

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Home Working Policy and Guidelines

N.B. Staff should be discouraged from printing this document. This is to avoid the risk of out-of-date printed versions of the document. The Intranet should be referred to for the current version of the document.

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Development

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Aneurin Bevan University Health Board is an Equal Opportunities organisation committed to offering home working or agile/hybrid working to support work-life balance. Home working forms part of an agile/hybrid working environment and has become more important since the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, resulting in the Health Board's promotion of its home working, agile/hybrid arrangements for employees.
- 1.2 This Policy supports the commitment by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to support home working in line with agile/hybrid principles to deliver value both for staff and the Health Board.
- 1.3 The term "home" may be the persons registered address or another non- health board premise. In this situation the policy will continue to apply.
- 1.4 The purpose of this document is to establish guidance to support home working arrangements. It sets out the steps to be taken to support staff working from home, including agreeing the home working arrangements, making an assessment of potential risks and the need to maintain contact and involvement.
- 1.5 The objectives of the Policy are to:
 - Ensure the Health Board acts responsibly by fulfilling its legal obligations to support staff to work safely from home away from their bases in non- Health Board premises;
 - Ensure managers and staff understand the process for establishing the home working arrangements.
 - Ensure our employees understand how to set up a safe home working environment.
- 1.6 Home working forms part of our strategy for agile/hybrid working arrangements supported in our <u>Agile/Hybrid Working</u> Framework.
- 1.7 The Health Board recognises that some employees may be unable to or prefer not to work from home but may be able to work agilely across Health Board sites, or other suitable premises.
- 1.8 To work effectively, any home working or agile/hybrid working arrangements must meet the business needs of the service to

- ultimately ensure the continued delivery of safe and highquality care to our service users.
- 1.9 Flexible working is not to be confused with agile/hybrid working and refers primarily to flexibility around working which is an agreement at an individual employee level. The Health Board's Flexible Working Policy and its related guidance recognises the need to enable staff to make a full contribution to work at different stages of their working lives. It also accepts that rigid adherence to full time and traditional patterns of working may fail to maximise the considerable benefits to the organisation which can be derived from flexible forms of working.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 The Policy applies to all employees where a home working or agile working arrangement is established or where a pandemic or extenuating circumstances occurs. However, it is recognised that not all roles are suitable for home working. Managers are encouraged to review tasks of a role to determine if any of these can be undertaken in agile/hybrid way. To support this assessment, a number of staff personas have been developed and included in the Agile/Hybrid Working Framework.
- 2.2 The Health Board will ensure that the application of any part of this Policy does not have the effect of discriminating, directly or indirectly, against staff on grounds of race, colour, age, nationality, ethnic (or national) origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religious beliefs or disability.
- 2.3 This Policy covers accessibility and equipment.
- 2.4 Risk, hazards and risk assessments are covered by this Policy. Many of the hazards that might compromise health and safety while working at home will be the same as in the workplace, but there may be additional hazards to consider when staff are working at home or from different locations.
- 2.5 There are many benefits to home/agile working arrangements and some are summarised below:
 - Increase in motivation, productivity and job satisfaction;
 - Better quality of work/life balance;
 - Increase in recruitment and retention of staff. The ability to recruit from a larger target pool;

- Accommodates the requirements of staff with disabilities/temporary health conditions.
- Reduction in travel costs and expenses supporting the Welsh Government decarbonisation strategy;
- Rationalisation of estates and better management of facilities.
- Social distancing element during a pandemic.

3.0 Definitions

There are a number of situations where individuals may particularly work from home:

- **Home Worker** where there is a contractual agreement to work the majority of the normal working week from home on a regular and ongoing basis. Such arrangements may be temporary or permanent. Attendance at the workplace may be required for specific events. Managers must determine the cost implications of travel and whether the base location is the most suited to avoid unnecessary travel expenses to the organisation.
- Agile/Hybrid Worker where an employee has a defined contractual work base within the Health Board but may work at other locations (including home) under this policy.

4.0 Contractual Arrangements

- 4.1 Any agreement for an employee to work from home does not automatically entitle the employee to choose when they work; it simply means they undertake their role within their home location. Employees' contractual obligations, including their normal working patterns, continue to apply. Any changes to working hours will need to be agreed between the employee and their line manager and based on the requirements of the department or service and in line with the Flexible Working Policy.
- 4.2 In the event of any performance concerns arising, please refer to the Capability Policy. As a result, home working arrangements will be reviewed and possibly removed. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

- 4.3 Home working should not be a barrier to communication between an employee and their line manager.
- 4.4 Where an IT problem prevents an employee from working effectively at home or another place of work, they should contact the IT helpdesk straightaway and continue to work from either a Health Board premise or suitable alternative location to avoid disruption to the service. If this cannot be resolved in a timely manner, the employee should notify their line manager to ensure other working arrangements can be discussed.
- 4.5 Copies of all appropriate documentation relating to home working are to be kept in the employee's personal file.

5.0 Management Responsibilities

To be able to effectively manage a home-working situation the line manager is expected to adhere to the good home working practices set out in the Agile/Hybrid Working Framework.

 Managers should develop plans to maintain or restore business operations in a timely manner following interruption to, or failure to, business processes in line with the Health Board's <u>Business Continuity Policy</u>.

6.0 Employee Responsibilities

- To familiarise themselves with the content of this document, carry out the appropriate actions outlined and comply with related guidance to implement safe homeworking.
- To take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of other people who may be affected by their activities in work.
- To co-operate with the Health Board to enable compliance with health and safety duties.
- To use all work items provided by the Health Board in accordance with the training and instructions they receive to enable them to use the item safely.
- To ensure any equipment provided is accessible and conforms with the requirements of the organisation. In the event of statutory equipment testing (e.g., PAT testing), it is employee responsibility to bring the equipment onto a Health Board site and suitable agreed location.
- To familiarise themselves with the local processes and guidance for absence reporting and follow such processes at all times.

- To be aware of their responsibilities in relation to information governance and confidentiality. Please refer to section 8.6 for further information.
- To maintain contact with their manager, colleagues and service users as agreed.
- Report any major changes to their health that may have an impact on their ability to carry out the full requirements of their role to their line manager. This is to enable the Health Board to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate or where required due to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Equality Act 2010.
- Incidents, accidents and near misses must be reported via RL Datix.
- In the event of an IT/network failure, an employee has a duty to report this immediately to their manager and they may be required to work at a Health Board premises in order to undertake their duties.
- Report any damage of equipment to their manager. This will be dealt with via the relevant policies.

7.0 Related Polices

In certain circumstances this policy supports other employment initiatives and should be read in conjunction with:

- Adverse Weather Policy
- Agile Working Framework
- All Wales Information Security Policy
- Capability Policy
- Employment of Disabled People Policy
- First Aid at Work Policy
- Flexible Working and Guidance Policy
- Managing Attendance at Work Policy
- Lone Working and Guidance Policy
- Organisational Change Policy
- Policy for Workstation Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- Safer Manual Handling Policy
- Working Time Policy

8.0 Other Considerations

8.1 Suitability for Home Working

There is a decision flowchart and Home Working Checklist in <u>Appendix 2</u> that managers <u>must</u> complete with staff when mutually agreeing home working arrangements.

8.2 Personal Costs and Expenses

- There is currently no provision to reimburse costs e.g., utility costs to staff for working at home. Staff may seek tax relief in accordance with HMRC requirements – https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home.
- It is the responsibility of individual employees to ensure any tax implications for home working are met.
- Employees are responsible for making sure that their mortgage or lease and home insurances do not restrict or prevent their home being used for work. Employees should discuss with the home insurer any changes that may need to be made to their policy to ensure that they are fully protected while working from home. Employees are responsible for any additional premiums if any necessary changes mean an increase in their premium.

It will still be a requirement for mileage expenses to be claimed in accordance with an employee's contractual work base. Further information relating to mileage expenses can be found in the <u>Mobility</u> and Expenses Policy.

8.3 Care of Dependents

As part of an agile/hybrid working arrangement staff will be expected to work during the same working hours as if at the normal workplace unless by prior agreements such as annual leave, flexible working request and special leave. For further information please refer to section 4.1.

8.4 Health and Safety Issues

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that an employer shall ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees – this also extends to homeworkers. As the control that can be exercised over a member of staff

working from home is limited, the main responsibility will be with the home worker under section 7 of the Act, which places obligations on home workers themselves to do their work in such a way as to ensure that they and other persons who may be affected, including other members of the household and the public, will not be exposed to risks to their health and safety.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Health Board is required to complete a risk assessment of the work activities carried out by home-workers. This assessment of the proposed area of work and equipment in the employee's home will be carried out to ensure that safety of the employee, their family and members of the public. It will be completed by the employee, checked by the appropriate manager prior to the agreement being finalised and will be continually reviewed.

Risk Assessment Guidance can be found on the Health Board's intranet site by following this link: <u>Health and Safety Policies</u>

Some of the common hazards of home working are:

8.4.1 Handling Loads

There may be occasions when routine/occasional homeworkers may have to carry equipment into and from the workplace and they should be mindful of the manual handling guidance to reduce the risk of injury.

Further guidance regarding manual handling can be found in the Health Board's <u>Safer Manual Handling Policy</u>

8.4.2 Using Work Equipment

Employees who have been provided with specialist equipment in the workplace as a result of workplace assessments e.g., footrests, specialist chairs, keyboards, must seek agreement from their line manager if they wish to take any equipment home. Additional equipment will be made available onsite, with staff needing to book equipment, along with hot desk.

For employees who wish to work from home occasionally, if they have been provided with smaller equipment, e.g., specialist keyboard or mouse, the employee can agree with their manager that they take the equipment home should they choose to work at home but that they return it to the workplace when they are working there or they are able to use other available equipment. If it has been agreed that

employees will work at home as part of a reasonable adjustment due to a disability, arrangements may need to be made to provide the relevant equipment at home in accordance with the <u>'How to Procedure Reasonable / Tailored Adjustments'</u> guidance.

Any requests for additional equipment can be made and supported on a case-by-case basis, ensuring reasonable adjustments are identified and supported where possible.

If the Health Board provides equipment to carry out the work at home, it will ensure that:

- The equipment is correct for the job being done.
- The employee and manager must keep a record of the equipment taken home.
- Accurate information relating to training and the safe use of any supplied equipment is given to employees.
- The equipment is checked regularly and kept in a condition that does not cause harm to the home workers or others.
- The employee must return all equipment provided by the Health Board, including written and electronic records, when the home working arrangement comes to an end. The manager must inform ICT Services at the earliest opportunity to ensure all necessary steps are taken to remove any network access.

8.4.3 Using Electrical Equipment

The Health Board is responsible for the maintenance of any electrical equipment it provides for home workers. Electrical sockets and other parts of the home worker's domestic electrical system are their own responsibility.

It is essential that the existing electrical systems are adequate for any incoming electrical equipment. Most of the faults that can cause harm can be prevented by looking for any damage to electrical equipment.

8.4.4 Working with Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

The Health Board must ensure that the display screen equipment provided for home use is safe and does not affect the user's health. This aims to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injury, mental stress and visual fatigue.

Employees have a responsibility to conduct e-learning DSE training via ESR and a DSE Self-Assessment via Datix.

For further information please refer to the <u>Policy for Workstation</u> <u>Display Screen Equipment (DSE)</u>

8.4.5 Lone Working

The risks of working alone at home or another location should be considered in the form of an assessment completed by the Directorate/Divisional Manager. This will need to include aspects of security, stress and isolation and regular communication, particularly to cope with any accident situations. The policy can be accessed here: Lone Working Policy & Guidance

8.4.6 New and Expectant Mothers

Any new or expectant mothers working at home will be risk assessed for work activities prior to any agreement being confirmed. The Health Board policy provides the necessary information for completion of the assessment and can be accessed here: Health and Safety - Obligations for New and Expectant Mothers at Work Checklist

8.4.7 Incidents, Accidents and Near Misses

All employees must follow the existing Health Board arrangements to record any incidents, accidents and near misses via the DatixWeb system whilst working at home or agilely. If the incident, accident or near miss involves a lone worker, this must be clearly identified when being recorded via Datix.

An investigation will then be undertaken to identify any areas for improvement. Risk assessments must then be updated to reflect the findings.

8.5 Information Governance Issues

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the issues involved with regard to information security and home working. It is also to ensure that the Health Board is able to effectively manage the risks associated with these issues.

Information Security is largely concerned with three areas, these being:

- **Confidentiality** Protecting sensitive information from unauthorised disclosure.
- **Integrity** Safeguarding the accuracy or completeness of information and software.

 Availability – Ensuring that information and services are available to the authorised users.

Information takes many expressions. It can be stored on computers, traversed across networks, printed out, written down on paper or spoken in conversation. From an information security perspective, appropriate protection should be applied to all forms of information, including papers, databases, films, view foils, models, memory sticks, conversations and any other method used to convey knowledge and ideas.

Where there is a regular need to work with personally identifiable information in the job description, the home worker's working environment should be considered and where necessary risk assessed. Any perceived information governance risks used to inform consideration of home working applications. These findings must be documented and reviewed on a regular basis.

Home workers must ensure, whilst working from home, that information is stored safely to protect it from loss destruction or damage. Employees must ensure that visitors and family members cannot gain access to Aneurin Bevan University Health Board information or networks. To further promote confidentiality and security, employees should ensure to distance themselves from others in the home when dealing with confidential information. Further guidance for staff working from home has been provided by Information Governance: Guidance for Staff Working from Home

Employees are expected to keep any work data used at home confidential and secure. All work data remains the property of the Health Board and may be required at any time. All data will be managed in line with the <u>All Wales Information Security Policy</u>.

Home workers will be required to complete the All Wales Information Governance learning module on ESR before any arrangement is commenced.

All relevant statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements shall be explicitly defined and documented for each information system. All staff must adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Further information can be found on the Health Board's intranet site via the following link: <u>Information Governance Unit</u>

Security incidents shall be reported through appropriate management channels and a DATIX incident raised as soon after the incident is discovered as possible.

8.5.1 Physical Security

- Equipment shall be situated to protect and reduce the risks from environmental threats and hazards and opportunities for unauthorised access.
- Equipment shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and/or documented procedures to ensure its continued availability and integrity.
- Decommissioning or reuse of equipment should be conducted through Health Board channels only.
- A clear desk and a clear screen policy should be implemented in order to reduce the risks of unauthorised access, loss of and damage to information.
- Equipment, information or software belonging to the organisation shall not be removed from the Health Board or the staff property without Health Board authorisation.

8.5.2 Communication and Operations Management

- Detection and prevention controls to protect against malicious and unauthorised software (e.g., viruses) and appropriate user awareness procedures should be implemented.
- Capacity demands shall be monitored and projections of future capacity requirements made to ensure that adequate processing power and storage are available.
- Back-up copies of essential business information and software should be taken regularly in line with policies.
- The management of removable computer media, such as discs, memory sticks and printed reports shall be controlled.
- Ensuring confidential information is disposed of properly in confidential waste bags stored on-site at the workplace.
- All conversations must remain confidential in line with the <u>All Wales Information Security Policy</u>.

8.6 IT Equipment in the Home

For most employees, working from home is a choice and to ensure that they can effectively perform their duties, a stable broadband connection with the necessary network speed and connections is a requirement.

The equipment in the home office will be assessed, as required, for the individual circumstances of each individual in order to fulfil service needs and in line with the agreement being of a routine or occasional nature. Equipment supplied is to be used in conjunction with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board business only.

8.7 IT Support

In the event of a fault or installation of IT equipment in the home environment, the IT/ICT must be contacted who can support.

 The employee must also make contact with their line manager to notify them of the issues and discuss next steps.

8.8 Staff Wellbeing/Support

Managers are encouraged to regularly ask staff how they are feeling, how their work is going, if there any concerns about safety and ensuring they have the right set up when working from home.

Possible signs that staff may not be coping include:

- Appearing tired, anxious or withdrawn;
- Increase in sickness absence or being late to work, missing or absent from team meetings, not turning on webcams;
- Changes in the standard of their work or focus on tasks;
- Being less interested in tasks they previously enjoyed or changes in usual behaviour.

The Employee Well Being Service (EWS) is available to all Aneurin Bevan Health Board employees and has both Clinical Psychologists and experienced Counsellors who provide evidence based psychological therapies. The service offers psychological therapies for staff experiencing issues that may or may not be work related, for example, anxiety, depression, family and relationship problems. The service is confidential and is self-referral only. Staff can self-refer by calling: 01633 234888.

Further information and a range of resources are available on the EWS intranet page and on the following website: www.aneurinbevanwellbeing.co.uk

9.0 Consultation Process

The following stakeholders were consulted in the review of this Policy and their comments incorporated as appropriate:

- Complex HR Team
- Health & Safety Manager
- Information Governance Manager
- Service Managers
- Staff Side representatives

10.0 Advice

If you require any further advice or assistance with the policy or the guidance, please contact the Complex HR Department.

Applications to become a permanent home worker should be made through the attached application form in <u>Appendix 1.</u>

11.0 Appeal

Should an employee be dissatisfied with the outcome of their home working application, they have a right of appeal. The appeal will be considered under section 6 of the All Wales Respect and Resolution Policy and will follow the process set out there.

The employee must contact their next in line manager and submit their written appeal as soon as possible but within 14 calendar days of receipt of the written decision. The grounds for the appeal should be clearly set out.

At the meeting the employee may, if they wish, be accompanied by a workplace colleague or a trade union representative.

12.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Appendix 1

Name:

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board HOME WORKING OPTIONS

REQUEST FOR CONTRACTUAL VARIATION TO WORKING BASE ARRANGEMENTS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE EMPLOYEE

Staff Number

1. Personal Details

Current		Base:	
post:			
Department:		Telephone:	
Line			
Manager:			
2. Please explain what you wish to vary about your working base and the reasons for your request.			
3. Is this a	temporary or pern	nanent variation?	

4.	What impact will this variation have on the service?
5.	What impact will this variation have on your colleagues?
6.	What are the benefits to the Health Board?
6.	What are the benefits to the Health Board?
6.	What are the benefits to the Health Board?
6.	What are the benefits to the Health Board?
7.	What are the benefits to the Health Board? What are the benefits to you?

9. What would be the proposed solutions to any potential problems?

Signed:Date:

Print:

To be completed by the Manager

10.	Date/s of meetings to discuss application:	
11.	Discussion points:	
12.	Outcome:	
13.	If the application is rejected, outline reasons:	

14.	Details of monitoring criteria and timescales:		
Sign	ed:	Date:	
Print	:		

Appendix 2

Assessing a role for agile/hybrid working

*Remember – Agile/hybrid working is a choice and all staff will remain with a contractual base location as per their employment contract. This <u>will not</u> change as a result of any agile/hybrid working arrangement. Consider the nature of the work/tasks undertaken by the employee. Can any of the employee's role be undertaken away from the office/work location? (e.g., work-related training (including statutory & mandatory training), virtual meetings, inbox management, admin tasks, virtual clinics, using clinical apps, collaboration, etc. NO What percentage of the role can be undertaken away Role is not suitable for agile/hybrid from the office/work location? working. If circumstances change, employee/manager can request for a review of this checklist. If unclear, consider a role review Majority Does anything need to be put in exercise: place to support agile/hybrid Some/up to half working (e.g., IT equipment)? Complete the What type of the role activity is most NO Agile/Hybrid effective where? Minority Working How much of the work must be Checklist undertaken face to face/with other below. Varies people? Which work location best supports YES productivity? Unclear Consider employees personal preferences (e.g., home environment Consider what needs to be not suitable for home working, social put in place for the aspects of attending the base employee to work in an location, equipment required, etc.). agile/hybrid way. Complete the Can the work be structured in a Agile/Hybrid different way to support agile/hybrid Working Can these provisions be made? working? Checklist How much supervision does the role below. reauire? What number of supervisors/trainers We would encourage you to read the Agile/Hybrid Working Framework for tips and guidance in a are required to maintain support for variety of areas. new starters and ensure no detriment Final Agile Hybrid Working Framework.pdf to training experiences?

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Home Working Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure everything is in place for agile/hybrid working, and keep it as a local record of actions taken.

Name/Team:
Department:
Home Working Address:

	Action and Responsibility	Completed / Notes
	Determining Arrangements/Tasks	
1	Manager and employee to agree all tasks able to be completed at home.	
2	Manager and employee to discuss options for agile/hybrid working collectively with the team, within individual preferences and considered alongside service and team needs.	
3	Employee understands that agile/hybrid working is not a contractual change but a mutually agreed arrangement between line manager and employee.	
4	Manager ensures each employee is aware that unless agreed individually or as a request through flexible working policy, hours of working remain unchanged during agile/hybrid working.	
5	Manager and employee to agree how often the employee will attend the main base and work at home/at other locations and how they will be contactable in normal working hours (e.g., phone/MS Teams).	
6	Manager to ensure regular team catch-ups are scheduled to maintain a shared awareness of the team's priorities.	
7	Manager and employee to discuss how the employee will maintain a sense of team and agree an approach for managing others (if applicable).	
8	Employee ensures that place of working is clearly indicated on roster or calendar.	
9	Manager and employee to agree set objectives in order to monitor performance. Manager must ensure the employee has clear goals and clarity on any objectives set.	

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10	The employee is to check home insurances	
	and those with interest in the property have	
	been informed of the working arrangements.	
11	Manager and employee to discuss the	
	continuity of training and development and	
	the needs and requirements to supervise	
	new or existing staff.	
10	Manager to ensure completion of all statutory	
	and mandatory training modules and that	
	staff have undertaken the required risk	
	assessments in line with the Policy for	
	Workstation Display Screen Equipment	
11	(DSE).	
11	Manager to explore need for any reasonable	
	adjustments and specialised equipment (for long-term working at home agreement only).	
12	Employee to ensure any impacting changes	
12	to circumstances or wellbeing needs are	
	communicated to the manager. Manager and	
	employee are aware of access to the	
	Employee Wellbeing Service.	
13	Manager, employee and team to consider	
	any changes required to on-site working	
	space, in line with other service needs, i.e.,	
	the reduction in desks and increase of 'hot	
	desking' facilities.	
14	Employee understands that they must	
	adhere to Health Board's existing policies	
4.5	linked to agile/hybrid working.	
15	Unless there is a contractual home base,	
	home working will be reviewed every 12-	
	months but can be reviewed earlier. The arrangements will end at the review date	
	unless both parties agree the arrangements	
	should be extended.	
	IT & Information Governance	
1	Team to discuss the IT resources available to	
1	support agile/hybrid working. Manager to	
	ensure each employee has access to the	
	required IT resources and systems.	
2	Manager to ensure each employee has a	
	suitable environment to work at home/at	
	other locations.	
3	Employee understands in the event of an	
	IT/network failure, an employee has a duty	
	to report this immediately to their manager	
	and they may be required to work at a	
	Health Board premises in order to undertake	
	their duties.	
4	Employee to ensure understanding of data	
	protection regulations and access and	
	storage of Health Board data when working at home.	
5	Employee continues to report any security	
	Employee continues to report any security	

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	incidents through the appropriate management channels and in accordance with DATIX requirements.	
6	Manager and employee to agree and set a 12-month review date and establish regular reviews throughout this period. The arrangements will end at the review date unless both parties agree the arrangements should be extended.	

Employee/Employees covered by this arrangemen	1t:
Manager's name:	
Review Date:	