Contents

1.   Assessment of Risks

1.1.   The risk assessment process is summarised below, separated into five distinct stages and action points to support effective assessment of the risks involved in lone working:

Table 1: Lone Worker Risk Assessment Process		
	Process	**Action Point**
1	Identifying lone workers	Establish and identify lone workers for each work area.
2	Identifying associated hazards	Identify the range of dangers associated with all areas of lone working and/or work processes.
3	Assessing the degree of risk for generic or individual situations	Review the generic risk assessments and complete individual or local risk assessments if necessary. Then prioritise the level of associated risk.
4	Putting control measures in place, and developing safe systems of work	Assess how effective the existing control measures are and update them if appropriate. Develop local procedures or actions plans if necessary.
5	Evaluating and review	Evaluate and record how effective the control measures are, and update risk assessments as necessary..

Table 2. List (non-exhaustive) of areas/jobs where lone workers may exist.
Managers may find this helpful for stage 1 of table 1.(Identifying lone workers)

	STAFF GROUP	EXAMPLE OCCUPATIONS
1	Lone working staff within premises or in remote parts of premises	• Nursing Staff • Porters • Security • Reception & Admin Staff • Facilities and Maintenance Staff • Radiographers • Domestic Staff • Medical Staff • IT Staff • Home Workers • Phlebotomists • Podiatrists
2	Staff working outwith normal work hours	• Domestic Staff • Porters • Estates on-call staff • Security • Transport Staff • Nursing and Medical Staff • Flexi-Workers • Community Nursing and Midwifery
3	Mobile workers working away from their fixed base carrying out home visits or who travel in the course of their work	• Community Nursing and Midwifery • Community A.H.P's • Estates on domiciliary visits • Others Using Cars/Vehicles

1.2. Risk assessments must be carried out in all areas of work where lone working poses an actual or potential risk to staff. The risk assessment will involve identifying all potential hazards and the risks associated with specific work environments, tasks or activities. It must identify who will be affected and how, and the control measures which are needed to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably possible. Risk assessment must be carried out by competent people and must be recorded and shared with those affected by it. Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include the following:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
- Is the person medically fit and suitable to be a lone worker? (e.g. Are there special needs and or conditions, which the risk assessment should consider)
- What training is needed to make sure the staff member is competent in safety matters?
- Have staff received the training which is necessary to allow them to be a lone worker?
- How will the person be supervised?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are people of a particular gender especially at risk if they are a lone worker?
- Are new or inexperienced staff especially at risk if they are a lone worker?
- Are any members of staff new or expectant mothers?
- Are younger workers especially at risk if they are a lone worker?
- What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?
- Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who are lone workers?

1.3. Details of the risk assessment must be recorded and must include:

- The extent and nature of the risks;
- Factors that contribute to the risk including job content and specific environments, tasks and activities;
- The safe systems of work to be followed to eliminate or reduce the risk.

1.4. The risks which lone workers face must be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

1.5. Using safe systems of work depends largely on local circumstances, and local procedures or protocols must be in place that provides specific guidance for staff in relation to lone working and the associated risk reduction.

1.6. Issues to consider in developing safe systems of work include:

- joint working with others for high-risk activities;
- improvements to security arrangements in buildings;
- security lighting in parking areas;
- using checking-in and monitoring systems*****;
- any special needs and / or conditions in relation to individual workers or environments;
- communications systems for sharing information on risk with colleagues in other disciplines and agencies;
- using personal protective equipment or mobile phones and personal alarms.

*Ensure any system recognises where phone signal problems may exist and staff are informed of alternative arrangements in these circumstances, e.g. "roving SIM card " may reduce the incidence of such problems.

1.7.   Appendices 2 and 3 provide two generic templates of lone worker risk assessment and measures to help control these general risks. However, each type of lone-working situation will need to be assessed individually and, where necessary, take account of local circumstances and any special needs and / or conditions of individual workers or environments

1.8.   Arrangements for managing risk must include:
- Guidance for lone workers on assessing risk (e.g. Violence and Aggression Assessment Check List. Appendix 1);
- Details of when to stop and get advice;
- The procedures to be followed in the event of an incident or emergency.

1.9.   All staff must be familiar with these local protocols and procedures. There may also need to be detailed guidance to tackle specific areas of risk such as:
- lone workers travelling alone on work-related business;
- domiciliary and home visits;
- working out-with normal office hours;
- fumigation work and working with dangerous substances;
- electrical work near live conductors.;
- individual staff needs and / or conditions.
- Individual environmental or geographical issues

2.   Staff Training

2.1.   Underpinned by a local lone work worker risk assessment the line manager and member of staff should identify and agree learning needs and how these will be met through the Turas Personal Development Planning and Review (PDPR) process. Advice and guidance on training is available from the Learning and Development Department and the Health and Safety Team.

3.   Reporting of Incidents

3.1.   Staff must report all incidents (including near misses) to their line manager or health and safety representative at the earliest opportunity as per NHS Fife Adverse Events Policy. These must be reported in DATIX. The line manager must investigate all reports where necessary, as outlined in the Policy. In order to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and associated local procedures and protocols, local statistics and incident reports must be reviewed regularly.
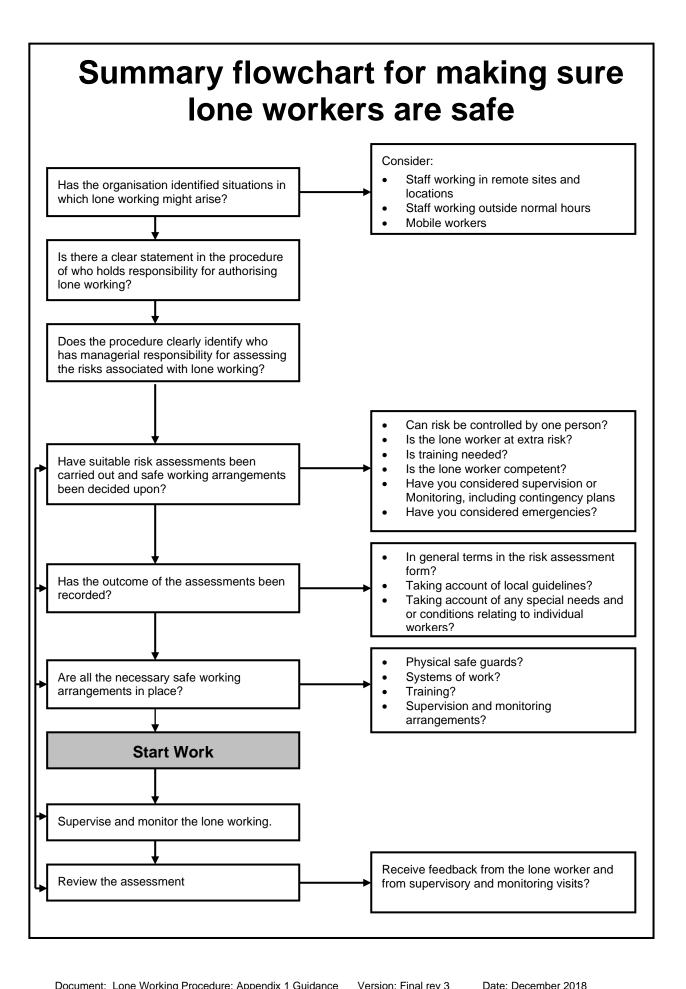
4.   Review

4.1.   This guidance and its associated policy (GP/L6) will be monitored and reviewed periodically to ensure the function of the procedure is fulfilled, and any controls are up to date and relevant. The review processes will include:

- collecting and monitoring reported incidents;
- reporting incident statistics and safety improvement measures which have been introduced, to local Health and Safety Committees and the Area Partnership Forum;
- (c) reporting to NHS Fife Management of Health and Safety Group the results of any audits on how the procedure is being implemented and followed.

5.   Information, Instruction and Training

5.1.   The manager or supervisor must inform staff:
- About the dangers and risks arising from their work;
- Of any precautions to be taken;
- What to do in the event of an emergency;
- How and when to report incidents and near misses
- Of the results of monitoring and health surveillance.

Summary flowchart for making sure lone workers are safe

Has the organisation identified situations in which lone working might arise?

Consider:
- Staff working in remote sites and locations
- Staff working outside normal hours
- Mobile workers

Is there a clear statement in the procedure of who holds responsibility for authorising lone working?

Does the procedure clearly identify who has managerial responsibility for assessing the risks associated with lone working?

Have suitable risk assessments been carried out and safe working arrangements been decided upon?

- Can risk be controlled by one person?
- Is the lone worker at extra risk?
- Is training needed?
- Is the lone worker competent?
- Have you considered supervision or Monitoring, including contingency plans
- Have you considered emergencies?

Has the outcome of the assessments been recorded?

- In general terms in the risk assessment form?
- Taking account of local guidelines?
- Taking account of any special needs and or conditions relating to individual workers?

Are all the necessary safe working arrangements in place?

- Physical safe guards?
- Systems of work?
- Training?
- Supervision and monitoring arrangements?

Start Work

Supervise and monitor the lone working.

Review the assessment

Receive feedback from the lone worker and from supervisory and monitoring visits?

6.   Appendix1: V&A Assessment Checklist

Violence & Aggression Assessment Checklist

Department: .... Section: .... Location: ....

Risk Assessment: Complete the following sections and assess the risks to anyone who might be affected by their working activities/work environment.

Hazard	Findings				Possible Remedial Action Make notes to help with your risk assessment
Workplace: Outside	Yes	No	Partially	N/A	
Is there uncontrolled access to the site?					
Is there uncontrolled access to buildings & work areas?					
Are bus stops and car parks close to buildings?					
Are there footpaths?					
Area areas well lit with good all-round visibility?					
Are there areas where people can hide or move unnoticed (e.g. trees, shrubbery, waste & storage areas)?					
Are signs clear, visible and appropriate?					
Is there a security patrol?					
Inside:					
Are there physical barriers to restricted areas?					
Are these areas suitably signed?					
Can staff make unobstructed 'swift' exits if necessary?					
Are existing security installations working and maintained?					
Are signs clear, visible and appropriate?					
Is the lighting sufficient or are there dark or shaded areas?					

Hazard	Findings				Possible Remedial Action Make notes to help with your risk assessment
Interactive Areas: e.g. Waiting Areas	Yes	No	Partially	N/A	
Is there enough space to prevent overcrowding?					
Are there private rooms available to deal with sensitive issues?					
Do staff have a good view across the area?					
Is the layout confrontational?					
Is there physical separation for staff – is this confrontational or intimidating?					
Is the seating comfortable and is there enough?					
Is the area noisy (e.g. trolleys, banging doors)?					
Are there systems to keep patients informed (e.g. of delays)?					
Are there ways to reduce anxiety or boredom?					
Lighting, Decoration & Furnishings	Yes	No	Partially	N/A	
Is the lighting harsh or glaring?					
Are there any potential weapons or missiles (e.g. unsecured chairs, pictures, pot plants, crockery)?					
Workplace Procedures & Organisations:					
Organisation					
Is there enough competent staff to deal with any possible violence?					
Are there special arrangements for higher-risk staff (e.g. young workers, pregnant workers, staff with any disability, new or inexperienced staff)/					
Are there procedures for bank staff?					
Are there any lone workers?					
Are there other precautions in place for lone workers?					
Is appropriate information available to staff on potentially violent or aggressive patients or family?					
Are emergency arrangements in place?					
Do staff travel alone?					

Hazard	Findings				Possible Remedial Action Make notes to help with your risk assessment
Workplace: Outside	Yes	No	Partially	N/A	
Do staff have a mobile workplace?					
Do staff work in a community-based setting?					
Do shift patterns involve working alone or in small numbers?					
Do shift patterns involve working late at night or during the early hours of the morning?					
Do staff work in a high crime area?					
Do staff handle valuable property or possessions?					
Do staff handle materials, including drugs, which are often targets for theft?					
Do staff handle complaints?					
Communication					
Can staff attract the attention of other staff if necessary?					
Can staff et immediate support?					
Can staff call for help if alone and working off site?					
Area systems in place to pass on information on incidents and patients to other affected staff, departments and agencies?					
Staff Training					
Are staff trained and competent to deal with potential violet and aggressive situations?					
Are staff aware of incident forms and how to fill them in?					
Are staff so busy that it is difficult to display a caring attitude?					
Patients, Family & Friends					
Is there the possibility of alcohol or drug abuse?					
Are there rowdy or over-anxious groups of people accompanying patients?					

Hazard	Findings				Possible Remedial Action Make notes to help with your risk assessment
Workplace: Inside	Yes	No	Partially	N/A	
Is there the possibility of psychiatric disorders or confused states or behavioural problems?					
Is there the possibility of situations which patients or relatives see as threatening?					
Are people likely to be unstable or volatile?					
Are people likely to he highly stressed or angry?					
Are long waiting times involved (e.g. in receiving units or clinics)?					

NAME: ....   DATE: ....

SIGNATURE: ....   FILE NO: ....

7. Appendix 2: Lone Worker Risk Assessment
RECORD OF GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT
FOR LONE WORKERS (Community or Home Visits)

NHS Fife

Department	*Enter details*
Manager responsible	*Print name of responsible Manager*
Risk Assessor(s)	*Print the assessors name here*

Description of Task / Procedure / Environment

Staff carrying out community or home visits are potentially at risk as lone workers.

*Footnote: **This generic risk assessment may be used as a template for assessing these risks. It should be modified and/or edited to take account of the environment, tasks or activities associated with work being done** and any special needs and / or conditions related to individual workers.*

Identify significant hazards / threats within the area / when undertaking task (See Hazard Identification Sheet(s) for examples)

Indicate below which of the hazards exist for the lone working situation you are assessing.

1. Visits in high-risk locations (for example, areas with high-crime rates)
2. Visits in isolated rural areas
3. Visits to involving unfamiliar clients or relatives
4. Visits to high-risk or unstable or unpredictable client group (use care plan and/or patient notes to check)
5. Visits during unsocial hours
6. New or inexperienced staff in community work
7. Staff become potential target if easily identifiable as healthcare workers (for example, uniforms, specialised equipment, etc.)
8. Staff carrying valuables or drugs.
9. Accident to, or illness of the lone worker
10. Others (add details below):

Where in the task are the hazards / threats present? (e.g. preparation, storage, transportation, during the task, at the end)

En route to or from domiciliary or community visits and while on site on such visits in homes or in the community

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Who / what is at risk from the significant hazards / threats identified above?
NHS Fife staff who have to make domiciliary or community visits as part of their job.

What risk control measures are in place now? (E.g. hoists, local exhaust ventilation, protective equipment, safe systems of work, personal alarms, training and supervision, contingency plans)

For each of the hazards listed in the hazard identification section, consider the list below and indicate which are in place and ensure staff are aware of these, then allocate each hazard a risk level of HIGH, MODERATE or LOW:

Complete a V&A Assessment Checklist and supplement this with information from the list below;

a. Pre-Assessment of new clients in a health centre or clinic.
b. Accompanied visits (2nd member of staff) when there are concerns about safety.
c. Potential or known risk factors recorded in referral documents and/or care plans.
d. Risk information shared with/by other professionals and agencies.
e. Systems for monitoring staff whereabouts and movements and for regularly reporting to base.*
f. Personal attack alarms available.
g. Mobile phones available. *
h. Information and training given to staff on basic personal safety.
i. Staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence (de-escalation).
j. Staff aware of system for reporting incidents or near misses via Datix, and appreciate the need for this procedure.
k. Individual Staff risk assessments for special needs and or conditions (e.g. New and expectant mothers)
l. Home Visit procedure
m. Others (please give details):

*Ensure any system recognises where phone signal problems may exist and staff are informed of alternative arrangements in these circumstances, e.g. "roving SIM card " may reduce the incidence of such problems.

What risks are not adequately controlled? (Please assess if risks are very low / low / moderate / high using the grading matrix)

List here the hazards assessed in the section above as HIGH or MODERATE

If risk is moderate or high, has it been entered on the risk register?

Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **ID No:**

What additional controls are required? (Remember to complete an action plan indicating who is going to take action and by when) (Consider emergency situations e.g. major spills, fire, cardiac arrest)
List here the measures needed to further reduce the assessed risk to a level which is as low as reasonably practicable

Has the risk assessment been agreed with your line manager?

Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **Manager's Signature and date**

Have the findings of this Risk Assessment been communicated to all relevant staff?	How?
Yes ☐ **No** ☐	

Risk assessment completed by:

Print Name: **Signature:**

Designation:

Date: **How soon should this assessment be reviewed?**

Review carried out by:

Print Name: **Signature:**

On what date?

8.   Appendix 3: Risk Assessment for Lone Workers in Buildings

RECORD OF GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT
FOR LONE WORKERS IN BUILDINGS

NHS
Fife

Department	*Enter details*
Manager responsible	*Print name of responsible Manager*
Risk Assessor(s)	*Print the assessors name here*

Description of Task / Procedure / Environment
Staff carrying out lone working in buildings.

*Footnote: **This generic risk assessment may be used as a template for assessing these risks. It should be modified and/or edited to take account of the environment, tasks or activities associated with work being done** and any special needs and / or conditions related to individual workers*.

Identify significant hazards / threats within the area / when undertaking task (See Hazard Identification Sheet(s) for examples)

Indicate below which of the hazards exist for the lone working situation you are assessing.

a. Staff working alone (no other staff in close proximity).
b. Staff working alone outwith normal office hours.
c. Staff meeting with clients or patients in isolated locations and alone.
d. Inadequate security staff provision.
e. Access to the building insecure.
f. Lack of first aid if staff become ill or injured.
g. Staff working alone in confined spaces.
h. Staff working alone with dangerous substances.
i. Others (please give details):

Where in the task are the hazards / threats present? (e.g. preparation, storage, transportation, during the task, at the end)
At the workplace while staff are lone workers

Who / what is at risk from the significant hazards / threats identified above?

NHS Fife staff who have carry out lone working in buildings

What risk control measures are in place now? (E.g. hoists, local exhaust ventilation, protective equipment, safe systems of work, personal alarms, training and supervision, contingency plans)

For each of the hazards listed in the hazard identification section, consider the list below and indicate which are in place and ensure staff are aware of these, then allocate each hazard a risk level of HIGH, MODERATE or LOW:

Complete a V&A Assessment Checklist and supplement this with information from the list below;

a. Joint working for high-risk activities (e.g. in confined spaces or with dangerous substances).
b. CCTV within or around the building.
c. Entrance security systems (for example, digilocks or swipe cards).
d. Security lighting or adequate lighting around access points and parking areas.
e. Panic buttons/alarms linked to staffed locations.
f. Reporting/checking-in systems.
g. Regular supervisor or colleague check during activities.
h. Two-way radios or other communication systems. *
i. Staff have information and training on basic personal safety
j. Staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence (de-escalation).
k. Staff aware of system for reporting incidents or near misses via Datix, and appreciate the need for this procedure.
l. Individual Staff risk assessments for special needs and or conditions (e.g. New and expectant mothers)
m. Others (please give details):

*Ensure any system recognises where phone signal problems may exist and staff are informed of alternative arrangements in these circumstances, e.g. "roving SIM card " may reduce the incidence of such problems.

What risks are not adequately controlled? (Please assess if risks are very low / low / moderate / high using the grading matrix)

List here the hazards assessed in the section above as HIGH or MODERATE

If risk is moderate or high, has it been entered on the risk register?

Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **ID No:**

What additional controls are required? (Remember to complete an action plan indicating who is going to take action and by when) (Consider emergency situations e.g. major spills, fire, cardiac arrest)

List here the measures needed to further reduce the assessed risk to a level which is as low as reasonably practicable

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Has the risk assessment been agreed with your line manager?

Yes ☐   **No** ☐   **Manager's Signature and date**

Have the findings of this Risk Assessment been communicated to all relevant staff?	How?
Yes ☐	
No ☐	

Risk assessment completed by:

Print Name: **Signature:**

Designation:

Date: **How soon should this assessment be reviewed?**

Review carried out by:

Print Name: **Signature:**

On what date?