

Continuing to work differently

The outbreak of COVID-19 is having an impact on everyone's daily lives, as the government and the NHS take the next necessary steps to manage the outbreak, reduce transmission and treat those who need medical attention. It may be difficult, but by following guidance on social distancing and staying alert you are helping to protect yourself, your family, the NHS and your community.

You may be bored and frustrated, or see it as an opportunity for new challenge and seek new tasks during this time. At times you may also feel low, worried, anxious, or be concerned about your health or that of those close to you. Everyone reacts differently to events and changes in the way that we think, feel and behave vary between different people and over time. It's important that you take care of your mind as well as your body and to get further support if you need it.

Working remotely: You are not 'working from home' you are 'at home, during a crisis, trying to work.

Routine

Do something that marks the end of your day to detach physically and emotionally from work including a clear start and finish time.

Dress for the working day to help to switch our heads from home to work and puts us in the right space to work effectively especially when not in our normal workplace.

Set some ground rules with those you share your home with. By setting clear boundaries of which space you need when working, and be clear about what they can and cannot do during your set working times if this helps.

Safety, performance and breaks

Maintain your own safety - avoid being sat at a laptop for too long and reduce your risks by planning for regular breaks and doing something different to break repetitive tasks.

To check your workspace is set up correctly **click here**. If it helps, allocate time in your calendar for concentration time – or a particular project.

This helps reassure you – and possibly your colleagues – that your hard work and concentration means that any silences or absences from group conversations aren't perceived as not pulling your weight.

Environment

Be practical, flexible and sensitive to each other's situation when working from home.

Remember that we are in unusual circumstances that may mean normal working practices have to be altered or adapted to work in modern times.

Check in with your team and other colleagues regularly via MS teams or WhatsApp groups as it is important to connect with others, reducing feelings of isolation.

Continuing to work differently

Consider additional responsibilities which may be having an impact such as **childcare/home schooling**. For further information on how to work from home effectively, **see this excellent resource from Trello**.

Working from your workplace: for those who aren't able to stay at home.

Active travel

Consider a different way to commute such as cycling or walking to include regular time for exercise.

Further information can be **found here**.

Safety

Please report any symptoms of feeling unwell so that arrangements can be made for covid testing if necessary.

Self-isolation form can be found here.

Wash your hands often and avoid touching your face.

Guidelines

Managers will be undertaking risk assessments for all staff members to determine individual and workplace risk.

- **Work station assessment**
- **Screen time safety**
- **Mobile Working Assessment**

Manager and team leader considerations

Your team's success will not be measured in the same way it was when things were normal

Teamwork

- Check in with your team at the start and end of the day, encourage teamwork, teambuilding and consider holding an organisation update or Q&A sessions via MS Teams.
- For meetings held virtually, encourage a relaxed but professional dress code unless with external customers where a more professional presentation would be expected.

Remote working

- Talk to, and support your staff with home working arrangements; consider individual employees' needs, responsibilities or health conditions and disabilities. For more info contact **bchft.hradvice@nhs.net**
- It's important to recognise that some individuals may find it hard to motivate and organise themselves when working from home. If this happens, talk through some **practical steps** that might help.

Wellbeing

- Ensure employees are aware of resources available for support on mental health and wellbeing. **Click here for further information.**
- Be mindful of any changes in your staff behavioural patterns and that certain groups or individuals may be affected by ongoing events and may require extra support. **Click here for a manager's checklist.**

Wellbeing

- Acknowledge that often, what you are able to contribute is enough, be kinder to yourself
- Regular self-care

Wellbeing Guide

Moodzone

Mindfulness

Regular exercise

Sleep

Lifestyle

Desk Yoga

- Stay connected to friends, family and work colleagues. For Facebook users why not join BCHFT Staff Space to connect with others
- **5 ways to wellbeing**
- We are all learning how to cope and adapt right now – be patient and remember this is an adjustment for all of us
- Be kind to yourself and consider your own wellbeing. It's ok to not be ok and understandable if you find yourself impacted by events and circumstances.
- Remember that it is unlikely that the return to normal will be quick, so mentally prepare for a gradual return to the new normal.
- Stop and say “hello” to other team members
- Please use one of our **safe spaces** set up for staff wellbeing. They are there to be used by any member of staff who needs a few minutes to catch their breath or get some space.

Bloxwich	DPH	BFH	Penn	Heath Lane	Edward St	Hallam St
Seminar Room	Hot Desk Room	HLC room 3	Meeting room 2	Tredgold Room	Lighthouse, Quiet Room	Pines

The Trust is in the process of also setting safe spaces in community settings for staff that work in the community.



Consider

- Give yourself breathing space and be kind to yourself
- Make allowances for yourself in these very unusual circumstances
- Don't expect to achieve things in the way you normally do at this is a very stressful time, we are only human.
- Setting aside time for yourself
- Learning a new skill
- Sharing how you are feeling
- Switching off to make time for yourself, you could set a reminder on your mobile if it helps.

Avoid

- Try not to bottle up your feelings, try and find someone you feel comfortable talking to.
- Don't set yourself unrealistic goals as you will be putting unnecessary pressure on yourself
- Think about sugar, caffeine and alcohol intake as they can increase stress increase stress in the long run
- Overworking, such as checking emails and messages outside of your working hours
- Reduce the amount of time spent on social media, mobile phones and watching the news.

Get 1-1 support from professional colleagues

Sometimes we all need 1-1 support and depending on your individual needs you can be put in touch with a mental health first aider, counsellor or psychologist. This support will be either by phone or video conference and can be arranged for a time that is convenient to you.

If you feel you need to access this support, please either call **0121 612 6812** or visit **here**.

Connecting

- Bring on the gifs, emojis and pictures on MS Teams! Share pictures of your craft projects, from your walks/exercise or anything else to **share your whole self**
- Remember we're all human and a lot of conversation is in the non-verbal cues, such as tone of voice and facial expression. It's very easy for statements and questions to inadvertently appear sarcastic, unkind or harsh, where no malice was intended, so assume the best and remember there's a human behind each and every screen and keyboard.

Useful References

- **FAQ Gov.uk**
- **Remote working top tips**

