

## Top tips while working from home

Working from home for an extended length of time is something that is new to many of us. For some, it has brought unexpected benefits, but also a number of challenges.

With all of these changes, many of which are beyond our control, it is important that we continue to look after our wellbeing when working from home, as we would when working on site.

You need to have approval to work from home from your line manager in line with the Trust's [Interim Home Working Policy](#). Your line manager can share this with you if you do not have access to the intranet. Once you have the approval in place, please take time to think about how you will look after yourself as well as work effectively.

### Your working schedule

#### Maintain a routine

Try to keep to a routine where possible to ensure that you remain focused during work time and that you relax during your non-working hours. This may include continuing to dress for work, subconsciously checking you into your working role.

#### Plan your workload

Think about creating a plan of what you need to achieve and schedule in the time you intend to spend working on it. Having a plan can help you stay motivated and keep you on track.

#### Finish work at your designated time

Try setting a reminder to ensure that you don't overwork and tire yourself out. Make sure that you turn off and switch to non-working activities at the time you set for yourself. Think about the things that you find relaxing, such as exercising, reading, art projects, watching a film or playing computer games for example, and build these into your daily routine.

#### Build in regular rest breaks

Use the opportunity of the flexibility of home working to make sure that you take your breaks and step away from the screen, eat well, stay hydrated and perhaps take a walk or reach out to friends, family or colleagues for a chat.

#### Establish new habits

Try to get up at your usual time and consider using the time that you would have allocated to traveling to work to introduce habits to your daily schedule that benefit your health and wellbeing, for example by introducing physical or mental exercise or taking time to prepare healthy snacks for the day.

## **Flex your working schedule**

With the agreement of your line manager there is flexibility within the home working schedule to adapt your working hours to best balance your home and work commitments. Within this though, it is important that you maintain regular contact with your colleagues, by making and committing to a plan for when you will work, documenting your availability, keeping your calendar updated and shared with your team members, and staying connected.

## **Staying connected with your colleagues:**

### **Link in with colleagues**

Working from home can feel isolating without the day-to-day interactions that we have with our colleagues. Think about how you can build these into your work day, perhaps by holding virtual team lunches or coffee mornings. While we are all experiencing similar influences with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, these will be affecting each of us differently. If you have a colleague you haven't heard from for a while, consider reaching out to them, dropping them an email, calling them or even sending a text to see how they are.

### **Maintain your visibility**

Remember to check in regularly with others in your team, individually and in team meetings, to share what you are working on. Knowing more about what our colleagues are doing can help us position our work and link with others to share ideas and think of ways to overcome any hurdles we are facing. In a shared environment, we regularly check in with each other naturally in passing conversation: while we work virtually, this is a little harder and takes effort to achieve. You could share your calendar with colleagues so they can see when you are free to check in with them.

### **Staff networks**

We have a number of staff networks in our Trust that you may wish to join to gain additional support during your time working from home and beyond.

Information on our five staff networks:

- BAME Network
- Disabled Network
- LGBT+ Network
- Women's Network
- Young Apprentice Network

is available on the [Staff Networks intranet](#) or you can contact **Ben Cooper** directly who will be able to share further details with you.

## **Your home working environment:**

### **Your work station**

Have a designated working space that is set up to enable you to work comfortably. Our [Interim Home Working Policy](#) advises on how to set your space up and additional advice can be sought from our Occupational Health Physiotherapy colleagues. It is important that you take time to consider your environment and the setup of your work station, to make sure that you are able to work comfortably and not put yourself at risk of future health issues.

### **Help with equipment**

If you need help setting up your work station or to ensure you have the necessary equipment available to you, please do speak with your line manager. If you haven't already, you will need to complete the Self-Assessment Checklist attached to the Interim Home Working Policy. This can be found on the Trust intranet pages or your manager can print or send you a copy if you don't have access to the intranet.

### **Manage the expectations of those around you**

Take time to chat with those you live with so that they understand how and when you plan to work and if there is anything they can do to support you. If possible, consider shutting the door to the room you are working in so the people you live with know you are busy.

### **Workplace adjustments**

If you previously had workplace adjustments in place, for example to assist you if you have an ongoing health condition, please speak to your line manager about how this can be continued during your time spent working from home.

### **Technical support while working from home**

#### **Remote working**

If you have an OUH email address and computer login then you can access the Trust intranet from home on your PC or tablet via a virtual desktop. You will need to download some software to access this which is available for Windows, MacOS and iOS devices, including iPads, and Android devices. Please contact OUH IM&T Service Desk for details.

#### **Accessing your files and the intranet using your work computer**

Information on to do this can be found on [COVID-19 Staff FAQ – working from home](#) on the Trust website.

#### **Ensuring cybersecurity**

Sophos have kindly made their [Sophos Home Premium Security anti-software](#) available free of charge to all OUH employees until February 2025.

#### **IM&T technical support**

There is information available on the Information Management and Technology (IM&T) intranet [Remote Working](#) section If you need any further technical support, you are welcome to contact our IM&T colleagues on **01865 222822**.

Do you have any other top tips for working from home? If so, please email them to: [culture@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:culture@ouh.nhs.uk)