

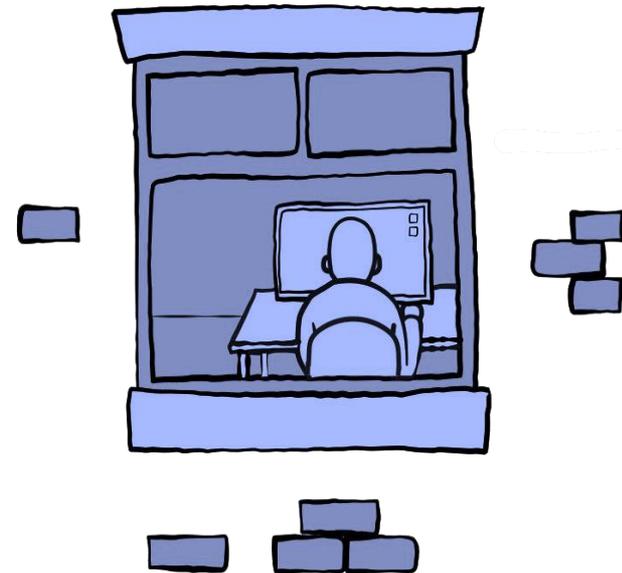
# Working from home guidance

This pack is intended to provide you with guidance around working from home, for a prolonged period, given recent developments with COVID-19.

You should read this alongside the latest information from [Public Health England and Government guidance](#).

## **This is an active document**

As more information becomes available this guidance will be updated. Check it regularly for the latest information.



# Key principles



Nightingale Hospital  
North West

**Working from home, for a prolonged period, is a different way of working. We need to work independently using digital solutions to remain in contact with one another, our partners and stakeholders. We recognise that everyone is different, and we need to approach this way of working based on individual needs. During this difficult time, we will continue to trust each other to deliver services for Nightingale North West.**

## **As a minimum, we all need to:**

1. Stay in contact with our team, colleagues and manager - make sure your manager and colleagues have the best phone number to contact you on. Plan in frequent calls to discuss work and your own well-being. Use Microsoft Teams and other digital platforms to join meetings, and take full advantage of the Microsoft Team platform to collaborate in real time on documents.
2. Keep work calendars up to date - this helps colleagues know when you are working, and ensure meetings, 121s and catch ups are planned in, just as you would if you were in the office.
3. Report any technology problems - if you have any problems with your devices or technology and are unable to access the systems let your manager know as soon as possible and discuss your options. Please report any IT problems to the IT Service Desk as quickly as possible.

# Video conference etiquette

- Establish a conference call host who will lead the meeting
- Reduce unnecessary background noises and ask participants to turn off their microphones ('mute' themselves) during presentations
- Have a clear structure for the meeting
- Be conscious of what is around you and visible on your camera
- Familiarise yourself with how to turn your camera and microphone on and off
- If your internet connection is not particularly fast or stable, try turning your camera off, which may improve audio quality
- The Kings Fund has released a helpful short guide on managing virtual meetings - [https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/leading-virtual-meetings-top-tips?utm\\_source=linkedin&utm\\_medium=social](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/leading-virtual-meetings-top-tips?utm_source=linkedin&utm_medium=social)



# Working with children at home

**While most parents have worked from home at some time with children due to the occasional sickness or weather-related school closure, the prospect of doing so for a longer period may feel daunting.**

You may now be facing new challenges to your work-life balance with trying to keep children, and you, healthy, happy and busy - while still doing your job. We know that working parents are good at being creative to fit everything into their busy working day, but everyone's work day and childcare commitments will be different.

**Have an honest conversation with your manager about your childcare commitments so you can agree how they can best support you.**

# Top tips

Here are some practical steps to ensure you're looking after your own wellbeing while working from home



## Keep your day structured...

Prepare your work zone. Start your day as you would normally. Set your alarm, shower, coffee and have breakfast. If possible, working similar hours to what you would normally can help to get into 'work mode'. Try to stick to a routine - but don't worry if it doesn't work right away.

## ....and be flexible

Working from home allows you the opportunity to be flexible how you plan your day and your work, particularly if you have childcare, caring, or other commitments.



**Give yourself time to think:** If you can, get up before your children to collect your thoughts and plan your day (while it's quiet!)

## Take regular breaks and keep active:

Build frequent downtime into your day, ensuring you break up your work activity. Just because you're working from home doesn't mean you can't go outside. Just taking a stroll around the garden in the fresh air can give a welcome break from sitting and screen time, and help you to refocus.



## Set up your workstation:

Use a suitable location that works for you. Make sure the area is well lit and well ventilated.

# Top tips



## Make to-do lists

It might help, if you don't already, to write a daily list of tasks to do; review it in the morning, or the end of the day. This helps offload your thoughts to help gain a good night's sleep.



## Keep the balance:

Some people believe that working from home can be invasive in our personal life, as the divide between work and home life is less clear. At the end of the day, close your laptop and if you're working from a spare room, shut the door and forget about it until tomorrow.

## Stay connected

Take some time each day to pick up the phone or use Microsoft Teams and have a proper conversation with someone, rather than via email. When using Teams try to use your web cam as this can help you feel more connected to people. You might want to arrange regular check-in calls with colleagues - even if there are no business matters to discuss, just having some human contact can be really beneficial. Try having a virtual coffee break with your team a few times a week.



## Divide and get by:

Can you share your caring responsibilities with someone else? If so, think about dividing childcare duties around each others work calendars.



# Microsoft Teams

**Use Microsoft Teams to keep in touch. Message people, start free video or voice calls, and setup team areas to help you feel more connected. You can access this both through your laptop or mobile phone:**

- Chat one on one or with a group of people.
- Group video call with up to 20 people.
- Setup 'team areas' where you can chat, share files and work on documents together.
- Message anytime, even if they're offline.
- Snooze your notifications so you can respond later.
- See what you chatted about in the past, including shared photos and your video call history.

A user guide for Microsoft Teams can be found at

<https://support.office.com/en-gb/article/microsoft-teams-video-training-4f108e54-240b-4351-8084-b1089f0d21d7>

# GDPR at home



- **Never leave protected information or equipment in any vehicle**
- **Make sure laptops or tablets you use for work are encrypted**
- **Only take the absolute minimum paperwork out of the office**

With home and mobile working on the increase we need to be more aware of the limited circumstances in which paper records/hard copy material containing personal or other confidential data may be taken out of, or accessed away from the office.

Always ask yourself the question, do I really need to take personal or confidential information out of the office? If you are authorised to carry protected information in paper files and/or on encrypted devices beyond your secure workplace, it's imperative that you keep your laptop, mobile phone, any other mobile devices and official papers with you at all times and that you take reasonable precautions based on the environment you are in.

