



Working from home

1 What this policy covers

Working more flexibly may benefit you by giving you a more favourable work-life balance, while it can also help GHC to better manage space and resources. This policy provides guidance and support when considering working-from-home arrangements, whether long or short term. GHC may ask you to work from home and will explain the reasons for this to you.

2 Principles

Homeworking will be accommodated if a manager and employee agree that homeworking is safe, appropriate and effective. All relevant GHC policies will apply in the same way to those working at home. Regular home workers are still required to attend GHC sites for meetings, supervision and training.

3 Responsibilities

- GHC will ensure that applications for homeworking are managed consistently and effectively.
- Your manager will approach applications to work from home positively and where agreed put in place processes for effectively managing home workers.
- Your manager will ensure that you complete the Home Working Checklist, DSE Workstation Checklist, risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly, and maintain an up-to-date staff emergency contact list.
- Every GHC staff member must adhere to this policy.
- You are responsible for considering any potential risks to your health and safety and alerting your manager at the earliest opportunity if you are aware of changes to your health and wellbeing that may impact your ability to do your job.

4 Policy in practice

Options for homeworking:

- working from home primarily
- working flexibly both at home and at GHC
- working from home as part of a return-to-work plan or reasonable adjustments being made
- working from home because of exceptional circumstances (eg as part of business continuity planning, personal safety or to protect NHS services).

4.1 Requesting a meeting to discuss WFH

You or your manager can raise the option of working from home. You should discuss how this may work in relation to your job using the Working from Home Checklist to support the conversation and help reach an agreement.

Not all roles will be suitable for home working, each situation needs to be considered on its own merits. Consideration should be given to:

- the impact on service delivery
- the impact on other staff/departments
- any financial impact
- any impact on your health, safety and wellbeing
- suitable IT equipment and software needed, as well as dedicated workspace.

4.2 Care arrangements

Other than in exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement with the manager, if you work from home regularly you should not undertake caring responsibilities for dependants. You may be required to demonstrate that you do not have care responsibilities during your working hours as part of considering home working requests.



4.3 Health and safety

When you are working from home we will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, your health, safety and welfare are maintained and you will be expected to do the same. Therefore, you must complete a working from home risk assessment, including a checklist for display-screen equipment. If there are significant risks that cannot be rectified, homeworking may not be suitable.

If working from home is agreed, you should maintain your workstation and surroundings, taking account of the advice provided and agreed during the assessment process. In the unfortunate event of an accident, incident or dangerous occurrence, please notify your manager immediately by telephone and then complete the appropriate actions agreed with your manager.

4.4 Supporting health and wellbeing

It is important that your wellbeing is supported when you are working from home. This includes being part of a team and ensuring regular communication and support. It is also important that you consider how to maintain your own health and wellbeing while working from home. Your manager will discuss this with you during the working-from-home assessment meeting and will regularly review this with you.

4.5 Sickness absence reporting

The normal sickness absence reporting will apply if you cannot work because of sickness. Please contact your manager as soon as possible if you become ill while homeworking.

4.6 Trial period

A trial period is recommended initially, to see how effective working from home is for you, your role and the team/department. You and your manager will meet at the end of the trial period to discuss the effectiveness and agree if it will be a long-term/regular agreement.

After a trial period, if you or your manager do not believe working from home is beneficial or appropriate, you will discuss and agree arrangements for returning to work at GHC. This may mean arrangements need to be put in place before you can return to work at GHC.

4.7 Security and confidentiality

If you are working from home, relevant GHC policies, procedures and rules continue to apply. Therefore, it is important that you can continue to follow expected

security, information governance and confidentiality protocols as if you are working at GHC. Any breach should be reported to your manager as soon as possible.

4.8 Planning permission/business rates

You must check if you need planning permission or will have to pay business rates for working at home. For advice check with your local council about planning permission and HMRC on business rates. GHC will not take responsibility for this.

4.9 Reimbursement of expenses

GHC will not contribute towards the costs of working from home or household bills. If you have one, your GHC mobile telephone must only be used for work calls. If a Trust mobile is not provided (as working from home is occasional), work-related call costs will be refundable if they are not included in your phone contract.

4.10 Access to and meetings at your home

During working hours you must allow reasonable access to your home by your manager or other authorised person, as requested. You should be given notice of the visit and wherever possible, a mutually convenient date/time agreed. Any pets should be appropriately controlled. Your home should not be used for meetings with your manager or colleagues unless mutually agreed. It should never be used for meetings or appointments with service users.

4.11 Reviewing the agreement to work from home

A review and evaluation of working from home will be completed during your appraisal. This will include conversations about any effects on your health and wellbeing. Regular conversations on how you are managing working from home should also be part of routine discussions with your manager. This will ensure that if there are any problems or concerns they are addressed as soon as possible.

4.12 Ending working from home

If circumstances or the needs of the service change, or if it is determined that the arrangement should end for another reason, your manager will discuss this with you. If you do not wish to continue working from home, you should arrange to meet your manager to discuss possible options for returning work at GHC.