CORP 10

Lone Worker Policy

Policy applicable to:

NHS East Surrey CCG	✓
NHS Guildford and Waverley CCG	✓
NHS North West Surrey CCG	✓
NHS Surrey Downs CCG	✓

Policy number	CORP 10
Version	1.4
Approved by	Audit Committees
Name of originator/ author	Senior Business Support and Facilities Manager and Business Support Manager
Owner (director)	Executive Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs for the Surrey Heartlands CCGs
Date of last approval	February 2020
Next approval due	February 2023

Version control sheet

Version	Date	Author	Status	Comments / changes since last version
1.0		Jonathan Perrott	Draft	Original draft based on Lewisham CCG Lone Worker Policy Acknowledgement to Lewisham CCG for use of original lone working policy.
1.1		Jonathan Perrott	Draft	Input from TIAA, Dir of Safeguarding, CHC Business Manager, JSPF Policy Working Group
1.2		Jonathan Perrott	Draft	Review by Health & Safety Group. Comments from Deputy Director of Corporate Affairs
1.3		Jonathan Perrott	Draft	Review by JSPF
1.4	14/02/20	Governance Team	Draft	Formatted
1.4	21/02/20	Audit Committees in Common	Final	Approved.

Equality statement

The Surrey Heartlands' CCGs aim to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others. We take into account the Human Rights Act 1998 and promote equal opportunities for all. This document has been assessed to ensure that no employee receives less favourable treatment on the protected characteristics of their age, disability, sex (gender), gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity.

Members of staff, volunteers or members of the public may request assistance with this policy if they have particular needs. If the member of staff has language difficulties and difficulty in understanding this policy, the use of an interpreter will be considered.

We embrace the four staff pledges in the NHS Constitution. This policy is consistent with these pledges.

See next page for an Equality Analysis of this policy.

Equality analysis

Equality analysis is a way of considering the effect on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act, such as people of different ages. There are two reasons for this:

- to consider if there are any unintended consequences for some groups; and

- to consider if the policy will be fully effective for all target groups.

Title of Policy: Lone Worker Policy	Policy Ref: CORP 10
Assessment conducted by (name, role): Jonathan Perrott, Business Support Manager	**Start date for analysis:** 7/10/19 **Finish date:** 14/10/19

Give a brief summary of the policy. Explain its aim.
The aim of this policy is to minimise the potential risks associated with lone working.

Who is intended to <u>benefit from</u> this policy? Explain the aim of the policy as applied to this group.
All staff who work in a lone worker environment.

1. **Evidence considered**. *What data or other information have you used to evaluate if this policy is likely to have a positive or an adverse impact upon protected groups when implemented?*
Reviewed other CCG Lone Worker policies to determine best practice.

2. **Consultation.** *Give details of all consultation and engagement activities used to inform the analysis of impact.*
Developed in consultation with Safeguarding and CHC teams, many of whom undertake their roles in a lone working environment.
Engagement with the Joint Staff Partnership Forum on policy development.

3. **Analysis of impact**
In the boxes below, identify any issues in the policy where equality characteristics require consideration for either those abiding by the policy or those the policy is aimed to benefit, based upon your research.

Are there any likely impacts for this group? Will this group be impacted differently by this policy? Are these impacts negative or positive? What actions will be taken to mitigate identified impacts?

a) People from different age groups (Age)	None
b) People with disabilities (Disability)	None
c) Men and women (Gender or Sex)	None
d) Religious people or those with strongly help philosophical beliefs (Religion or belief)	None
e) People from black and minority ethnic groups (Race)	None

f) People who have changed gender or who are transitioning to a different gender (Gender reassignment)	None
g) Lesbians, gay men, bisexual people (Sexual orientation)	None
h) Women who are pregnant or on maternity leave (Pregnancy and maternity)	None
i) People who are married or in a civil partnership (Marriage and Civil Partnership)	None
j) Carers	None

If any negative or positive impacts were identified are they valid, legal and/or justifiable? Please detail.

4. Monitoring- *How will you review/monitor the impact and effectiveness of your actions?*

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

5. Sign off

Lead Officer:

Deputy Director of Corporate Affairs

Date approved:

14/10/19

Contents

1. Introduction and Policy Objective

1.1 Surrey Heartlands' CCGs takes the health, safety, physical and emotional wellbeing of all staff seriously.

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

1.3 If staff work alone and/or face potentially hostile or abusive situations, it is important to have a system in place to ensure that an alarm can be raised if assistance is required.

1.4 Health and Safety Legislation requires employers and managers to assess risks to staff whilst lone working and make arrangements for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review. This policy deals with generic aspects of management of lone working risks and provides advice on the efficacy of various actions that may be utilised to reduce these risks.

1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- Surrey Heartlands Health & Safety Policy; and
- Surrey Heartlands Incident Reporting and Management Policy.

1.6 Staff and line managers are also advised that they should refer to Lone Worker guidance in Appendix 5 with further guidance and templates available on the Surrey Heartlands shared drive.

2. Framework

2.1 Surrey Heartlands' CCGs recognise that they have 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 their staff. This policy complies with this legislation.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all staff carrying out duties for or on behalf of the CCGs, whether or not they are directly employed and describes the measures that must be taken by the CCGs, managers and staff to safeguard personal safety when working alone in an office or building, carrying out an external visit or working at home.

4. Definition of Lone Workers

4.1 Surrey Heartlands' CCGs recognises that any member of staff may spend a limited amount of their working time "alone".

4.2 Surrey Heartlands' CCGs define a lone worker as any individual who, in the process of carrying out their duties on behalf of the organisation, may find themselves working alone or in an area isolated from colleagues.

4.3 The Health and Safety Executive defines a lone worker as: "Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision". This includes:

- staff who work from home;

- staff supporting meetings and events outside the office, including travelling alone to and from events outside core working hours;

- staff working out of hours or returning to a site when on call;

- staff working separately or out of earshot from others; and

- staff undertaking assessments / meetings in clients' homes.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Key responsibilities
Joint Accountable Officer	Is the accountable officer and as such has responsibility for ensuring that appropriately resourced systems are in place for Health & Safety Management.
Executive Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs for the Surrey Heartlands CCGs	Responsible for reviewing and coordinating the implementation of this policy.
Local Security Management Specialist (LSMS)	Will provide specialist advice and support regarding security risks associated with lone working, including conducting additional risk assessments where required.
Directors and Line Managers	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; and • ensuring appropriate training is provided.

Role	Key responsibilities
All staff	Responsible for: • understanding and adhering to the lone working policy and guidelines; • attending appropriate training related to lone working and health and safety; • taking all reasonable steps to maintain their own personal health and safety and that of other work colleagues; • reporting any concerns to their manager in writing as soon as is reasonably practicable; • reporting of all incidents, as soon as possible, using the organisation's incident reporting processes; and • co-operating with managers in completion of lone worker risk assessments.

6. Risk Assessments

6.1   A risk assessment is the first step in deciding what mitigation or safe working arrangements need to be taken to protect staff from harm. The managers of 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.

6.2   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.

6.3   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;

- history – any previous incidents in similar situations; and

- any other special circumstances.

6.4   All information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.

6.5   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.

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

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

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

7.   Supporting documentation

7.1 The following appendices contain relevant documentation that supports lone working arrangements:

- Appendix 1: Lone Worker Risk Assessment (for use by line managers of lone workers). This should be completed by the line manager and employee, a copy retained by the line manager and a copy placed on the employee's personal file with HR.

- Appendix 2: Lone Worker Important Contact Information Sheet

- Appendix 3: Lone Worker Information Sheet to be completed by line managers

- Appendix 4: Proforma for a Pre-Visit Risk Assessment

- Appendix 5: Guidelines on what to consider when completing a risk assessment

8.   Training

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

8.2 Line managers are responsible for ensuring staff identified as lone workers are appropriately trained to identify, mitigate and report risks and incidents.

8.3 Lone workers must fully understand the risks and precautions involved in their work and the location that they work in. Equally, managers should be clear what work is able to be completed safely by a lone worker and recognise when advice should be sought by the lone worker.

9.   Supervision and Monitoring

9.1 Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still an organisational responsibility to ensure staff safety as far as is reasonably practicable.

9.2   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 alone to decide whether they need assistance. Effective means of communication are essential to ensure that lone workers remain safe, these may include:

- regular contact by phone, email etc;

- safeguards that raise an alarm in the event of an emergency;

- procedures to be adopted if contact is not made with base within a specific timeframe;

- regular checking of safeguards 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; and

- supervision arrangements should be regularly reviewed to take account of any:

  o significant change in the work;

  o significant change in the health status of the patient/client;

  o change in the health of the employee;

  o environmental change or modification; and

  o change in the process or methods of work.

10.   Illness, Accidents or Emergencies

10.1   The risk assessment should identify foreseeable events. Emergency procedures should be established and employees trained in them. The risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need first-aid training. They should also have access to clear reporting guidelines in relation to any escalation that may be required.

11.   Incident Reporting and Recording

11.1   An incident can be defined as an 'any unplanned event that resulted in injury or ill health of people, or damage or loss to property, plant, materials or the environment or a loss of business opportunity'

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

11.3   Staff should report all incidents/accidents and 'near misses' to their line manager at the earliest opportunity

11.4   Types of incidents include:

- health & safety incidents;

- security incidents;

- fire incidents;

- physical or verbal aggression; and

- Information governance incidents, including breach of confidentiality.

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

- staff should report using the organisation's incident reporting process (within two working days of the incident): and

- line managers should assist staff with the reporting process and follow up on any required actions.

12.   Support

12.1   In the event of an incident involving a lone worker, the manager should immediately ensure the employee receives any necessary medical treatment, or mental health support, including occupational health support and counselling.

12.2   Managers should be sensitive to the employee's need to talk about the incident and offer any assistance possible. They should also ensure that, where appropriate, the Security Management Specialist is informed at the earliest opportunity. If managers are unsure what circumstances would require such escalation, they may seek clarification from the Corporate Facilities team.

13. Appendix 1: Lone Worker Risk Assessment

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?			
Does staff member have health issues to be taken into consideration?			
Is the lone working environment safe and suitable?			
Is this staff members electronic calendar (read only) accessible by all?			
Does this staff member have information and training on health and safety and the risk associated 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?			
Are suitable arrangements in place for controlling risk of work-related stress, 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 Risks or Concerns – Please specify			
Provide more detail on above areas of concern and list any possible immediate remedial action:			

A copy of this form or equivalent to be retained by line manager and on HR personal file

Staff name: …………………......... Signature ……………….……… Date ……...

Manager name ………………………… Signature ……………………... Date ………

14. Appendix 2: Lone Worker Important Contact Information

Emergencies	9-9-9 is the United Kingdom's emergency telephone number along with the EU standard 1-1-2.

Either number can be used but people normally refer to 9-9-9

If you are using a mobile phone which is out of range, dial 1-1-2. This will connect you directly to emergency services even if you do not have network coverage. |
On call	The On Call numbers can be located on the Surrey Heartlands shared drive.
Occupational Health & Safety	Senior Business Support and Facilities Manager
Risk team	Deputy Director of Corporate Affairs
Local Security Management Specialist (LSMS)	The Local Security Management Specialist can be contacted via the Senior Business Support and Facilities Manager.

Please note contact details can be found for internal staff within the Surrey Heartlands CCGs Policy folder

15.   Appendix 3: Lone Worker Information Sheet

Employee details						
Name	**Make of Vehicle**	**Registration**	**Colour**	**Work Mobile No. Personal Mobile No.**	**Home Address and Phone No.**	**Emergency Contact Name, Home and Mobile No.**

16. Appendix 4: Proforma for Pre-Visit Risk Assessment

From gathering as much information about the Service User to be visited, an approximate level of risk can be determined and the appropriate safety precautions taken dependant on this risk. In cases where little or no information is provided, the risk level is determined as high until evidence to the contrary.

Service User Name / NHS Number: ………………………………………………………

Pre-Visit Risk Assessment		
Q1.	How useful is the information on the referral?	
Q2.	Can more information be gained?	
Q3.	Have you spoken to the referrer?	
Q4.	Have any incidents they are aware of given them cause for concern?	
Q5.	Is this Service User already known to your service? Check Database	
Q6.	If yes, have all other visits been safely / successfully completed?	
Q7.	Has an incident form involving this person ever been completed? If so, in what circumstances? If unclear, check Risk Management Department	
Q8.	Do service user notes indicate other individuals who may be present in the home environment and the risk they may pose?	
Q9.	Are there any incidents around substance or alcohol abuse?	
Q10.	Is there a history of self-harm?	
Q11.	Is the presence of any undesirable pets indicated e.g. dangerous dogs, snakes, etc.	
Q12.	Is there any history of weapon ownership / use?	
Q13.	Is there any information re: risk posed by other family members / persons who may be present?	
Q14.	Is there history of allegations made against staff?	
Planned Circumstances of Visit & Sign Off		
Q15.	a) Time of Visit		b) Location of Visit	
Q16.	Decision	☐Visit Alone ☐Visit alone but via monitored call back procedure ☐Visit in pairs ☐Further discussion with manager required ☐Other, please specify:
Q17.	a) Risk Assessor's Name		b) Designation	

17.   Appendix 5: Guidelines on what to consider when completing a risk assessment

Before a lone worker home visit

Where it is practicable, a log of known risks should be kept by the department. This should record the location and details of patients/service users/other people that may be visited by staff, where a risk may be present.

This log should be kept securely and the information should be accurate and reviewed regularly. It should be available to lone workers to inspect ahead of any visit they make.

Information Sharing

Managers should highlight any areas and/or patients that pose a significant risk to staff. Information concerning risks of individuals and addresses should be communicated internally to all relevant staff who may work with the same patients/service users.

Scheduling Visits

If there are known risks associated with a particular location or patient/service user, lone workers should consider, in consultation with their manager, rescheduling the visit so they can be accompanied by another member of staff.

Emergency Equipment

As part of the planning process, the emergency equipment that may be required should be assessed. This might include a torch, map of the local area, telephone numbers for emergencies (including local police and ambulance service), a first aid kit, etc.

Lone Worker Movements

As part of the risk assessment and action taken to reduce risk managers may implement a local system hereby lone workers ensure that someone else (a manager or appropriate colleague) is aware of their location and if applicable their visit schedule. Other actions that could be taken include:

- details of vehicles used by lone workers could also be left with a manager or colleague, for example, registration number, make, model and colour; and

- procedures could also be in place to ensure that the lone worker is in regular contact with their manager or relevant colleague, particularly if they are delayed or have to cancel an appointment.

The Buddy System

Where lone working is required staff should ensure they make another colleague aware of their movements. To operate the buddy system, you must nominate a buddy. This is the person who is the contact for the period in which they will be working alone.

The nominated buddy will:

- be fully aware of the movements of the lone worker;

- have all necessary contact details for the lone worker, including next of kin;

- have details of the lone worker's known breaks or rest periods;

- attempt to contact the lone worker if they do not contact the buddy as agreed; and

- follow the agreed local escalation procedures for alerting their senior manager and/or the police if the lone worker cannot be contacted or if they fail to contact their buddy within agreed and reasonable timescales.

Contingency arrangements should be in place for someone else to take over the role of the buddy in case the nominated person is unavailable, for example if the lone working situation extends past the end of the nominated person's normal working day or shift, if the shift varies, or if the nominated person is away on annual leave or off sick.

Escalation Process

Managers should have a local escalation procedure, outlining who should be notified if a lone worker cannot be contacted or if they fail to contact the relevant individual within agreed or reasonable timescales.

The escalation process should include risk assessment and identification of contact points at appropriate stages, including a line manager, senior manager and, ultimately, the police.

Dealing with animals

The potential risks posed by household pets when conducting home visits will involve safety, allergies and infection control. Where animals are present and the staff member is concerned, a polite request should be made for the animal to be placed in a different room. If the resident/owner is not content with this request and has had the clinical and personal safety issues explained in a calm manner and if appropriate the visit should be abandoned and reported in accordance with the risk reporting policy. Where pets are considered to be a risk this can also be noted in the electronic patient record (EPR).

Lone working and taxis

The CCG does not advocate the use of taxis or private hire vehicles for use by lone workers. Where there is an operational requirement for such transport to be used, lone workers must only use reputable licensed companies and they should book in advance. Private hire cabs should not be used, other than licensed or registered hackney carriages.

Lone working and travelling by foot

Where staff need to take part of their journey by foot they should always endeavour to use well-lit paths and pavements. They should avoid unoccupied/populated areas and should ensure that their colleagues are aware of the route being taken prior to the journey.

Staff members need to be aware of the areas that they are working in and plan their journey accordingly.

In the event of a situation where a staff member has concern for their safety they should head for the nearest public area (Shop, Petrol Station, Police station etc.)

If possible look out for street CCTV cameras and try and remain in view of these.

Lone working and public transport

Where it is necessary to utilise public transport, staff members should prepare for their journey by ensuring they know the routes and times of buses/trains etc. They should stick to using larger stations and bus stops in busy areas.

Lone working devices

It is essential to recognise that lone worker devices will not prevent incidents from occurring. However, if used correctly in conjunction with robust procedures, they will enhance the protection of lone workers.

Lone workers should still exercise caution even if equipped with such devices and continue to use the risk assessment process.

Use of a mobile phone

The following information and guidelines should be noted:

- lone workers may carry mobile phones and they should always check the signal strength before entering a lone working situation;

- a mobile phone may be the main form of communication. If entering a known risky area lone workers should tell their manager or a colleague about any visit in advance, including its location and nature, and when they expect to arrive and leave. Afterwards, they should let their manager or colleague know that they are safe*;

- if provided, a mobile phone should always be kept as fully charged as possible;

- emergency contacts may be kept on speed dial;

- the phone should be kept nearby and never left unattended;

- lone workers should be sensitive to the fact that using a mobile phone could escalate an aggressive situation; and

- in some circumstances, agreed 'code' words or phrases should be used to help lone workers convey the nature of the threat to their managers or colleagues so that they can provide the appropriate response, such as involving the police. The decision to use code words or phrases should give due consideration to the ability of a member of staff to recall and use them in a highly stressful situation.

*A mobile phone could also be a target for thieves. Care should be taken to use it as discreetly as possible.

18.   Appendix 6 – Procedural Document Checklist for Approval

	Title of document being reviewed:	Yes/No/ Unsure	Comments/ Details
A	**Is there a sponsoring director?**	Yes	Elaine Newton, Director of Corporate Affairs and Governance
1.	**Title**		
	Is the title clear and unambiguous?	Yes	
	Is it clear whether the document is a guideline, policy, protocol or standard?	Yes	
2.	**Rationale**		
	Are reasons for development of the document stated?	Yes	
3.	**Development Process**		
	Do you feel a reasonable attempt has been made to ensure relevant expertise has been used?	Yes	
	Is there evidence of consultation with stakeholders and users?	Yes	
4.	**Content**		
	Is the objective of the document clear?	Yes	
	Is the target group clear and unambiguous?	Yes	
	Are the intended outcomes described?	Yes	
5.	**Evidence Base**		
	Is the type of evidence to support the document identified explicitly?	Yes	
	Are key references cited?	Yes	
6.	**Approval**		
	Does the document identify which committee/group will approve it?	Yes	
7.	**Dissemination and Implementation**		
	Is there an outline/plan to identify how the document will be disseminated and implemented amongst the target group? Please provide details.	Yes	Policy will be published in accordance with current practice and will be shared with staff through internal communication

Title of document being reviewed:		Yes/No/ Unsure	Comments/ Details
8.	**Process for Monitoring Compliance**		
	Have specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-specific standards been detailed to <u>monitor compliance</u> with the document? Complete Compliance & Audit Table.	Yes	Complete Compliance and Audit Table
9.	**Review Date**		
	Is the review date identified?	Yes	
10.	**Overall Responsibility for the Document**		
	Is it clear who will be responsible for implementing and reviewing the documentation i.e. who is the document owner?	Yes	

Director Approval			
On approval, please sign and date it and forward to the chair of the committee/group where it will receive final approval.			
Name		Date	
Signature			

Committee Approval			
On approval, Chair to sign and date.			
Name		Date	
Signature			

19.   Appendix 7 – Compliance and Audit Table

Criteria	Measurable	Frequency	Reporting to	Action Plan/ Monitoring
Number of Lone Worker Risk Assessments completed	By number	6 monthly	Audit Committees in Common	Health and Safety Group six monthly report
Number of lone workers who have received training re working in situations isolated from colleagues	By number	6 monthly	Audit Committees in Common	Health and Safety Group six monthly report
Lone worker guidance for staff reviewed/updated and staff advised how to access	Team briefs advise staff how to access up to date guidance and templates on intranet	6 monthly	Audit Committees in Common	Health and Safety Group six monthly report
Security staff survey	Completed and results analysed and acted on	Annual	Audit Committees in Common	Health and Safety Group six monthly report
Investigation into incidents involving lone worker situations completed with appropriate actions within 30 days	Numbers of investigations managed in timely manner through Datix reporting	6 monthly	Audit Committees in Common	Health and Safety Group six monthly report