

Policy	Lone Worker Policy
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Document Number	1

1. Introduction

This policy has been developed to ensure there are systems of control in place to protect staff when working alone. The level of control will be commensurate with the level of risk.

It is important to consider the health of lone and peripatetic workers. Being alone does not necessarily mean being at great risk, nor does it require elaborate management systems to control those risks. It is important to distinguish between the chance occurrence of finding oneself on one's own and work that is specifically intended to be carried out in isolation and may last for some time.

The following definition of a lone worker applies to this policy:

'Lone workers are those whose work is such that they work by themselves without other people around. They can be found in a number of situations including those working in fixed locations or can be mobile workers working away from their fixed base. The work they are doing would be expected to last some time'. This could include homeworkers, cleaners, doctors, nurses, technicians and Customer Service Team (CST) members.

2. Responsibilities

Senior Management Team - to ensure that this policy complies with legislative requirements.

Managers - Managers who have responsibility for lone workers have an obligation to undertake a risk assessment and to take steps to avoid or control risks where any exist. Managers must arrange to review the lone workers' working environment regularly, including visiting work sites if needed. All documentation detailing risk assessments should be retained for future reference.

The Lone Worker - Each employee has a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves, other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their managers in meeting the company's legal obligations. It is a lone workers responsibility to report accidents, near misses or concerns they have about their health and safety with line managers. In addition, the security of computer laptops and other equipment must be considered.

3 Lone Workers at R-Health

There are relatively few lone workers at R-Health. Lone working is more likely to be a consideration for clinical staff whose work takes them to customer sites or for those who work from home, either permanently or on a hybrid basis.

4. Hazards Encountered by Lone Workers

Hazards that lone workers can encounter are aggression and violence from members of the public, accidents and emergencies affecting them, sudden illnesses and poor access to hygiene and welfare facilities.

5. Risk Assessment

All lone workers should have a risk assessment performed of their workplace. This should be done by their manager. This can be a simple assessment of the employees' work (no specific form is needed). The outcome of the risk assessment will determine any action needed. The risk assessment needs to focus on:

- Whether the work can be done safely by a single person.
- What arrangements are required to ensure the lone worker is safe.

6. Arrangements

If the risk assessment demonstrates a risk (such as violence from the public), appropriate control measures need to be considered such as doubling up of staff. For a lone worker in a remote location the following factors need to be considered:

- Condition of the workplace (i.e. safe entry and exit routes, adequate illumination, heating and ventilation, fire precautions etc.).
- Communication with the worker should be considered (i.e. telephone communication, mobile phone, etc). Managers should ensure that there is frequent communication with lone workers and that arrangements are in place for contact to be made with the lone workers during the course of their lone working. The lone worker should have suitable means for communication.
- For home workers, a risk assessment of the home environment should be carried out.
- Staff who drive for work purposes should follow the R-Health Driving at Work Policy.
- Training should be provided to lone workers on this policy and any relevant concerns should be discussed.

7. Record Keeping

All risk assessments, room audits and details of training provided should be recorded and stored. Risk assessments of individuals should be saved in the individual's HR file. Risk assessments and room audits of a lone working environment should be saved on the Management drive of the R-Health server.

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