

Homeworking | Employee Guide to Mental Health and Wellbeing

Intention

Working from home during this difficult time can be challenging in many ways. In addition to our worries and concerns about keeping our friends and loved ones safe from the virus, we may also have the added pressures of taking care of small children, or have older children with school work to do, or maybe we are living alone and are struggling with the lack of face-to-face contact with other people. Whatever your personal situation is, it is extremely important that we all take steps to keep ourselves as well as we can be, both mentally and physically.

This short guide is intended to help employees consider the potential effects of the current pandemic and how we can take steps to reduce the impact on our mental health.

Our duty to you

As an employer, we are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

What can I do to help myself?

1. Try to create some structure to your day and maintain a positive work-life balance

Plan your day and create a new routine that works for you. Make sure you take a break away from your work at lunchtime. If you can, try to get some fresh air or use this time to go for your one form of outdoor exercise each day. Going outside into the sunshine will increase the production of serotonin hormone and can help to boost your mood, make you feel calmer and help with sleep. Eating a well-balanced diet and staying hydrated is also important to staying healthy.

2. It's good to talk

Working from home can feel quite isolating at the best of times, so it is particularly important to ensure that you have regular check-ins with colleagues, whether that be one-to-ones with other colleagues or team meetings to keep everyone focused and motivated. As well as phone calls, there are now many apps available, including Microsoft Teams, Skype and FaceTime, that can be used to keep in touch with work colleagues while working remotely.

3. Establish new ways and opportunities of working

Working remotely may require some innovative ways of working. Consider how the current restrictions can be overcome, and maybe even turned into potential new business opportunities. Think about how you can communicate and support each other through this difficult time.

How can I get help?

This is an uncertain and anxious time for everyone, and it is quite normal to feel this way. If you feel like you are struggling to cope, you may need some additional support. Speak with your line

manager or your mental health first aider for further information on what support services are available through your workplace.