

AGILE & HOME WORKING GUIDANCE

1. Introduction

Agile & Home working should be considered for all employees, but not all roles may be suitable. Managers should consider if perhaps parts of a role could be carried out from home considering their team, individual needs, and the service they deliver. UHBW recognises that each department and individual needs are different, and that any agile or home working arrangements must meet and maintain the business needs of the service.

2. Principles of Agile & Home Working

For colleagues whose contracted duties do not require an on-site presence they should agree with their manager the proportion of time to be spent on site. This should include the needs of the service, training and supervisory requirements while enabling a better balance between working life, personal commitments, health needs and caring responsibilities.

If it is possible for all of your duties to be carried out from home, teams should agree how and when they should come on site for wellbeing purposes, personal development, training and importantly to keep in touch with colleagues.

Where clinical staff can undertake aspects of their role from home without detriment to the service, this should be facilitated by their manager where possible. When considering the feasibility of this, it must be determined how situations will be managed when presence on site is required to support clinical services at short notice. It is expected that colleagues will be able to return to the workplace within a reasonable timeframe should there be an operational requirement to do so.

All agile or home working arrangements are subject to review, at least annually, as part of the appraisal conversation. However, wellbeing conversations and check-ins should occur regularly.

For contractual purposes an employee's base will be the UHBW office or site regularly worked, regardless of what percentage of working hours are carried out at home.

Agile or home working arrangements should:

- Focus on results, outcomes and performance NOT physical presence
- Promote high levels of trust and autonomy amongst colleagues
- Allow work life balance to be more managed effectively

Agile or home working may be a reasonable adjustment for colleagues with a known medical condition.

Anyone with dependents must ensure that they are able to fulfil the requirements of their post whilst working from home by making adequate provision for the care of their dependents during working hours.

Colleagues can manage their working hours flexibly to fit with their work life balance arrangements. For example, taking children to school or attending appointments provided contracted hours are worked and performance is not affected.

Colleagues must be available to attend the workplace with reasonable notice when required to do so. This may be for example to deal with a work-related matter, attend team meetings, a training activity or to cover a colleague if required.

3. Line managers responsibilities

- Ensuring that agile or home working, is promoted and supported wherever possible
- Assessing the suitability of the role for agile or home working including the impact on service delivery before approving any requests
- Signposting colleagues to the wellbeing resources available
- Ensuring that colleagues have appropriate equipment to undertake their role at home
- Ensuring that issues related to improving or maintaining productivity, quality, health, safety, and security are considered, and action taken to support colleagues in managing them
- Keeping in touch with colleagues working from home to ensure team cohesion
- Maintaining regular contact with any agile or home workers, including regular supervision and information sharing, and provision of training and personal development opportunities
- Being alert to the signs that home working may not suit a team member due to isolation, drop in motivation etc.
- Seeking advice and assistance from Health and Safety, Occupational Health and HR Services, as appropriate
- Ensuring that agile or home workers have completed a DSE and Homeworking Risk Assessments and have confirmed that they will ensure all work will be undertaken safely and securely.
- Reinforcing the need for confidentiality and securing of data in line with UHBW IM&T and Governance policies

4. Employee responsibilities

- Completing the required [REDACTED]
- Ensuring the security of UHBW property, information, files, documents etc. within their possession
- Agreeing agile or home working arrangements with their line manager and letting them know of any issues or changes in circumstances
- Being available and contactable during the agreed working hours and maintain regular communication with their manager and colleagues
- Being available to return to the workplace with reasonable notice
- Taking good care of any UHBW supplied equipment and reporting any damaged, lost or stolen equipment or data without delay
- Maintaining a positive work life balance and health, safety and wellbeing, seeking support if they have any concerns

- Adhering to the Working Times Regulations with respect to weekly working hours and rest breaks
- Notifying their home insurance provider of their homeworking arrangements as this may affect their cover. UHBW takes no responsibility for changes to coverage or premiums as a result of homeworking

5. Communication and Keeping in Touch

Clear communication with colleagues who work from home is essential and will require a proactive approach to maintain team spirit and cohesion and to ensure that all members of the team feel included and engaged.

Teams should discuss and agree how they will keep in touch including how contact will be maintained (phone call, teams call for example) and how frequently (daily, weekly for example).

6. Working Hours

Where it is agreed that some duties fall outside of their normal working hours, unsocial/enhanced payments will be not be made in relation to these adjusted hours.

Arrangements for working more than the normal weekly contacted hours must be by prior agreement with the line manager. Payment for any additional hours will be in accordance with the appropriate national terms and conditions of service.

7. Insurance

UHBW's indemnity will continue to apply to Agile & Home /home working in the same way as if the colleague were at work on site.

UHBW recommends that all individuals working from home contact their mortgage providers or landlords and their home insurance providers to inform them about any changes to their home working circumstances. UHBW takes no responsibility for changes to cover or premiums as a result of agile or home working, nor accepts liability for damage caused to the home or its contents.

UHBW will not be responsible for any injury to any person other than the employee at their remote workplace.

8. Expenses

Under an agile or home working arrangement, the employee's base will remain their conventional onsite place of work and not their home for the purposes of any expenses such as travel claims.

Any additional household expenses incurred by working from home should be offset by reduced travel cost. No contribution will be made by the Trust towards normal household expenses attached to homeworking, such as heating, lighting or council tax costs.

9. Shared workspaces and hot desks

When working in the office, a hot-desk or team desk will be provided. A hot desk is a bookable workspace for any colleague to use at any time. The number and location of hot desks are currently being reviewed across UHBW sites.

Hot desks and shared desks should not contain any personal belongings such as photographs, plants and mugs. All desks should be cleared and sanitised after use in preparation for the next user.

10. Additional Guidance for Medical Workforce

- Expectation that DCC activity is delivered on site unless team agreement is reached to undertake DCC activity remotely, e.g. Outpatient Clinics or Regional MDT meetings
- Flexibility can be applied to Supporting Professional Activity PAs with up to 1 SPA (core) being delivered off site/at home to support revalidation, CPD, Essential Training etc.
- Remaining Core SPA (0.5) should be delivered on site to facilitate teaching, training and supervision
- Additional SPA can be delivered flexibly depending on activity
- Discussions should take place as part of job planning to understand total specialty activity and how Agile or home working opportunities may be incorporated, as well as equity of application
- Specialties/teams need to ensure service delivery is maintained at all times and that the burden of service delivery does not fall to the same individuals
- Individuals carrying out agreed DCC from home must be able to return to site within a reasonable timeframe (within 1 hour) to support service need or staffing shortages
- Ensure appropriate environment whilst on video calls, maintaining confidentiality and professionalism
- Requests from junior doctors for working remotely will be treated in line with the Flexible Working Policy and will be managed by the Deanery.

11. Additional Guidance for non-medical Clinical Workforce

- Compressed week/9 day fortnight for Band 7 and above
- 1 day per fortnight can be worked from home for Ward Sisters, Clinical Nurse Specialists or Matrons
- Work from home can be used when undertaking work activity where long periods of focus is required, not to occur in same week if working 9 day fortnight
- Virtual Clinics can be undertaken at home or other non-clinical duties for Clinical Nurse Specialists or Associate Practitioners etc. but must be able to come into the hospital if required
- Ensure appropriate environment whilst on video calls, maintaining confidentiality and professionalism

12. Workplace Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing is paramount, and managers should assure themselves that agile or home working does not adversely affect the health and wellbeing of their team members.

There is an extensive offer of wellbeing services and interventions available. Managers should signpost their team members to them during regular wellbeing conversations, 1:1s, and team meetings and when reviewing a colleague's agile or home working arrangements.

The workplace wellbeing menu available to all UHBW colleagues is available on the Workplace Wellbeing sections of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

13. Supporting personal wellbeing

Stay Connected: check-in with colleagues as part of regular 121 meetings and check-ins or during team meetings or shift handovers. Guidance for managers is available on [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and from Health Education England [here](#).

Switching Off: Agile or home working can impact the ability to manage an effective work life balance. People can find themselves working longer hours. Support colleagues to manage their technology and to disconnect and act as a role model through your own good working practices.

Take a break: encourage colleagues to take a regular break away from the screen or workstation throughout the day.

Be active: encourage colleagues to remain active –you can find information on the Buzzer Challenge on [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and a video [REDACTED]

Wellness Action Plan: A Wellness Action Plan is a personalised, practical tool to help people identify what keeps them well at work, what causes them to become unwell and the support they would like to receive, find our Manager's Guide [REDACTED]

Further wellbeing tips: The NHS and Every Mind matters have created [seven simple tips to tackle working from home](#), reminding us to take regular breaks, set boundaries, and stay connected.

Core workplace initiatives at UHBW – psychological wellbeing

- **Care first:** Offer 24/7 access to free, confidential counselling (and advice line similar to Citizens Advice). Call 0800 174 319.
- **Occupational Health Service:** Supports health at work issues and offers free confidential counselling. Call [REDACTED].
- **UHBW Psychological Health Service:** Offer free, confidential 1:1 check in sessions. Call [REDACTED].

Core workplace initiatives at UHBW – physical wellbeing and healthy lifestyles

- **Physio Direct:** a free physiotherapy consultation and phone advice delivered by Occupational Health. See [REDACTED] for details or book a phone appointment with a Physiotherapist via [REDACTED]
- **Manual Handling:** The team advise on workstation, equipment and Display Screen queries. Find them [REDACTED] or call: [REDACTED] or email: [REDACTED]

14. Further information and support

HR Services: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

15. Review

These guidelines will be reviewed at least every 3 years or earlier as required.