



Sample risk assessment for staff / volunteers working from home

(Health and Safety Executive <https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/home.htm>)

As an employer (or recruiter, volunteer co-ordinator or supervisor; all these terms could cover several people taking on a single role or multiple roles met by one person) you should consider the risks that might apply to your home-working staff across these areas:

- Recruitment and induction
- Physical safety
- Mental health / emotional well-being
- Meeting their own care needs

Please see our sample assessment below.

You may have further hazards specific to your roles to build into the framework and your own solutions to some of the issues outlined.

Please share your good practice with us, so we may share it with other organisations.

USEFUL LINKS

[Infoengine Cymru](#) for local support organisations

[Social Care Wales information and resources covid-19](#)

[Silent call video](#)

[Employee Assistance Programme association](#)

RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION

Hazards	Harm	Control measures (What are you already doing? What further action is necessary?)	Action by whom?	Action by when? (Timing or date)
Unsuitable applicant	Access to children or adults at risk	Application form Two references, followed up Use of DBS checks / self-disclosure form Video interview Induction (video conference / webinar) Code of conduct Clear remit (dos and don'ts) of role	Recruiter Supervisor	On application When successful

Poor performance / conduct in role	Harm to service users, to volunteer or to reputation of organisation	Regular contact – frequency and method Measurable (SMART) targets Accountability – evidence of tasks achieved Quality control / assessment Training?	Supervisor	
Health affected by coronavirus	Harm to volunteers, their family, service users, the public	Clear health protection messages given re: social distancing and self-isolation, use of PPE where applicable Reporting procedures	Supervisor	

PHYSICAL SAFETY

Hazards	Harm	Control measures (What are you already doing? What further action is necessary?)	Action by whom?	Action by when? (Timing or date)
Hearing damage	Hearing damage from exposure to high noise levels for long periods, sudden loud noises or from hearing infections due to poor headset hygiene	<p>Use of volume controls on headsets</p> <p>Default settings after each call, to prevent volume creep</p> <p>Staff guidance in headset hygiene and ensuring a comfortable fit.</p> <p>Reporting of incidents of 'acoustic shock' from loud sounds over telephone equipment</p>	<p>Supervisor to ensure</p> <p>Reminders re: volume control, headset hygiene.</p> <p>Monitor and investigate any reports of acoustic shock</p>	Regular intervals

Voice strain	Call handlers may suffer voice problems, including voice loss	<p>Guidance on use of microphones, and equipment hygiene</p> <p>Self-care: to keep a drink at workstations</p> <p>Regular breaks away from the workstation to do other jobs, eg paperwork.</p>	Supervisor to remind staff to self-care	Regular intervals
Slips, spills, trips	Injuries occur in their home workplaces	<p>General good housekeeping</p> <p>All areas well lit, including stairs</p> <p>No trailing leads or cables</p> <p>Allow time to tidy / clean, etc.</p>	<p>Supervisor: Regular reminders</p> <p>All staff responsible for addressing issues</p>	Regular intervals

Electrical	Possible electrical shocks or burns from using faulty electrical equipment. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	<p>Use all equipment as per the instructions and as intended</p> <p>Don't use damaged electrical equipment</p> <p>Request replacements.</p> <p>Take care with drinks on workstation.</p> <p>Request fire assessment.</p>	Staff to report all issues to supervisor, to address as applicable.	Regular intervals
Posture and physical comfort	Damage to neck, back or shoulders due to poor posture, wrong height of chair or workstation, wrong type of chair etc.	Guidance on posture and best practice for positioning of equipment, workstation, chair etc. provided.	<p>Supervisor: Reminders.</p> <p>All staff responsible for addressing issues.</p> <p>Supervisor, address as applicable.</p>	Regular intervals

Eye strain	Use of VDUs causing eye ache, blurred vision, headaches etc.	Guidance re; screen settings, etc. Access to sight tests and glasses. Reminder to take frequent breaks from the screen.	Supervisor: Reminders. All staff responsible for addressing issues. Supervisor, address as applicable.	Regular intervals
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MENTAL HEALTH / EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Hazards	Harm	Control measures (What are you already doing? What further action is necessary?)	Action by whom?	Action by when? (Timing or date)
Stress	Adverse effects of: (eg) lack of job control (no control over timing / frequency of incoming calls) or verbal abuse during calls	<p>Call targets set in consultation with supervisors to ensure they're realistic – Protocols followed.</p> <p>Staff get induction / training / support for the role. Staff can talk to supervisors or manager if they are feeling unwell or ill at ease about the calls. Policy for dealing with inappropriate responses from service users, including handing them over to others to deal with.</p> <p>Understand it's not personal, many people find these circumstances stressful.</p>	<p>Supervisor</p> <p>Peer support mechanisms</p> <p>Access to Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)</p>	

<p>Emotional exhaustion</p>	<p>Emotional burden of supporting others who are suffering, causing staff distress</p>	<p>Staff get induction / training / support for the role. Prepared for the issues of the service users. Not expected to have all the answers. Staff can talk to supervisors or manager if they are feeling unwell or ill at ease about the calls.</p> <p>Time out, and time to talk through own concerns.</p> <p>Policy for checking in with staff – are you OK?</p>	<p>Supervisor</p> <p>Peer support mechanisms</p> <p>Use of support helplines</p> <p>Positive personal self-care: exercise, a good book, a funny film, favourite music, etc.</p>	
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MEETING THEIR OWN NEEDS AT THIS TIME (RELATING TO CORONAVIRUS, ETC.)

Hazards	Harm	Control measures (What are you already doing? What further action is necessary?)	Action by whom?	Action by when? (Timing or date)
No access to food	Hunger and malnutrition, concern for other family members	Signpost to delivery services, local volunteer schemes, use of community circles, etc. Allow the time it takes to do this when most effective: time demand may be out of their control and during 'work hours'.	Supervisor to share good information (eg CVCs Third Sector Support Wales), keep in contact, be sensitive to time demands	

No access to medication	Lack of required medication, higher anxiety, concern for own health and other family members	Signpost to delivery services, local volunteer schemes, use of community circles, etc. Allow the time it takes to do this when most effective: time demand may be out of their control and during 'work hours'.	Supervisor to share good information (eg CVCs), keep in contact, be sensitive to time demands	
Financial concerns	Changes in family income, access to wages, benefits	<p>Ensure that no volunteer is out of pocket due to expenses incurred whilst volunteering.</p> <p>Ensure paid staff receive salary (as per Government arrangements). Working from home allowances may be accessible retrospectively.</p>	<p>Supervisor to share good information eg Citizens Advice UK</p> <p>Access to EAP</p>	

Having children at home	Constant concern / demand, likely interruptions, difficulty concentrating, noise levels, lack of appropriate space / place to work	<p>Be sensitive to the needs of the family at this time.</p> <p>Adjust targets accordingly.</p> <p>Don't expect work within regular hours. Adjust access to support / supervision accordingly.</p>	Supervisor	
Concerns about other family members	Possible interruptions, higher levels of anxiety, need to be available during 'work hours'	<p>Be sensitive to the needs of the family at this time.</p> <p>Adjust targets accordingly.</p> <p>Don't expect work within regular hours. Adjust access to support / supervision accordingly.</p> <p>Access support e.g. Age Cymru Advice on 08000 223 444 or email advice@agecymru.org.uk (open between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday)</p>	Supervisor	

Suffering domestic safety issues	Prevented from working, denied access to communication, coercive control, manipulation, exploitation, all forms of harm, threat to life	<p>Provide safety information, appropriate website links, helplines, silent call system (999 followed by 55 at prompt*)</p> <p>Welsh Women’s Aid Live Fear Free helpline</p> <p>0808 80 10 800</p>	Supervisor Can speak to Live Fear Free for guidance themselves	
Other safeguarding concerns	Concerns regarding other family members at risk of abuse, neglect or harm	<p>Clear communication messages, and support to make use of them:</p> <p>Immediate and significant risk to life, health or public safety, or a crime has been committed, call 999</p> <p>Consult Police or Social Services WLGA Welsh Local Authority links in local county</p>	Supervisor Listen Support Reassure Provide guidance	

		<p>NSPCC advice line for Practitioners: NSPCC advice and support 0808 800 5000</p> <p>Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm or 9am – 6pm at the weekends</p> <p>Childline: Childline 0800 1111 for children to call</p>	If necessary, raise the alarm	
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DISCLAIMER

This guidance is intended for information only. It is not a substitute for legal or professional advice and WCVA accepts no liability for any loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.