate Induction.

5.2 Resources:

Training on the application of this procedure for relevant managers and staff will be facilitated/delivered by the Risk Manager and ICT Team as necessary.

5.3 Exceptions:

There are no remote/homeworkers exempt from the operation of this procedure.

6.0 MONITORING:

It is the responsibility of the Risk Management Team and the Health and Safety Committee to monitor the implementation of and assess the level of compliance with this procedure.

7.0 EVIDENCE BASE/REFERENCES:

- The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000.
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (NI) 1992.

8.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS:

This procedure has been developed by the Risk Manager. Consultation took place with Trade Unions, Senior Managers, Assistant Directors and Directors within the organisation. The final content of the document was agreed Health and Safety Committee, before SMT approval on recommendation by the Health and Safety Committee.

9.0 APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Remote/Homeworking Checklist.

Appendix 2 – Homeworking Tips & Advice.

Appendix 3 – CIPD Top Tips For Managing Remote Teams.

Appendix 4 – Information Security Guidance.

Appendix 5 – Employee Working From Home Pro-Forma

Appendix 6 – Working From Home And Your Wellbeing (Inspire):

10.0 EQUALITY STATEMENT:

10.1 In line with duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; Targeting Social Need Initiative; Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Human Rights Act 1998, an initial screening exercise, to ascertain if this policy should be subject to a full impact assessment, has been carried out.

10.2 The outcome of the equality screening for this procedure undertaken on 10th May 2021 is:

Major impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minor impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
No impact.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

11.0 SIGNATORIES:



Katrina Keating

Date: 11th May 2021

Lead Author

Nigel J. Ruddell

Dr Nigel Ruddell
Lead Director

Date: 11th May 2021

APPENDIX 1 – HOME-WORKING CHECKLIST:



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Health and Social Care Trust



Remote/Homeworking Self-Assessment Checklist

Department:		Email:	
Location:		Telephone:	
Days Per Week:		Hours Per Day:	
Enter brief details of primary work to be carried out below:			
Date Completed:		Completed By:	
Checked By:			
Further Action:	Yes	Details:	No
Date Action(s) Completed:			

- | INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete all questions by entering a tick in the appropriate YES, NO or N/A columns. 2. Once complete take it to your line manager and go through any concerns. Discuss questions to which you registered a 'NO' answer, and raise/record any other concerns you may have. 3. You can request that your line manager and/or a member of the Risk Management Team assist you in completing this assessment. 4. Once both you and your line manager are satisfied that the assessment has been suitably completed, both must sign it off and date it, and both should retain copies. 5. A review date must be agreed, which should reflect any planned actions and the tasks involved. A review period of 12 months is recommended. 6. You as the employee must inform your line manager of any relevant changes in circumstances that may impact on this assessment. |

CHECK:	YES	NO	N/A	CONSIDERATIONS
General Requirements:				
Is Display Screen Equipment (DSE) to be used?				If yes, then a DSE Assessment, must be carried out.
Are you a new or expectant mother?				An individual risk assessment must be completed (See SharePoint).
Has your health, safety, fire and DSE training been completed in compliance with the Statutory/Mandatory Policy?				If not please arrange training as soon as possible through the normal procedures.
Is there a working room/space of sufficient size?				Approximately 11m ³ is recommended – avoid working in cramped conditions
Do you have access to Trust Health, Safety and Fire Safety Procedures?				Contact your line manager and / or see SharePoint.

Mental Wellbeing:				
Do you have regular contact with your line manager i.e. at least weekly?				Consider how such is initiated.
Have arrangements been made for you to work in / visit the office on a regular basis?				There should be direct contact at least weekly.
Is your home phone number given to members of the public?				Define under what circumstances and how you will be contacted.
Are you aware of the measures in place for reporting concerns about your mental well being, for example work related stress?				Discuss reporting procedures with your line manager.
Did you know that you have a right to return to previous arrangements if you are unhappy remote/home working?				Report any concerns to your line manager immediately they arise.
Are you aware of the Employee Counselling arrangements?				Use the service, it's there for your benefit.
Is the remote/home working arrangement regularly reviewed?				Review arrangements on an annual basis or if there are any changes.
Do you have access to email, telephone etc.?				
Are you included in all internal communications?				Including changes or social events?
Do you receive the same training opportunities etc. as those in the workplace?				
Are your clear on your hours of work, required outputs etc.?				Discuss practical solutions with your line manager
Do you feel you have enough training to deal with any problems you encounter, with your PC for example?				
Do you take regular breaks?				A walk for example?
Have you implemented mutually agreed arrangements with your family?				
Is the room in which you work suitable?				Is it quiet, suitably comfortable, etc.
Are you clear on other arrangements for confidentially, cost of internet/phones, stationery, post, insurance etc.?				See above Procedure.
Digital Security, Physical Security & Data Protection				
Are you clear on the Trusts ICT Policy and Procedures?				Check with your line manager and read Section 4.5.

Are you clear on the Trusts Data Protection Policy and Procedures?				Check with your line manager and read Section 4.5.
Is access restricted to those who are trained/authorised to use it?				Equipment should be locked away/secured if necessary
Is expensive equipment stored out of sight and secure?				Lock equipment away, use blinds as necessary. Consider any necessary precautions when in transit.
Is secure/lockable storage available where necessary?				For sensitive material, valuable equipment, etc.
Are you clear on procedures for loss, damage, breaches etc.				Check with your line manager and read Section 4.5.
Work Equipment:				
Is any equipment you have been provided with suitable?				
Is work equipment regularly inspected and maintained?				Ensure arrangements are agreed and implemented with line manager
Are you satisfied that your activity (and everything you are using) is adequately insured?				Advise your home insurance company of your intention to work at home
Have you received adequate information and training on the safe use of the equipment?				Advise your line manager if you need any additional training.
Manual Handling Operations:				
Is significant manual handling required as part of your activity?				Can this be eliminated?
Fire Safety & Emergency Procedures:				
Are you aware that fire safety in your home is your responsibility?				See section 4.2.4 for more information.
Does your line manager have a contact number to use in the event of an emergency?				Can you provide the number of a family member or neighbour?
Electrical Equipment:				
Are you aware that the electrical system in your home is your responsibility?				Ensure sockets are sufficient, avoid overloading and extension leads / adapters.
Has any portable electrical equipment supplied to you been PAT tested?				Look for certificates or stickers. Contact your line manager if not
Is the equipment still included in the PAT testing programme?				Report to your line manager if you think items have been missed
Accident/Incident Reporting & First Aid:				
Are you clear on incident reporting procedures?				Check with your line manager / see SharePoint.
Are there effective communication systems in place should you have an accident?				Can you ring an ambulance if necessary?

Do you have adequate first-aid provision?				A first aid kit should be available. Consider the risks and how you would react.
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FINAL QUESTIONS:			
Check	Yes	No	Comments
Has this checklist has covered all the issues relevant to your home/remote working?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If not, please detail here or on additional sheets.
Is any corrective action required as a result of this assessment checklist?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Compile an action plan and implement it as soon as practicable, preferably before the employee commences home/remote working.
Employee Name (printed):			
Signature:			
Date:			
Line Manager Name (printed):			
Signature:			
Date:			

REMEDIAL ACTION REQUIRED			
Action Required	By Whom	By When	✓

ASSESSMENT REVIEW SCHEDULE	
Date assessment to be reviewed:	
By whom:	
<i>Note: This is the formal review date. However, this assessment must be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect it is no longer valid i.e. there is any change in circumstances. Employees must advise line managers of any relevant changes back in the home.</i>	

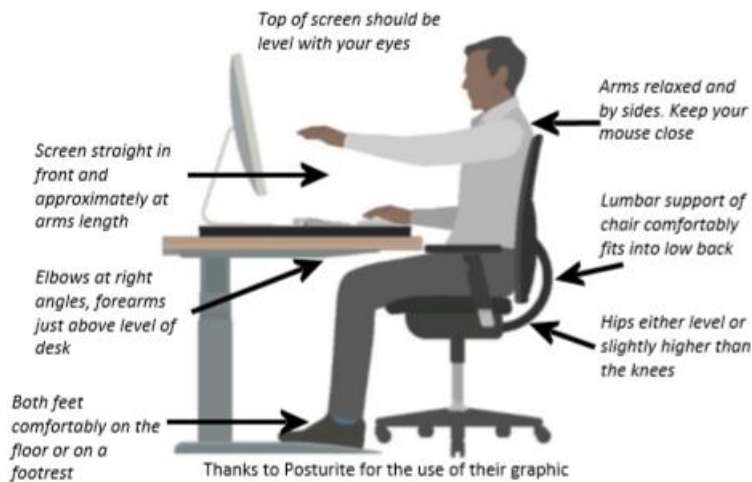
Contact your line manager and/or the Risk Management Team should you require any assistance or are unsure about anything.

APPENDIX 2 – HOMEWORKING TIPS & ADVICE

FOR SOME OF US OUR HOMES ARE NOW OUR WORKPLACE
REMEMBER WE STILL HAVE THE SAME RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR OWN HEALTH AND SAFETY!

These are extra-ordinary times with many of us working from home, at short notice, having had little time to prepare. There is also uncertainty about how long it will last, so let's look at some important issues.

1. **WORKSTATIONS:** This one affects us all and is a 'high frequency/low impact' risk (whilst it's happening all the time any potential injuries are unlikely to be too serious).



This picture summarises the recommended set up for a workstation and this is what we should try and replicate in our homes.

However, many will not have NIAS chairs, monitors, desks, etc. and if you only have a laptop it's challenging to fully achieve both the right 'screen height' and 'horizontal arms'! As such we need to apply our innovation value and improvise to help reduce risk as best we can.

Below are some points to consider.....

The single most effective thing you can do is **take regular breaks!** You should aim to take a 10-minute break in every hour. Stand up and walk. Go into your garden/another room; walk up and down the stairs; do some stretching, etc. Ensure you take a lunch break of at least 30 minutes AWAY from your laptop.

DO:

- Use the best chair you can find i.e. one with a backrest and armrests if possible.
- Select the most suitable worktop you have i.e. solid and best height for your size/legs.
- Eliminate glare where possible i.e. move the table, close blinds, etc.
- If you have a separate monitor or keyboard then use them – this will allow you to get the right balance between arm and eye levels.
- Make sure your immediate work area is clear of clutter, both on the 'desk' around your laptop, and under your 'desk' so your feet aren't obstructed.
- Position your laptop so your forearms can rest on the work surface to give you support.
- Look at making small changes to your workstation each day i.e. changes that will make you change your position, albeit only slightly. It is constant positions/repetitive actions that are most likely to result in discomfort/strains.
- Drink plenty of water – hydration is essential!

DO NOT:

- Work from your bed, or even your bedroom if possible.
- Work sitting on the sofa with your laptop on your knees, or any similar position.
- Spend the time you have away from your laptops on your phone or tablet!



Whilst ensuring you comply with government/public health guidance try and get out, get some fresh air, and do some exercise every day. If you can't get out set yourself an exercise routine indoors. Keep mobile!

HOMEWORKING TIPS & ADVICE

2. FIRE SAFETY: This also affects us all, but is easily overlooked, including the impacts of everyone being at home 24/7, and is a 'low frequency/high impact' risk (thankfully fire don't happen too often, but when they do they have the potential to be fatal!).

Ensure all your smoke detectors are working and you have spare batteries where required. If you don't have smoke detectors then GO AND GET SOME! Hardware stores are still open – they're reasonably cheap and easy to fit.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best escape route is often the normal way in and out of your house. Think about any problems you may have using it i.e. at night would you need a torch (if a fire starts from an electrical fault you may have no power)? Could the escape route be blocked at anytime i.e. do people put their bikes in the hallway? How can you keep it clear? Think about a secondary escape route. A back door, a window, etc. ensuring you can then get out of where it leads you! If there are older, less mobile and/or disabled people in the house think about how they will get out. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>DOOR/WINDOW KEYS</u></p> <p>Decide where you will keep door and window keys, always keep them there, and ensure everyone knows where they are!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PRACTICE YOUR ESCAPE PLAN</u></p> <p>Practice it with everyone who lives in the house – ensure everyone knows it!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>IDENTIFY A SAFE PLACE</u></p> <p>Think about a room you could use if you couldn't get out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a room with a window that opens so you can call for help, possibly escape from. Have towels, etc. available that you can use to seal the door. Take your mobile with you – dial 999 immediately. 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>QUICK BEDTIME CHECKLIST</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check your cooker is off. Switch off and unplug all non-essential electrical appliances. Ensure any candles, cigarettes, fires, etc. are fully extinguished. Turn any portable electrical/gas heaters off. Ensure emergency exits are clear and keys are where they should be. Close all internal doors to help prevent any fire spread. 	

Don't leave candles unattended!

Don't overload electrical sockets!

3. TIPS FOR WORKING AT HOME: While you may not have to travel to get to work that day, it is still important to keep to a 'work day ritual'. Some tips for working at home include:

- Have a specific location where you work. This may be a room, or area, but it is always the place where you do your work. Avoid your bed, sofa etc.
- Begin and finish at the same time every day you are working at home, avoid sleeping late.
- Have a beginning and end of day ritual. Since there is no longer a 'break' between waking up and going to work, some people find it helpful to actually leave the house and walk around the block before starting work. You may want to end the day the same way.
- As you would for working in the office, set a schedule and stick to it. Make a 'to do' list and check your accomplishments at the end of the day. Stick to deadlines.
- Pace yourself, don't burn out and on the other hand don't develop bad habits by not doing the same amount of work as before.
- Get changed out of your night time clothes, wear 'work type clothes' if it makes you feel more productive. Avoid excessive snacking.
- Maintain regular contact with the Trust. Establish a routine for contact with management / co-workers etc. Keep your manager informed of your progress and any difficulties encountered. **Managers** think about the nature of the job and the individual; establish whether you need to measure and monitor hours or output or both.
- Arrange/participate in Team conference calls regularly to ensure everyone remains 'connected' and up to date. Determine what interruptions are okay and what is not. Tell your family what the ground rules are etc. Don't let the radio/TV distract you.

Follow existing Information Governance and ICT Policies and Procedures

APPENDIX 3 – CIPD TOP TIPS FOR MANAGING REMOTE TEAMS¹:

1. Agree ways of working. Make sure every team member is clear about how you will work together remotely, how you keep each other updated, and how frequently.
2. Show the big picture but prepare to flex. Remind your team about the big picture and how their work fits into it. Review short-term goals regularly and adjust as needed. If some members can't carry out all their usual work, consider other skills they can lend to others to meet team goals.
3. Set expectations and trust your team. Be clear about mutual expectations and trust your team to get on without micromanaging. Focus on results rather than activity.
4. Make sure team members have the support and equipment they need. This includes any coaching they might need to use online systems or work remotely. Keep your calendar visible and maintain a virtual open door.
5. Have a daily virtual huddle. This is essential for keeping connected as a team, to check in on each other's well-being and keep workflow on track. It needn't be long, but regularity is key.
6. Keep the rhythm of regular one-to-ones and team meetings. This maintains a sense of structure and continuity for all.
7. Share information and encourage your team to do the same. Without physical 'water-cooler conversations', opportunities to pick up information in passing are more limited. Share appropriate updates or learnings from other meetings and projects and invite your team to do the same.
8. Tailor your feedback and communications. People can be more sensitive if they're feeling isolated or anxious, so take this into account when talking or writing. Communicate regularly, not just when things go wrong, whether it is information, praise or criticism.
9. Listen closely and read between the lines. Not being in the same room means you don't have extra information from body language or tone to get the sense of what people are thinking or feeling, particularly in more difficult conversations. Home in on what's not being said and ask questions to clarify your interpretation.
10. Help foster relationships and well-being. Make time for social conversations. This increases rapport and eases communication between people who may not meet often. It also reduces feelings of isolation.

¹ <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/flexible-working/remote-working-top-tips>

APPENDIX 4 – INFORMATION SECURITY GUIDANCE:

How do I work from home securely?

If you are working from home, there can be a number of challenges. ICT have put together some tips based on advice from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to make sure data protection isn't one of them.

Working from Home & Keeping in Touch with Colleagues

Working from home can be daunting and brings various challenges for us all. Please use the tools you have to keep in touch and continue to collaborate. Use video conferencing (Zoom) and document sharing tools like SharePoint where possible. *And it's good to lift the phone too!*

- ✓ Set up your zoom account using your **NIAS email** to avail of appropriate levels of security.
- ✓ Please read all guidance provided with these tools and ensure you are **well prepared** before calls etc. – check connections etc. See [Zoom help here](#).

Device Security

We are more likely to have our devices stolen when we are away from the office or home. We have encryption built in which will protect data on the device if it is lost or stolen but please continue to take extra care. When the device is not being used, please keep it somewhere safe.

- ✓ Make sure you **report any problems**. This is especially important for security issues.

Remote desktop and applications

Remote application solutions give us access to the corporate applications we need while working from home. We will support you by deploying and monitoring the most up-to-date version of our remote access solution.

- ✓ We ask you to continue to use **unique and complex passwords**
- ✓ Continue to **lock your screen** when away from your computer

Be extra vigilant about opening web links and attachments in emails or other messages

As more staff are working from home there has been an increase in email as a method of communication. It is important to defend against phishing attacks.

- ✓ Please be **extra alert to cyber threats** when working outside the office environment
- ✓ Do not add **forwarding rules** to external email addresses
- ✓ Where possible, complete the new **Cyber Security Awareness Regional** eLearning course (30 mins; released August 2020) www.hsclearning.com

Cyber criminals are preying on fears of the coronavirus and sending 'phishing' emails that try and trick users into clicking on a bad link. Once clicked, the user is sent to a website which could download malware onto your computer, or steal passwords.

- ✓ Please **do not open or forward** suspicious messages. Contact us at the **IT Service Desk** by phone or email and we will deal with the email message at this end. Your prompt actions could make a big difference and we welcome all calls.

Follow NIAS and HSCNI policies, procedures and guidance

We have taken steps to ensure that data is adequately protected.

- ✓ We need all users to be mindful of information security when using our systems.
- ✓ Only use approved technology for handling personal or sensitive data

APPENDIX 5 – EMPLOYEE WORKING FROM HOME PRO-FORMA

Name	Role	Date Working From Home Commenced	Date Meeting Held To Discuss Arrangements	DSE Assessment Complete	Remote / Homeworking Assessment Complete	Adjustments In Place	Occasional or Regular Homeworking?

Line Manager Name (printed):	
Signature:	
Date:	

Working From Home and Your Wellbeing

Given the current situation, you may be implementing a work-from-home policy. That means lots of us will be dealing with an unusual challenge: working from home for the first time, full time. With this in mind, we have created a handy guide to looking after your health and wellbeing at home.

Start your day right

Act like you are going into the office. The mental association you make between work and an office can make you more productive. Get started as you would on any other day.

Get out once a day

Spending time outdoors or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing. It can lift your mood, reduce your stress and anger, and increase relaxation. Remember - as per government guidelines, you may wish to take exercise outdoors once a day, such as jogging or cycling.



Maintain contact

Try to make plans to chat with people or groups you'd normally speak with in person. Video and phone calls, instant messages and texts are all good ways of connecting during these uncertain times.

Establish boundaries

Structure your days as if you are in work. Forget the fact that you are sitting in your own office or front room. Draw up a schedule to maintain focus.

Take regular breaks

Don't let working from home compromise your need to step away and recharge. You should be taking breaks in the office and should have no problem doing it at home.