



Policy for Lone Working

“Eyecare at home” is committed to providing a safe environment for staff and patients. This policy lays out the responsibilities of practice staff with regards to working alone or in an isolated area of the practice. The risk assessment is to be reviewed annually and in addition, reviewed if there is any incident or near miss involving a member of staff working alone.

For Domiciliary Visits:

- All staff should accept responsibility for keeping personal contact details up to date.
- Where a member of staff does not intend to return to base at the end of the day it is their responsibility to inform their colleagues.
- Wherever practicable lone workers should be provided with, or in possession of, a mobile phone.
- They should be expected by the patient i.e. appointments have been made.
- They should park in well-lit areas close to the patient’s house facing the direction in which they intend to leave, but not on the patient’s driveway.
- Ensure their car is in good condition and has sufficient fuel.
- Make and registration number of cars is to be held by their base.
- If there is a known problem with animals at a particular address a polite request should be made to ensure they are secured or removed before the visit

Manager's Responsibilities

- Identify staff who are lone workers
- Inform staff of their responsibilities under the lone working policy.
- Ensure that all new starters are made aware of protocols in relation to lone working.
- Ensure that a risk assessment has been completed and documented and is regularly reviewed.
- Put procedures, devices and/or safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with lone working.
- Define working limits of what can and what cannot be done while working alone.
- Ensure that staff identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training.
- Record and investigate incidents involving lone workers and make recommendations to prevent recurrence.
- Ensure that a chaperone policy is in place
- For domiciliary visits the practice manager shall also take account of the current advice for domiciliary practice when carrying out the risk assessment. This is available from the AOP and FODO websites

Staff Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of all staff to take reasonable care of themselves by remaining alert and vigilant at all times.
- They should never knowingly put themselves at risk and withdraw immediately (or as soon as possible) from any situation where they feel threatened
- Ensure they read, understand and comply with the lone working policy and other related policies listed below
- Participate in the risk assessment process to reduce the risk associated with lone working
- Make full and proper use of any equipment provided, e.g. panic alarm
- Ensure that all known relevant information about patients is passed on, if there is a known risk, or history of violence or aggression, in line with Caldicott guidance.
- Report any incidents or risks identified from lone working to their manager

Risk assessments

The current risk assessment follows and forms part of this policy.

For reviewing the practice lone working risk assessments, the following questions will be considered:

- Is it necessary for the individual to work alone?
- Does this workplace present any special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a safe means of entry and exit to the workplace?
- Will cash or valuables be handled, and will there be a risk of violence?
- Is the worker vulnerable to harassment or assault?
- Do lone workers have knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are possibly being exposed?
- Do lone workers know what to do if something goes wrong?
- Do lone workers know how to contact their manager during their working hours?
- Does someone else know the whereabouts of the lone workers and what they are doing?

Other related policies:

Chaperone policy

Health and Safety Policy