



Lewisham
Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS Lewisham CCG

Lone Worker Policy

Document Information

Category:	Corporate
Summary:	The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements regarding personal risk management and how this will be implemented and monitored by the CCG
Approval Date:	May 2017
Date of Next Review:	April 2020
Accountable Officer:	Martin Wilkinson
Policy Author:	Katie Hitchen
Version:	Version 0.4
Superseded documents:	Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group Lone Worker Policy
Equality Analysis	<p>This policy applies to all permanent & interim employees within the CCG. This document has been assessed for equality impact on the protected groups, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. This document demonstrates Lewisham CCG's commitment to create a positive culture of respect for all individuals, including staff, patients, their families and carers as well as community partners.</p> <p>The intention is, as required by the Equality Act 2010, to identify, remove or minimise discriminatory practice in the nine named protected characteristics of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and marriage and civil partnership. It is also intended to use the Human Rights Act 1998 and to promote positive practice and value the diversity of all individuals and communities.</p>
Further Information:	
Related Documents:	Health & Safety Policy Incident Reporting Policy Information Governance Policy

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Sponsor: Victoria Medhurst, AD Integrated Governance.
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Contents

Section	Title	Page No.
1	Introduction	4
2	Scope	4
3	Definition of Lone Worker	4
4	Roles and Responsibilities	4
5	Risk Assessments	5
6	Lone Worker in Office Premises	6
7	Staff Working at Home	6
8	Training	6
9	Supervision & Monitoring	6
10	Illness, Accidents or Emergencies	7
11	Incident Reporting and Recording	7
12	Support	9
13	Legal Action	9
14	Policy Review	9
Appendix 1	Health & Safety Responsibilities for Line Managers	11
Appendix 2	Guidance on Lone Working	12
Appendix 3	Checklist for Managers	14
Appendix 4	Risk Assessment template	15
Appendix 5	Dynamic Risk Assessment	16

1. Introduction

Lewisham CCG takes the health, safety and welfare of all staff seriously.

It recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and often out of hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect staff, so far as is reasonably practicable, from the risks of lone working.

The CCG also recognises it has an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), for the health, safety and welfare at work of its staff.

Where staff are required to work alone, both the individual staff member and their line manager have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety Policy and the Incident Reporting Policy.

2. Scope

The Lone Worker policy applies to:

- All staff employed by the CCG, including interim staff, working on its premises;
- All staff employed by the CCG, working in their own homes, in other CCG premises or premises of other organisations;
- All visitors to its premises including contractors i.e. Security Guard, Cleaner etc;
- All employees travelling to and from work areas on CCG business activities

3. Definition of Lone Workers

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

This will include:

- Staff who work from home;
- Staff working out of hours or returning to the site when on-call;
- Staff working separately from others, for example working from a GP Practice;

The CCG recognises that any member of staff may spend a limited amount of their working time 'alone'.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Chief Officer

Is the accountable officer, and as such has responsibility for ensuring that appropriately resourced systems are in place for Health & Safety Management.

Corporate Director

The Corporate Director will be responsible for ensuring that the CCG implement this policy.

Associate Director Integrated Governance

The Associate Director Integrated Governance will be responsible for reviewing and co-ordinating the implementation of this policy.

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Local Security Management Specialist (LSMS)

The LSMS commissioned by NHS Lewisham CCG will provide specialist advice and support regarding security risks associated with lone working, including conducting specialist risk assessments where indicated.

Directors and Line Managers

All Directors and line managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Lone Worker Policy is effectively implemented in all areas within their control
- Conducting lone worker risk assessments as applicable to their areas of responsibility and ensuring that specialist security risk assessments are conducted where required.

Staff Engagement Group (SEG)

The SEG will informally act as a forum for the review of this policy and make recommendations on policies, procedures and issues for the senior management team's consideration.

Staff

All **staff** are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions;
- reporting all incidents, difficulties or risks raised from lone working, however minor, to their manager even if they do not wish any further action to be taken; Failure to report an incident may put others at risk;
- reporting any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone;
- maintaining an up to date diary of their appointments that is accessible to others whilst they are out working alone;
- being certain of three important things:
 - i) That they have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are exposed;
 - ii) That they know what to do if something goes wrong; and
 - iii) That someone knows their whereabouts, what they are doing and when they are due back.

5. Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is the first step in deciding what prevention or safe working arrangements need to be taken to protect staff from harm. All employees whose work contains an element of lone working should carry out a risk assessment. The risk assessment will provide an indication as to whether the work can or cannot be done safely alone.

Risk assessments should take account of both normal work and foreseeable emergencies including fire, potential risks such as violence, aggression and containment as well as illness and accidents.

The following issues should be considered when drawing up and recording a risk assessment:

- The environment – location, security, access
- The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk

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- History – any previous incidents in similar situations
- Any other special circumstances

All information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker, consideration should be given to making other arrangements to complete the task.

Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk and should ensure someone is always aware of their movements and expected return time.

The line manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements.

6. Lone Workers in Office Premises

Staff are not permitted to be in the Cantilever House once the premises officially close.

For information on what to do if you are working alone in an office please see Appendix 2, Guidance on Lone Working.

7. Staff working at home

Staff working from home should be in regular contact with their line manager or other designated person if working at home for extended periods.

Managers should be particularly aware of the importance of such arrangements for staff that live alone.

Staff should make managers aware of any changes in their circumstances where possible.

8. Training

Training is important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in uncertain situations, as well as enabling people to cope in unexpected circumstances.

Lone workers must be sufficiently experienced and fully understand the risks and precautions involved in their work and the location that they work in. Equally, the CCG should be clear what work is able to be completed safely by a lone worker and ensure that workers are competent to do the job alone and recognise when advice should be sought.

Managers should set limits of what may and may not be done whilst working alone.

9. Supervision and Monitoring

Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still the CCG's responsibility to ensure staff safety as far as is reasonably practicable.

The level of supervision needed is a management decision, which should be based on the findings of a risk assessment, i.e. the higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to individuals to decide whether they need assistance.

Procedures will need to be put in place to monitor lone workers as effective means of communication are essential to ensure that lone workers remain safe, these may include:

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- Regular contact by phone, email etc
- Warnings that raise an alarm in the event of an emergency
- Warnings to be activated if contact is not made with base within a specific timeframe
- Regular checking of procedures designed to raise the alarm if contact is lost with a lone worker
- Robust systems to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of their work

10. Illness, Accidents or Emergencies

The CCG's risk assessment should identify foreseeable events. Emergency procedures should be established and employees trained in them. Information regarding emergency procedures should be given to lone workers. Your risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need first aid-training. They should also have access to adequate first-aid facilities and clear reporting guidelines.

11. Incident Reporting and Recording

All staff should familiarise themselves with the CCG's incident reporting and management policy and information governance policy.

Staff should report all incidents/accidents and 'near misses' to their line manager at the earliest opportunity. An incident can be defined as an 'unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequences of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage to patients, members of staff, visitors, contractors or the CCG's reputation'.

Types of incidents include:

- Health & Safety incidents
- Security incidents
- Fire incidents
- Physical or verbal aggression
- Information governance incidents, including Breach of Confidentiality

Any incidents or near misses should be reported following the process outlined below and in the CCG incident policy:

Incidents should be reported confidentially through the following means:

a) staff should report using the CCG's DATIX Incident Reporting Form (within two working days of the incident) by clicking on the link below:

<https://lewishamccg.datix.thirdparty.nhs.uk/Live/index.php>

If access to this system is not available, staff should complete the form in Appendix I and send to lewccg.incidents@nhs.net within two working days of the incident to enable the logging of the incident.

c) Staff must inform their line manager within two working days of the incident

Reporting of **Information Governance (IG) incidents**

An Information Governance Incidents will typically breach one of the principles of the Data Protection Act and/or the Common Law Duty of Confidentiality.

Incidents should be reported confidentially through the following means:

a) staff should report using the CCG's DATIX Incident Reporting Form (within two working days of the incident) by clicking on the link below:

<https://lewishamccg.datix.thirdparty.nhs.uk/Live/index.php>

If access to this system is not available, staff should complete the form in Appendix I and send to lewccg.incidents@nhs.net within two working days of the incident to enable the logging of the incident.

b) Staff must inform the IG Manager NELCSU , SIRO or Caldicott Guardian within two working days.

Staff should not inform the Associate Director of Integrated Governance or their line manager unless informed to do so by the IG Manager, SIRO or Caldicott Guardian.

For security incidents, a summary of the incident will be reported to the CCG's Local Security Management Specialist as soon as possible by the Corporate Service Officer, whether or not the incident is considered to be serious enough to be reported to the police.

Failure to report an incident may put others at risk.

12. Support

In the event of an incident involving a lone worker, the manager should immediately ensure the employee receives any necessary medical treatment or advice.

Managers should be sensitive to the employee's need to talk about the incident and offer any assistance possible.

Staff should be made aware of the employee assistance programme provider, Workplace Wellness. They offer a confidential free service to staff which consists of information, advice and support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Further information can be found on the Intranet.

13. Legal Action

The CCG will seek to take legal action in all cases of physical violence and in specified cases of verbal violence if deemed appropriate, in line with the Directions to NHS bodies on 'tackling violence against staff 2003' and guidance issued by NHS Security Management Service.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years' time, unless an earlier review is required due to legislation or organisational change.

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0.1	20/07/2016	Victoria Medhurst	
0.2	25/01/2017	Susanna Masters	
0.3	20/01/2017	Katie Hitchen	Updates made
0.4	12/04/2017	Victoria Medhurst	Updates made – alignment with Incident Policy

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Appendix 1

Health and Safety Responsibilities for Line Managers

To ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors who may be affected by activity for which they are responsible in the workplace.

Line Managers will conduct risk assessments and implement suitable and sufficient controls of the risk identified for their own area of responsibilities. This will be done by:

- Identifying hazards to health and safety in the workplace and work practices
- Ensuring adequate resources are provided (including time allowance for staff taking on additional roles to comply with this policy)
- Reducing or removing hazards which are within their control.
- Drawing to the attention of directors, shortcomings that are not within their control and recommending changes to be made together with acceptable priorities and placing insufficiently controlled health and safety risks on the risk register.
- Ensuring that Safe Systems of work are developed that are suitable and sufficient.
- Monitoring changes in work practices and workplaces to assess the effect on safe working.
- Ensuring that health and safety related policies, including the Health and Wellbeing Policy, are applied and routinely monitored.
- Investigating actual and potential unsafe practices.
- Maintaining records of health and safety training provided for staff.

Appendix 2 – Guidance on Lone Working

Cantilever House is open from 7am until 9pm Monday to Friday. A security guard is present from 7-9am and again from 5-9pm in the reception area on the ground floor.

Staff working alone within a department during office hours should:

- Liaise with security to let them know that you are the last person in the office, and your estimated exit time
- If you are working very late at night/early in the morning, let a friend or relative know your whereabouts and the time that you are expected back.
- Ensure that you have access to a telephone to call for help if needed
- Secure valuables/keys in an appropriate place
- Any urgent building concerns which take place after 4.30pm must be reported to the out of hour's contact (0203 688 2244, option 6) as well as an email to Sue Woods (sue.woods3@nhs.net) or Katie Hitchen (khitchen@nhs.net) of any action taken.
- On leaving a department, ensure that all windows are closed.
- Do not use the lift when working alone in the building.
- If an incident occurs, follow the reporting and recording procedure
- Should the fire alarm activate whilst you are in the office alone, you must leave the building immediately by the nearest fire exit. Make your way to the allocated safety point, opposite the fire station on Eltham Road, and wait for the emergency services.

Lone working off site

All staff should be able to access a 'read only' view of your diary via outlook. However, when making lone worker visits/meetings, it is important to communicate with others about your intentions.

You must inform a colleague of:

- The time and location of the meeting
- A contact number if possible
- The estimated length of the meeting
- The time when you are expected to return to the office
- If not returning to the office, the time and location of your next meeting or the time when you are due to arrive home.
- If driving, car make, registration and model.

When a colleague does not return as expected

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If one of your colleagues has not returned back to the office or rung in to confirm their whereabouts do not panic.

In the first instance ask other colleagues whether they have heard from that person, or have been notified of changes to their plans.

If not, ring their mobile phone and check to see that they are safe.

If you receive no answer, or if they answer but sound distressed, then you should notify their manager immediately. If they are not available, notify the most senior person on the premises.

If it has not been possible to obtain an answer from their mobile, the Manager should then try to contact the person at home or through their next of kin **before contacting the police.**

In cases where the person answers but appears to be in distress, the police should be called immediately.

Staff at Laurence House

Staff at Laurence House should be aware of both the CCG's Lone worker policy and the Laurence House Lone Worker Policy (attached).



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Appendix 3 – Checklist for Managers

Are your staff –

- Issued with all relevant policies and procedures relating to lone working?
- Given all information about potential risks for aggression and violence in relation to where they may be visiting and the appropriate measures needed to control these risks?
- Aware of how to report an incident and of the need to report all incidents when they occur?
- Issued with the necessary contacts for post-incident support, or know where to find them?

Are they –

- Aware of the importance of doing proper planning before a visit, being aware of the risks and doing all they can to ensure their own safety in advance of a visit?
- Aware of the importance of leaving an itinerary of movements with their line manager and/or appropriate colleagues?
- Aware of the need to keep regular contact with appropriate colleagues and, where relevant their nominated 'buddy'?
- Aware of the need to carry out continual dynamic risks assessments during a visit and take an appropriate course of action?
- Aware of how to obtain support and advice from management in and outside of normal working hours?
- Aware that they should never put themselves or colleagues in any danger and if they feel threatened should withdraw immediately?

Do they –

- Appreciate the organisation's commitment to and support for the protection of lone workers and the measures that have been put in place to protect them?
- Appreciate that they have their own responsibilities for their own safety?
- Appreciate the circumstances under which visits should be terminated?
- Appreciate the requirements for reporting incidents of aggression and violence?
- Understand the support made available to lone workers by the CCG, especially post-incident support and summary

Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment Template – Lone Worker

Assessment				
Description of work Activity:		Location:		
Employee name:		Date of assessment:		
Carried out by:		Department:		
Activity & Area of Work			Yes	No
Does this staff member work out of core office hours (9-5pm)?				
Does this staff member work alone?				
Does this staff member work from home regularly?				
Are the means of communication between this person and the department adequate?				
Could this staff member be located easily at any given time?				
Is the manager or nominated person notified of all staff visits and timings even when called out for emergencies?				
Is this staff members electronic calendar (read only access) accessible by all?				
Does this staff member have information and training on health and safety and the risk associate with working alone?				
Has this staff member been given guidance on setting up computer workstations ergonomically for remote working?				
Has this staff member been given guidance on safe manual handling?				
Has this staff member been given guidance on safe driving?				
Has this staff member been given guidance on lone working?				
Do you have suitable arrangements for controlling the risk of work-related stress, including isolation or poorly managed work-life balance for home working?				
Is this staff member aware of how, where and why to report an incident or near miss?				

Other Concerns – Please specify

List any possible immediate remedial action:

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Appendix 5 – Dynamic Risk Assessments

A Dynamic Risk Assessment is “The continuous process of identifying hazards, **assessing risk**, taking action to eliminate or reduce **risk**, monitoring and reviewing, in the rapidly changing circumstances of an operational incident.”

