

Appendix 2

Working from Home Health and Safety Issues

In accordance with Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 ("HASAWA") there is a duty on every employer "...to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees".

In particular, the employer is responsible for:

- The provision and maintenance of the board's equipment and systems of work that are safe and without health risks;
- Ensuring safety and absences of health risks in the use, handling, storage, and transport of articles; and
- The provision of information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure health and safety.

The employer will make a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the home working activity ensuring that appropriate action is taken to remove or reduce as far as possible, risks to staff, other occupants or visitors at the home.

The staff member is required to assist in that process by completing a preliminary Health and Safety Self-Assessment [**Appendix 1**]. This assessment should take place before a new employee, or existing member of staff undertakes work from home and then reviewed on a regular basis.

Staff are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work in the home. Without prejudice to the board's duties as the employer, the staff member's duties in this regard are likely to be significant because the working environment is not under the board's control.

Risk Assessments should take into account the following issues:

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Staff will not be permitted to carry out work at a home-based workstation until a DSE Self Assessment has been carried out as described in the NHS Fife Display Screen Equipment Procedure [**GP/D 1.1**] and any recommendations implemented.

The "workstation" is defined in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 and includes the display screen, the software, the keyboard, disk drive, telephone, modem, printer, documents holder, work chair, work desk/ surface, any other items peripheral to the display screen equipment, and the immediate environment around it.

Work Equipment

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992 (PUWER) apply to work equipment used for working from home. Work equipment provided by the employer for the purposes of working from home will comply with the legislation and will be

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suitable and sufficient for its purpose, with proper information and training being given on how to use that equipment properly and safely. Particularly important will be proper storage facilities for paper files.

Any work equipment that the staff member chooses to provide themselves for the purposes of homeworking should also, as far as possible, comply with the requirements of the legislation. This is particularly important for any equipment associated with DSE that the staff member chooses to provide themselves.

Handling Loads

Staff working from home should be warned of the hazards of handling loads. Steps will be taken to avoid the need for any hazardous manual handling by staff of loads relevant to their work in the home either altogether or until suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been carried out.

Workplace

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 do not apply to the home but the standards they require provide a useful benchmark in carrying out the overall risk assessment. The home workplace should have adequate ventilation, a reasonable temperature, suitable and sufficient lighting, sufficient space, and the floor should be kept free from obstructions or from articles or substances which could cause a staff member to slip, trip or fall. If the board approves the home as suitable it will be the staff member's responsibility to maintain that safe and healthy working environment.

Electrical Equipment

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 requires electrical systems to be constructed and maintained, so far as is reasonably practicable, to prevent danger. Duties under the regulations fall on employers and employees insofar as they relate to matters under their control. The board is only responsible for electrical equipment which it supplies.

Security

Staff who undertake to meet with members of staff of NHS Fife or members of the public in the course of their employment should make appropriate arrangements to meet at the local work office or in a public building and not in the home environment unless such meeting is for the purposes of risk assessment of the home environment.

First Aid

In accordance with paragraph 3 of First Aid at work the Approved Code of Practice and Guidance to the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981, the board will ensure that the staff member has adequate and appropriate first aid provisions in the home. Staff will be given sufficient training and information to enable the board to comply with its duty to report and record the work related accidents, injuries and diseases referred to in the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

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Further guidance for employers and employees on Health & Safety for homeworkers can be found on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm>

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