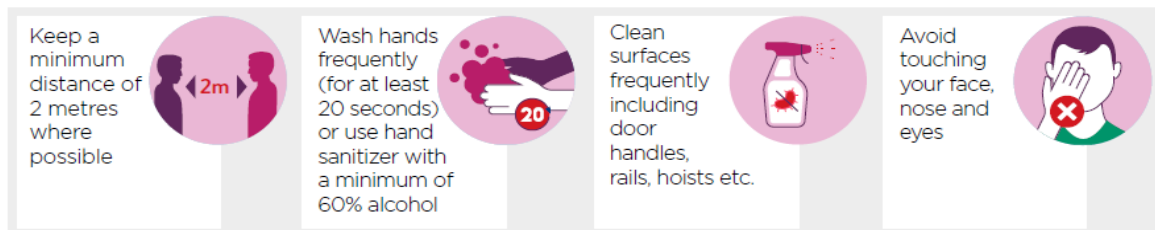# Health and Safety Toolbox Talk No: 141

Working from home during Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic

Working from home, where possible, is key in the fight against coronavirus. Staying at home is the single most important action we can all take to protect the NHS and save lives.

And while you may be well and not having any symptoms, working at home can be new experience for many people. It can be challenging and isolating. This Toolbox Talk aims to provide some tips to help you keep healthy and well.

Where you will be working:

- Where possible, designate a place to work that is as free (as possible) of distractions as you can make it.

- Use a desk or suitable table for your laptop. Balancing the laptop on your lap is extremely bad for posture. And the equipment can get hot.

- Although you may be looking slightly down towards the screen, try to sit as upright as possible to help support your back

- Keep your feet flat on the floor or footrest. Do **NOT** sit on crossed legs, or a leg tucked under your backside

- Give yourself enough arm / wrist room on the work surface

Set a routine for working at home - it's important to get up and get started, to take regular breaks including a lunch break. Try to have a healthy lunch where possible.

Drink plenty of fluid (not alcohol) – keep hydrated.

If you can, it is recommended to have a quick break every twenty minutes or so. Avert your eyes from the screen, have a little walk about and do some gentle stretching – you will probably be sitting for longer periods than in your office, and it is better not to remain too sedentary.

It is important that structured and unstructured connections with work and colleagues carry on whilst people are working remotely – simply put, keep in touch with your colleagues, and check they are ok.

Open windows where you can, it is important to have good air circulation

If you have not used Skype or Teams before, ask for support from you manager or colleague.

Please refer to https://www.pinnaclegroup.co.uk/coronavirus-information-for-staff/ for additional guidance

COVID 19 update

To help contain the virus, office workers who can work effectively from home should do so over the winter. Where an employer, in consultation with their employee, judges an employee can carry out their normal duties from home they should do so.

Public-sector employees working in essential services, including education settings, should continue to go into work where necessary.

Anyone else who cannot work from home should go to their place of work.

The risk of transmission can be substantially reduced if COVID-secure guidelines are followed closely. Extra consideration should be given to those people at higher risk.

Those classed as clinically extremely vulnerable can go to work as long as the workplace is COVID-19 secure, but should carry on working from home wherever possible.

There is no limit to group size when you are meeting or gathering for work purposes, but workplaces should be set up to meet the COVID-secure guidelines.

You should continue to:

- follow social distancing rules
- travel to venues or amenities that are open, for work or to access education, but aim to reduce the number of journeys you make

Information on local COVID alert levels, including what they mean, why they are being introduced and what the different levels are, can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions