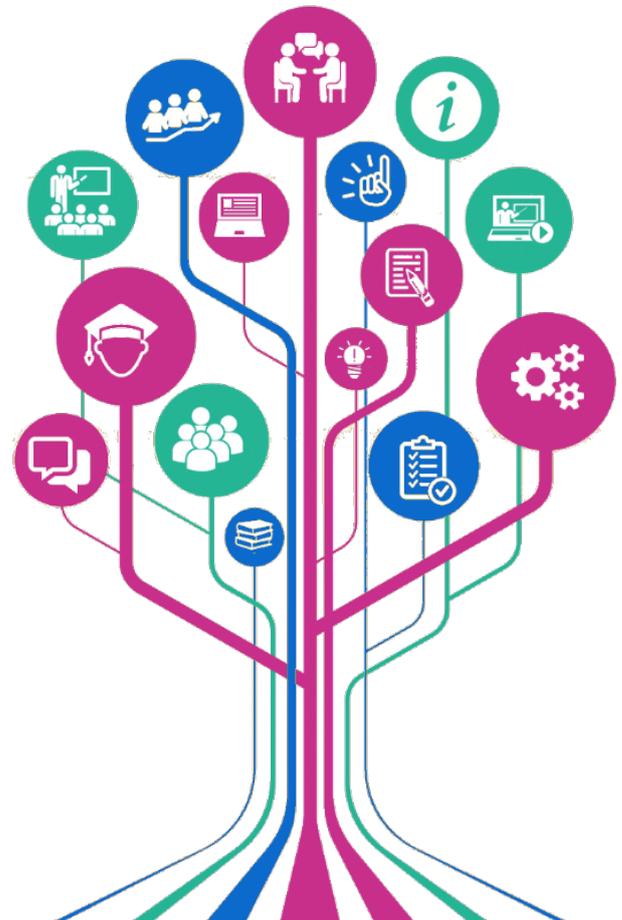


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# Staff Guide: Supporting your wellbeing while working at home



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## Introduction

Due to the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak there is now the requirement for a number of NHS Golden Jubilee staff to be supported to work at home on a temporary basis. As this could be a sudden change to your working arrangements, it's important to ensure you look after your health and wellbeing during this time.

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with helpful information and guidance to support your health and wellbeing while working at home.

**This guide must be read in conjunction with the HR Homeworking Policy**

<http://www.nhsnational-hr.scot.nhs.uk/policy-process-and-terms-and-conditions/working-atfrom-home/94183>

## What is 'working at home'?

Working at home is an agreement between you and your line manager that you can work at home for part of your working time, even though your contract of employment requires you to be based onsite.

While working at home can provide you with greater flexibility in terms of work / life balance it can also be isolating, particularly if you prefer the social interaction of being on-site at work.

Before you begin working at home, you should discuss this with your manager and complete the 'Home Workers Self-Assessment Form' to ensure you can safely work at home. A copy of this assessment can be found within the HR Homeworking Policy.

## Tips for working at home

You may find the following tips helpful in supporting your health and wellbeing when working at home.

### Be kind to yourself

There's a lot going on right now, so it's understandable to feel anxious, worried or stressed about family, health, income, and work - so be kind to yourself, don't feel you have to have it all worked out, and pretend everything is normal.

## Create a specific working space

When working at home, treat it as if it is a normal working day; get up at your usual time, shower, get dressed and have breakfast. This will help focus your mind into 'work mode' and get you started for the day.

Where possible, try and create a set space for working. Although you may not have a home office with a desk and chair, where possible try to create a set space to work comfortably from. Focus on your posture, try to maintain a good posture throughout the day and take regular short breaks from sitting (every 10 minutes to stretch is recommended). Movement is key to avoiding postural aches and pains that come from sitting at a laptop or computer for long periods of time.

The Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Occupational Health and Ergonomics (<https://acpohe.csp.org.uk/>) have produced some tips on setting up a comfortable workstation at home:

- Use books to raise your laptop to a more suitable height
- if you don't have an adjustable chair, sit on cushions to raise your height (if needed)
- Try using a box as a foot rest, if needed
- Add a rolled up towel or cushion behind your back to give it extra support, and
- Increase your screen view size, i.e. over 100%, so you do not strain your eyes.

## Maintain a positive work / life balance

When you are working on-site, it is generally easier to leave your work 'at the door' when you finish your shift. Therefore, when working at home you may find it more difficult to switch from 'work' to 'home' mode.

Working at home makes it easier to work longer hours and take fewer breaks, sometimes without even realising it. You may find it helpful to put a reminder in your diary when you plan to finish working for the day – and stick to it. It's also important to make sure you take a lunch break and step away from your work, if possible, try to get some fresh air or take a short walk during this time.

If you can't work in a separate room while at home, ensure you pack up your work things (e.g. laptop and paperwork) at the end of each day and keep it out of sight until the next working day

The Scottish Government has developed a 'Going Home Checklist' that they recommend you review when finishing work for the day, this includes:

- Taking a moment to think about your day
- Acknowledging the most difficult thing at work that day, and then letting it go

- Being proud of what you did at work that day
- Considering three things that went well
- Checking in on your colleagues before you finish: are they okay?
- Are you okay? Your colleagues are there to listen to and support you too, and
- Switching your attention to home and the need to rest and recharge.

## **Background Noise**

Studies have shown background noise for most people helps keep you focussed, so consider listening to the radio, music or even podcasts while you are working.

## **Make use of technology to keep in touch with others**

Working at home can be isolating. Therefore, it's important to ensure you are in regular contact with your team members.

Microsoft Teams has been rolled out within NHS Golden Jubilee to enable you to keep in contact with colleagues remotely. You can use this to chat with other team members, share files and pieces of work with each other, and even have video conferences. Try to schedule these in your diary as frequently as required. For access to Microsoft Teams, please speak to your manager and raise a call via the eHealth Service Desk.

## **Create a to-do list**

Working at home, can sometimes make it difficult to get your mind focussed on work and the tasks you have to do. Making a to-do list of tasks (daily or weekly) that you have to complete can help keep you focussed.

## **Sleep Well**

Getting plenty of good quality sleep is extremely important for your physical / mental health and wellbeing.

Stick to your regular bedtime and waking up time to keep yourself in a routine. Try to relax as much as possible in the evenings. It is recommended that you do not use any electronic devices (tv's, smartphones, etc) for one hour before bed to help you switch off, instead you could try reading a book, having a bath or meditation to help you relax, which in turn will aid a better sleep.

## **Mental Wellbeing**

It is important to look after your own mental wellbeing, and one way to do this is Mindfulness. Mindfulness is a simple technique that focusses on your breathing and offers breathing techniques to help alleviate stress and keep you calm.

## Helpful Resources

The [NHS website](#) has links to some resources on mindfulness, including a helpful demonstration video on breathing exercises.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mindfulness/>

[Headspace](#) is a website and app that offers a range of practices on mindfulness and things like managing stress, helping sleep, etc. NHS staff now have free access to the content that normally has a fee attached until the end of 2020. See their website for more information. <https://www.headspace.com/>

[Mind](#) have also produced a range of resources and tips on their website under the heading 'Coronavirus and your wellbeing'. <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

[Clear your head](#) is a website developed by the Scottish Government and includes practical tips on how to clear your head and feel better. <https://clearyourhead.scot/>

## Further information / contacts

If you require additional support while working at home, speak to your manager in the first instance. There are also a number of internal services available to support your health and wellbeing:

### Occupational Health

Email: [Occ.Health@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Occ.Health@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk)

### Occupational Health Physiotherapy

Email: [physio.occhealth@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:physio.occhealth@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk)

### Learning and Organisational Development

Email: [L&ODinfo@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:L&ODinfo@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk), telephone 0141 951 5123

### Human Resources

Email: [Lynne.Rapson@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Lynne.Rapson@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk), telephone 0141 951 5569

### Spiritual Care

Email: [Andrew.Gillies@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Andrew.Gillies@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk)