

## **Appendix D - Agile Working**

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### **Introduction**

From the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021, legal restrictions on social distancing ended. This document and set of provisions serves as interim position for the Trust in relation to the location at which staff undertake their work.

Upon return to the office, the majority of non-patient-facing staff will have been working wholly, or partially, from home since March 2020. The necessity to work from home during this period has expedited technological developments in enabling the organisation to work effectively from different locations. In a broader context, the benefits of home working have been accepted as the new 'norm' and consequently society has shifted away from traditional models of working. Individuals now expect the flexibility as to when and where they work, and it is imperative for recruitment and retention, as well as staff wellbeing and productivity, that we continue to provide agile working arrangements beyond the pandemic.

The constraints of the Trust's estate are an additional factor in establishing flexible working locations. There are some teams that exceeded their office space prior to the pandemic and the merger has added pressure to existing shortages across both sites.

### **Purpose**

This addendum to the Flexible Working Policy aims to provide a clear framework for agile working arrangements once the legal limits on social interactions are removed.

### **Definitions**

The difference between agile working and flexible working can be broadly split into location of work (agile) and working hours/pattern (flexible). The existing Flexible Working Policy continues to provide the framework to support non-standard patterns of work and should continue to be referred to should an individual wish to alter their working hours or pattern.

### **Scope**

These provisions will apply with immediate effect where appropriate. However, in light of the ongoing prevalence of Covid-19 and local limitations on physical space, it will be a

matter of departmental and divisional decision the extent to which the provision for maximum off-site time can be implemented in each area.

These provisions will be kept under regular review as the pandemic proceeds nationally and locally, and in response to further developments in operational requirements and management of estate and physical space.

## **Policy provisions**

For the purposes of agile working it is proposed that the following principles apply;

- 1) For staff undertaking task that do not require an on-site presence, a maximum of 60% of an individual's contracted working hours can be undertaken outside the work environment, with line manager approval. There may be certain situations where the line manager may be able to increase this time, provided that the service is able to support it.
- 2) We aim to support employee health and wellbeing alongside flexible working and therefore we encourage staff to assess whether they have appropriate space and equipment to work safely at home, for further guidance please see the DSE Assessment.
- 3) We will support those who choose to return to the office environment for their full contracted hours.
- 4) It will be a continuing expectation that an individual, or team, will attend the workplace as required, to meet operational demands, training & to provide supervision, or any other business reason.
- 5) Unless agreed as part of a flexible working request, the days at which an individual can work off site will need to be managed according to the department's operational needs and physical space.
- 6) All agile working arrangements are subject to review and managers will be expected to engage with staff to ensure the needs of the service are met.
- 7) For corporate meetings, the chair will have the flexibility to agree what proportion of meetings are required to be held in person to facilitate networking and training, and or other business reasons.

- 8) It is expected that the majority of meetings will continue to be held virtually unless there is an exceptional reason for it to be conducted face to face. Where meetings must be held in person but some participants wish to attend remotely, the chair should facilitate this where the technology and room configuration allows.
- 9) In accordance with The NHS Long Term Plan, where patient facing services have been delivered remotely during the pandemic, the expectation is that these will not automatically resume as face to face activities.
- 10) Some non-patient facing activity that requires team or co-working such as educational supervision or certain types of training will need to take place on site.
- 11) For contractual purposes your location of work will remain the fixed, or place of business, office or site where you regularly work, regardless of what percentage of agile working is undertaken.
- 12) Should there be further waves of Covid-19 that necessitate the need to reintroduce social distancing the ability to revert to 100% off site working will apply.
- 13) Hot desking will be implemented across departments to facilitate the new agile working arrangements.