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Date: 11th October 2023

Laurie Wrench
Deputy Director of Governance
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust
Lawton House
Bellringer Road
Trentham
ST4 8HH

Tel 01782 275030

Dear

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing in response to your e-mail of the 17th September 2023. Your request has been processed using the Trust's procedures for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Requested information: **Flexible Working Process**

- What is the process that staff are required to follow to request Flexible Working?
Employees should advise their line manager of their request. Our flexible working request form outlined within our Flexible Working Policy is completed. The request is reviewed by the manager and an outcome is advised to the colleague and followed up by letter.
- How are informal Flexible Working requests managed and recorded?
All outcome letters are stored centrally within our People Operations Team
- In the past six months, how many flexible working requests have been approved? **1 recorded centrally.**
- In the past six months, how many flexible working requests have been rejected? **0 recorded centrally.**
- What were the top reasons for the requests being rejected? **N/A**
- If a request is declined, what is the process that managers follow? Is there an independent review by an alternative manager? **The rejecting manager is to provide written confirmation of the reasoning behind the request being declined. Advise that the employee has right to appeal. If an appeal is received, the request will be reviewed by the manager one level above the manager responsible for the outcome of the decision stage.**
- Could you please share your Flexible Working policy/procedure and any other supporting information such as tool kits, guidance documents etc?
Please see Appendix 1 attached.

Flexible Working Offer

- What does the Trust offer as Flexible working options?
Example of flexible working opportunities within Trust include:
 - **Earlier or later start and finish times.**
 - **Part time working.**
 - **Job share.**
 - **Annualised hours.**
 - **Home working.**
 - **Flexitime.**
 - **Self-rostering.**
 - **Flexible rostering.**
 - **Compressed hours.**
 - **Agile working.**
 - **Career break**
- Does the Trust offer flexible working employment contracts e.g., term time, annualised hours, working from home, compressed hours, flexitime etc.) **Yes – where this can be accommodated within a team or service.**
- From the various flexible working offers, which do you believe has had the biggest positive impact for the workforce? **Allowing employees to work from home provides flexibility, reduces commuting and associated stress. The introduction of home working has believed to have increased employee satisfaction improved, work life balance but also reduced associated costs of our Trust's estate.**
- Do you offer night only contracts? If so, how do you ensure equity in training and development opportunities? **Yes- Consideration is given to supporting the development needs of those whose access is restricted due to their working patterns in the design of training and development opportunities.**
- Do you offer any training or workshops for your managers around enabling Flexible Working to support a cultural shift? **No official training- Support and advice is available to all staff from the People Operations Team**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review of the management of your request. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust, Trust Headquarters, Lawton House, Bellringer Road, Trentham, ST4 8HH. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

L. Wrench

Laurie Wrench
Deputy Director of Governance



Chairman: David Rogers
Chief Executive: Dr Buki Adeyemo
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Flexible Working and Employment Break Policy

Document level:

Code: 3.25

Issue number: 2

Lead executive	Director of People, OD and Inclusion
Authors details	Senior People Advisor

Type of document	Policy
Target audience	All Trust employees.
Document purpose	The purpose of this policy is to explain the procedures for all staff regarding flexible working and employment breaks and gives guidance, aligned to the ACAS code of Practice, on the main reasons for which these can be used.

Approving meeting	PCDC Trust Board	Meeting date	4 th April 2022 14 th April 2022
Implementation date	15 th April 2022	Review date	30 th April 2025

Trust documents to be read in conjunction with	
3.03	Compassionate and Other Leave Policy
3.11	Supporting Attendance at Work Policy
3.24	Recruitment and Selection Policy
3.19	Retirement Policy
3.16	Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave Policy
3.07	Management of Change Policy
3.47	Roster Management Policy
3.02	Resolution of Grievances and Disputes Policy
3.49	Agile Working Policy

Document change history	Version	Date
<p>What is different?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contractual changes take effect from 13/09/21 in England, these support the commitments made in the NHS People Promise around moving to flexibility by default - Process now to include following stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Informal discussion o Exploratory stage o Escalation stage o Decision stage o Appeal 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process to be monitored by People Operations Team (HR) - Some terminology updated - Failure to return added. 		
Appendices / electronic forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appendix 2 updated to reflect revised application process - Appendix 4 added to aid exploratory discussion 		
What is the impact of change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - compliant with new legislation 		

Training requirements	NA
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Document consultation	
Directorates	Partnership Working Group and Joint Negotiation Consultation Committee
Corporate services	Partnership Working Group and Joint Negotiation Consultation Committee
External agencies	Partnership Working Group and Joint Negotiation Consultation Committee

Financial resource implications	None
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External references
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.nhsemployers.org/tchandbook 2. Code of Practice on handling in a reasonable manner requests to work flexibly Acas 3. NHSE Flexible Flowchart .pdf (nhsemployers.org) 4. https://www.england.nhs.uk/our-nhs-people/online-version/lfaop/our-nhs-people-promise/the-promise/

Monitoring compliance with the processes outlined within this document	
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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - Initial assessment	Yes/No	Less favourable / More favourable / Mixed impact
Does this document affect one or more group(s) less or more favorably than another (see list)?		
- Age (e.g. consider impact on younger people/ older people)	No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Disability (remember to consider physical, mental and sensory impairments) – Sex/Gender (any particular M/F gender impact; also consider impact on those responsible for childcare) – Gender identity and gender reassignment (i.e. impact on people who identify as trans, non-binary or gender fluid) – Race / ethnicity / ethnic communities / cultural groups (include those with foreign language needs, including European countries, Roma/travelling communities) – Pregnancy and maternity, including adoption (i.e. impact during pregnancy and the 12 months after; including for both heterosexual and same sex couples) – Sexual Orientation (impact on people who identify as lesbian, gay or bi – whether stated as ‘out’ or not) – Marriage and/or Civil Partnership (including heterosexual and same sex marriage) – Religion and/or Belief (includes those with religion and /or belief and those with none) – Other equality groups? (may include groups like those living in poverty, sex workers, asylum seekers, people with substance misuse issues, prison and (ex) offending population, Roma/travelling communities, and any other groups who may be disadvantaged in some way, who may or may not be part of the groups above equality groups) 	No	Equality check added to decision process
	No	
	No	
	No	
	No	Protects rights regardless of sexual orientation, age, race etc.
	No	
	No	Equality Check added to decision process
If you answered yes to any of the above, please provide details below, including evidence supporting differential experience or impact.		
If you have identified potential negative impact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can this impact be avoided? Staff are required to complete mandatory education to ensure a safe service provision - What alternatives are there to achieving the document without the impact? Can the impact be reduced by taking different action? 		
Do any differences identified above amount to discrimination and the potential for adverse impact in this policy?	No	
If YES could it still be justifiable e.g. on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason		
NB – potentially adverse effects and indirect discrimination acknowledged in decision making process, equality check added to prompt the full consideration of any relevant protected characteristic		
Where an adverse, negative or potentially discriminatory impact on one or more equality groups has been identified above, a full EIA should be undertaken. Please refer this to the		



Diversity and Inclusion Lead, together with any suggestions as to the action required to avoid or reduce this impact.
Discussed the above with the Inclusion & Diversity Lead – adjustments offered and made ensured equality and inclusion.
For advice in relation to any aspect of completing the EIA assessment, please contact the Diversity and Inclusion Lead at Diversity@combined.nhs.uk

Was a full impact assessment required?	
What is the level of impact?	

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1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 All staff have the right to make flexible working and employment break requests, regardless of gender or gender identity, sexuality, parental status, family or other domestic circumstances. Where the term partner is used, this is regardless of gender and includes same-sex partners.
- 1.2 The Trust supports different ways of working which assist people in balancing work responsibilities with other aspects of their lives. The Trust offers Employment Breaks and Flexible Working as part of the commitment to arrangements which enable employees to balance paid work with their other commitments and responsibilities. The Trust recognises that a positive work/life balance benefits both employees through improved health and wellbeing and the Trust as staff are more productive and satisfied at work.
- 1.3 Employment Breaks and Flexible Working also assist the Trust to attract and retain the experience of staff consistent with the NHS commitment to the provision of high quality healthcare.
- 1.4 Employees also have access to other leave arrangements which recognise the additional personal commitments staff may have, please refer to 3.03 Compassionate and Other Leave Policy.
- 1.5 The policy supports application of our Trust values which guide our actions and behaviour as an employer and provider of services. These are:

Proud to **CARE**:

Compassionate – Caring with compassion, it's about how we listen, what we say, what we do.

Approachable – Friendly, welcoming, sharing ideas and being open.

Responsible – Taking personal and collective responsibility, being accountable for our actions.

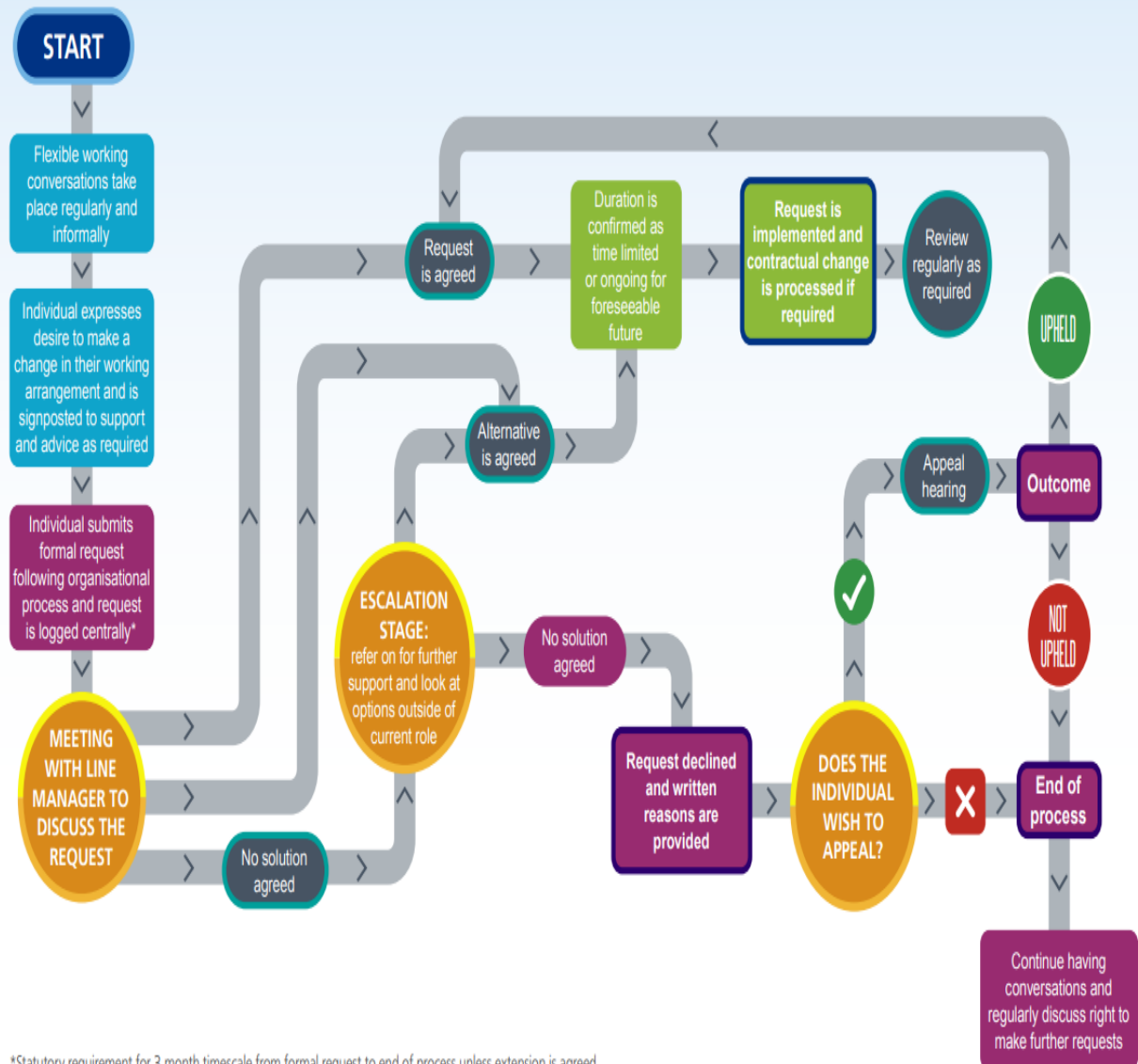
Excellent – Striving for the best, for high-quality safe care and continually improving.

Guide to making Flexible Working Requests

Guide to making flexible working requests

THE NHS STAFF COUNCIL
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

This flowchart has been designed to support both line managers and staff in the NHS understand the steps involved in making a request for a flexible working arrangement. It takes into account changes to the [NHS Terms and Conditions Handbook that come into effect on 13 September 2021](#). The flowchart should be used alongside your organisation's flexible working policy which will contain the detailed information you need to make a request.





Enablers to flexible working

THE NHS STAFF COUNCIL
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Flexible working forms a crucial part of creating modern and inclusive employment practices. More action is needed to increase the uptake of flexible working across the NHS, to allow us to recruit and retain diverse talent and ensure that the NHS is an employer of choice.

Following employer engagement, this poster identifies the ten enablers to flexible working.



2 Scope

- 2.1 All employees are able to request flexible working; the Trust has a legal duty to consider any request seriously. Employees can make requests for flexible working at any point and for any reason.
- 2.2 Flexible working will be incorporated into the recruitment and selection procedure and the Trust's commitment to flexible working included in all job advertisements.
- 2.3 The Employment Break procedure applies to all employees (both under Agenda for Change and Medical & Dental Terms and Conditions) of the Trust who have a minimum of 12 months service and have a firm intention to return to work after the Employment break.

3 Inclusion

- 3.1 These procedures should be applied equitably to all employees ensuring that there is no discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, belief, offending background, trade union activities, marital or family circumstances or domestic/care arrangements.

4 Duties/Responsibilities

- 4.1 Managers hold the following responsibilities:
 - To build flexibility in to all job roles, in order to promote flexible working as an employee benefit.
 - To ensure a high quality service to patients and service users by proactively planning for flexible working. To achieve this, managers must understand required staffing levels and skill mix required in order to create a clear framework within which flexible working can be accommodated.
 - To ensure that staff are made aware of this policy and take a pro-active approach in promoting flexible working.
 - Line managers should actively encourage staff to consider whether flexible working arrangements or reduced working hours may be appropriate following major life changing events, ill health or in line with service need.
 - To ensure that any request covered by this policy is requested formally using the enclosed application form(s).
 - To consider any applications made under this policy, being open and responsive to requests and to accommodate requests where possible. In doing so they must give serious consideration to the impact of a request on

both colleagues and service delivery. Managers have a primary responsibility for maintaining service effectiveness and quality and reviewing individual requests on a regular basis (at least annually).

- To maintain contact with employees whilst on employment break including communicating any major service related changes and (where possible) including the employee in any consultations under the Management of Change Policy.
- There is a requirement to consider flexible working options as part of the Trust's duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled staff under the Equality Act 2010 and staff returning from maternity leave.
- To maintain clear and accurate records of any employment breaks, flexible working applications or job share agreements entered into and, when relevant, to handover such documents to more senior managers/ colleagues or successors copies of which should be placed on the employee's personal file and forward a copy of the application and outcome to the People Operations Team (HR).

4.2 People Operation Team (HR) and Staff Side hold the following responsibilities:

- To provide any support or advice to Managers/Employees as appropriate.
- To maintain a central record of all flexible working requests and outcomes.
- To monitor and review the flexible working process

4.3 Employees hold the following responsibilities:

- To comply with the principles of this policy, being aware of the options open to them and use the attached form(s) to apply for flexible working or an employment break or otherwise put their request in writing¹.
- To be aware that requests must be objectively justified based on sound organisational and service needs.

5 Flexible Working

5.1 Examples of the types of flexible working that may be applied for are outlined at Appendix 3. Flexible working requests can be made for **any** reason, they may be particularly supportive in the following circumstances:

- Staff with a disability or underlying health condition.
- Staff returning to work following maternity/paternity leave, parental leave or shared parental leave/adoption leave regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

¹ Legal requirement to put the request in writing.

- Staff in need of temporary changes to their employment arrangements, for example, following a domestic crisis, bereavement or health related issue.
- Reasons relating to personal cultural, religious or spiritual advancement or pilgrimage.
- Staff with caring responsibilities outside of work, such as caring for a child or adult with a health condition or disability.

5.2 Informal flexible working conversations can be held between employee and line manager at any time including one-to-one's, health and wellbeing conversation and appraisals. This may provide a helpful head start for when an employee does decide to make a formal request.

5.3 In reaching a decision regarding a request for flexible working, managers should consider the impact on service delivery and the needs of the entire team/department to ensure that working arrangements are equitable and that the opportunity to work flexibly can be provided to all.

Whilst it is important to be positive and receptive to requests, and to be creative with flexible working patterns, one person's improved working arrangements should not be to the detriment of colleagues or the service.

5.3 Where it may not be possible to support the individual's initial request in the way proposed, it may be that an alternative arrangement could be agreed upon that is acceptable to both the individual and the needs of the team in which they work.

5.4 The flexible working request must be actioned from formal receipt to appeal stage within 3 months unless an extension is agreed by both parties.

5.5 Once a request is made and accepted, it will normally be for a fixed period of time (normally no longer than 12 months but may be longer). At the end of the agreed time for the flexible working the application will be reviewed at which point it may be extended, revised or ended. On termination of the flexible working request it is expected that the employee's original working pattern will be re-established. Each request is subject to an annual review as a minimum.

5.6 In the event that a permanent change to contractual terms and conditions is agreed, the employee has no right to revert back to the previous working pattern. The manager will issue a letter confirming these changes in detail; a copy will be retained on the personal file as a variation to the contract of employment.

6 Flexible Working - Employee's responsibility

- 6.1 To attend meetings and be prepared to discuss their application in an open and constructive way. Consideration should be given and discussed in the exploration meeting(s) to the impact a revised working pattern may have upon:
- Patients and other service users
 - The Trust/Directorate
 - Other team members
- 6.2 To submit a completed application form (Appendix 2) to their line manager.
- 6.3 To be prepared to discuss their desired working pattern with other members of their team where appropriate.
- 6.4 To ensure the application is made well in advance of the date they wish it to commence, unless extenuating circumstances necessitate urgent consideration.
- 6.5 To be receptive to alternative suggestions and to be prepared to be flexible themselves in order to reach a practicable flexible working outcome in agreement with the employer.

7 Points to consider when making an application

- 7.1 Employees should think carefully about their request as they have no right to revert back to former hours/pattern of work should a permanent change be granted.
- 7.2 Employees should consider the date they would like the new working pattern to begin and take account of the fact that the process can take up to 10 weeks to complete and sometimes longer where a problem arises.
- 7.3 The more notice provided to the Trust the change is more likely to be implemented when it suits the employee. Once the application is complete it should be immediately submitted to the manager.
- 7.4 Any requests made for a reduction in hours will see a corresponding reduction in pay and related benefits i.e. annual leave, bank holiday and pension contributions.

- 7.5 It is in the employee's best interests to provide as much detail as possible about the pattern of work they would like to enable the manager to explore different options.
- 7.6 Employees going on maternity leave should think carefully about when to make your request, bearing in mind that they may need to attend meetings with their employer so that the request can be properly considered. If the employee wishes the changes to take effect on their return from maternity leave they should make the application in good time.
- 7.7 Employees are not required to provide up-front justification of the reason(s) for the request, however if they are able to foresee and possible pre-empt difficulties that may arise blocking their request or indeed if they can demonstrate how the requested working arrangement may enhance service provision it may assist the process of agreeing a mutually acceptable outcome.

8 Flexible Working - Manager's responsibility

- 8.1 To ensure a high quality service to patients and service users by proactively planning for flexible working. To achieve this, managers must understand required staffing levels and skill mix required in order to create a clear framework within which flexible working can be accommodated.
- 8.2 To seriously consider any application in accordance with this procedure, holding meetings (Appendix 4) as appropriate.
- 8.3 To strictly adhere to the time limits as outlined in 5.4.
- 8.4 To have informal discussions with employees at any time e.g. one-to-ones, health and wellbeing conversations, appraisals.
- 8.5 To avoid any misunderstandings, managers should brief other team members and discuss any impact of the flexible working request, before agreeing flexible working applications as agreed at the exploration stage.
- 8.6 To decline a request only where there is an objectively justifiable reason. This means that there must be a sound business reason for a refusal of a flexible working request. Examples of objectively justifiable reasons (although not exhaustive) would be:
- Burden of additional cost i.e. bank and/or agency usage
 - Detrimental effect on ability to meet needs of patients/ service users
 - Staff and patient safety reasons

- Inability to reorganise work among existing employees
- Inability to recruit additional employees
- Detrimental impact on quality
- Detrimental impact on performance
- Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- Planned structural changes

8.7 Any requests for flexible working that are granted must be subject to an annual review, this could be included as part of the annual appraisal/job planning process if appropriate. This is to:

- Avoid the continuation of historical flexible working arrangements when they are no longer required by the individual employee
- Meet the changing needs of the service.

8.8 To provide the outcome of the request in writing, the letter of response must include details of the agreed solution and the right to appeal (Appendix 2).

8.9 To follow up on any People Operations Team (HR) and/payroll actions following any agreed outcome such as but not limited to:

- where flexible working practices are agreed as a permanent change, a letter of variation will be issued by the manager which will detail the amendment to the employee's contract of employment
- updating of ESR/EASY/E-Rostering,
- relocation of personnel file to new manager

9 Application Process

9.1 Informal Discussion

Use opportunities to discuss the flexible working arrangements prior to a formal application, this can help both the individual and manager.

9.2 Exploratory Stage

A formal discussion between the manager and individual upon receipt of a formal request to discuss the request, this stage may be omitted if it is possible for the manager to agree the request straight away. The exploratory stage is for the line manager to work through the request with the individual and what they want to achieve and to identify and evaluate options for achieving it. This could involve more than one conversation.

At this stage the line manager and individual should also agree whether and how any proposals are discussed with other team members.

An employee has the right to bring a companion who can be a trade union representative or a colleague to any meeting to discuss their application for flexible working.

All possibilities should be explored as far as reasonably practical. If agreement is reached the outcome must be confirmed in writing, including a review date (no longer than 12 months) and a copy of the paperwork shared with the People Operations Team (HR) via humanresources@combined.nhs.uk.

At this point it is not possible to decline a request, a note should be made of all options covered in the exploration stage and the request should be escalated to the next level of management (see escalation stage for next steps).

9.3 Escalation Stage

This stage is used when the line manager and individual have not been able to reach agreement on a solution in the exploratory stage. The flexible working request will be reviewed by the next level of management to check for other possible solutions including whether the flexibility the individual is seeking could be accommodated in a different team, location or role.

The manager reviewing at this escalation stage must check whether or not consideration has been given to any relevant protected characteristics of the individual under the Equality Act and where appropriate these have been taken into account.

More time to explore and investigate alternative options may be required at this time, an extension to the timescale should be mutually agreed.

Investigations may consider:

- Using an alternative manager to gain a second opinion to verify that a solution within the team can / cannot be found.
- Potential openings in other teams/locations e.g. vacancies, unused hours, unfilled hours/shifts.

Where a move to a new team/location is identified as a possibility a meeting between the individual and prospective new manager is recommended and a trial period could be considered. A trial in these circumstances ideally should be for two working weeks, excluding any annual leave, at the end of which a review meeting should be scheduled, this time period, as agreed by both employee and employer, will be considered an extension of the flexible working application process.

9.4 Withdrawn applications

The manager must write to the employee in all instances where applications are withdrawn / considered withdrawn. There are 3 main reasons why an application may be treated as withdrawn:

1. Employee decides to withdraw their application
An employee who withdraws their statutory request must withdraw their Flexible Working request in writing.
2. Employee fails to attend two meetings
Where an employee fails to attend two meetings without providing a reasonable explanation and / or extenuating circumstance, their application will be considered to be withdrawn.

The manager must:

- Seek advice from the People Operations Team (HR) in this instance.
- Advise the employee that the application is considered to have been withdrawn within 7 days of the scheduled meeting and confirm this in writing.

3. Employee refuses to provide the required information
There may be occasions when a manager considering a flexible working request requires more information to enable them to make a decision.

If an employee refuses to provide this information then their application may be considered to be withdrawn.

The manager must:

- Seek advice from the People Operations Team (HR) in this instance.
- Advise the employee that the application is considered to have been withdrawn and confirm this in writing to the employee.

9.5 Trialing new flexible working arrangements

Where there is some uncertainty about whether the flexible working arrangement is practical for an employee and/or the Trust a trial period may be agreed. If a trial period is arranged the Trust will allow sufficient time for an employee and their manager to implement and become used to the new working practices before making any decisions on the viability of a new arrangement.

Where a trial period has been arranged the manager will provide the employee with a document that details their new working pattern and makes clear that it is only a temporary variation to the terms of the employee's contract. The employee will be informed in writing of the start and end dates of the trial period (although the organisation may reduce or lengthen the trial period where necessary with the agreement of the employee, usually the trial period process should not exceed 6 months, the trial period will be considered a mutually agreed extension to the flexible working application process). The Trust will reserve the right, at the end of the agreed trial period, to require the employee to revert to their previous working arrangement.

9.6 Decision Stage - Flexible Working Request Agreed

The solution agreed after either the exploration or escalation stage should be documented and the decision provided in writing to the individual, copied to the People Operations Team via email humanresources@combined.nhs.uk.

The documentation should clearly record:

- The provisions agreed and any changes e.g. change to number of hours, work pattern, work location, role and/or team
- Any agreed trial arrangement and timeframe, including how success of the trial will be determined.
- The duration of the agreement, is it temporary (to be reviewed on a minimum of an annual basis, review date to be included) or permanent.

9.7 Decision Stage – Flexible Working Request Declined

If, following the escalation stage, a solution has not been agreed the line manager must provide written confirmation of this decision and the rationale of the outcome. This must provide the employee with robust clarification detailing the objectively justified reasons along with an account of the alternatives that were considered.

10 Right to appeal decision stage

- 10.1 The employee has the right to appeal the outcome of the decision stage if their request is refused or is only agreed in part. The employee may lodge an appeal within 14 calendar days of being notified of the decision on their application. Details of how to appeal must be included in the letter of response to the request (Appendix 2).

- 10.2 The appeal must be submitted in writing and clearly state the grounds on which the employee is appealing and addressed to the manager one level above the manager responsible for the outcome of the decision stage.
- 10.3 Wherever practical the appeal will be arranged without undue delay and heard within 14 calendar days from receipt from the appeal submission (this is dependent upon diary availability, annual leave, absence etc.).
- 10.4 Following on from the appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the outcome to their appeal within 14 calendar days of the appeal meeting and receive written confirmation of the outcome.

If an appeal is upheld the written decision must:

- Include a description of the new working pattern.
- State the date from which the new working pattern is to take effect.
- Be dated.

If an appeal is dismissed the written decision must:

- State the grounds for the decision. These will be appropriate to employee's own grounds for making the appeal.
- Provide an explanation as to why the grounds for refusal apply in the circumstances.
- Be dated.

The above timeframes may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and appeal manager and / or where is not practicable to achieve the timeframes due to capacity / annual leave / absence.

11 Employment Break - General Guidance

- 11.1 The Trust attaches considerable importance to establishing and promoting effective arrangements for securing, retaining and encouraging skilled staff the opportunity to take unpaid leave from their employment on a medium/long term basis for a variety of reasons as part of its continuing commitment to equality of opportunity and its development of policies which assist in the recruitment and retention of staff.
- 11.2 Employment breaks can be requested for a wide range of domestic and personal development reasons; for example childcare, eldercare, care for another dependant (for example, a person of any age who has a serious illness or disability), training, study leave or work abroad. Requests may however be for another reason, the list is not exhaustive and each application should be considered on an individual basis, also taking account of the needs of the service.
- 11.3 Staff on Employment Breaks will not normally be allowed to take up paid employment with another employer except where, for example, work overseas or charitable work could broaden experience. In such circumstances written agreement from the employee's line manager should be obtained.
- 11.4 The maximum length of break should be five years. The minimum length of break should be three months.
- 11.5 The length of the break should balance the needs of the applicant with the needs of the service.
- 11.6 Employees can take more than one Employment Break with the Trust, but the total time must not exceed 5 years.
- 11.7 Employees do not resign when taking an agreed Employment Break, although there is a change to the contract of employment.
- 11.8 Employees may request an extension to the agreed Employment Break in exceptional circumstances by contacting their manager at the earliest opportunity. Any extension to the agreed period will be subject to the manager's approval taking account of the circumstances of the request and service needs and must not take the member of staff beyond five years in total for all employment breaks

- 11.9 Employees may request an earlier return date from an Employment Break by contacting their manager at the earliest opportunity. The minimum notice period required before a return to work should be two months if the break is less than a year and six months if the break is more than a year. Early return will be subject to the line manager's approval taking account of the circumstances of the request and service needs. In circumstances where another employee has been recruited to cover the Employment Break, an early return may not be possible.
- 11.10 The agreed date of return may be postponed on medical grounds for up to 28 calendar days. If an employee is unable to return after this period the Trust may review the right to return.
- 11.11 An employee returning from an Employment Break will be subject to medical clearance through the Occupational Health Service.
- 11.12 If an application for an Employment Break has been declined, this does not prevent an employee from making an application at a later point in their employment.
- 11.13 Specific rules apply regarding NHS pension arrangements during the break. Further information for Scheme members in England and Wales can be obtained from the NHS Pensions website at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Pensions.

12 Employment Break - Procedure

- 12.1 The employee completes the "Application for an Employment Break" form and forwards this to their line manager for consideration.
- 12.2 The line manager completes the relevant information about whether the application is supported and how the post will be covered during the Employment Break period. The line manager forwards the form to the Associate Director of Directorate for approval.
- 12.3 When an application is declined, the employee should be notified of the reasons in writing. If an employee wishes to appeal against the decision they should follow the Trust's Resolution of grievance and disputes policy.
- 12.4 Where the application is agreed, before the break begins the line manager and employee will discuss/agree:
- that if the applicant returns to work within one year, the same job will be available, as far as is reasonably practicable.

- that if the break is longer than one year, the applicant may return to as similar a job as possible.
 - that return to work will be at the equivalent salary level, reflecting national pay award increases that have occurred during the break (subject to the A4C band that they return to). There is no progression of pay scale increments during the Employment Break period.
 - that the minimum notice period required before a return to work should be two months if the break is less than a year and six months if the break is more than a year. This is to allow the manager to source a suitable post, as described above.
 - the arrangements for keeping in touch during the break. This should include a responsibility to include the employee in any communications regarding changes to services or contracts of employment under the Management of Change policy.
 - the requirements on the applicant to keep up to date with their relevant professional registration needs, including attendance at specified training courses and conferences, and any assistance the employer may give in support of this.
 - the training arrangements for re-induction to work.
 - that the period of the break will count toward continuous employment for statutory purposes. Other provisions depending upon length of service, (e.g. pensions, contractual redundancy payments, annual leave entitlements, sick leave entitlements etc.) will be suspended for the period of the break.
 - that no entitlement to maternity or adoption leave will arise during an Employment Break although a Employment Break could follow a period of maternity/adoption leave.
 - any other conditions required either by the line manager or the applicant.
- 12.5 The agreed arrangements should be confirmed in writing to the employee prior to the commencement of the Employment Break.
- 12.6 Prior to the employee's return the line manager should discuss and agree the post that they will return to. The line manager should consider any flexible working request in line with this policy.
- 12.7 All applications and associated paperwork should be retained on the employee's personal file.
- 12.8 Employees hold the following responsibilities:

- To maintain contact with the line manager / employer during the course of an employment break.
- To inform the line manager / employer in a timely manner of any developments that materially impact upon the Employment Break agreement.
- Where relevant, to undertake any return to practice training before returning to work at the end of the employment break.
- To maintain sufficient knowledge, skills and professional registrations in order to take up their post at the end of the Employment Break.

13 Failure to Return

- 13.1 If the individual fails to return on the agreed date without notifying the Trust, it will be considered that they do not have an intention of returning. The manager will contact the individual in writing to confirm their intentions and they will be required to confirm that they no longer wish to be considered for return to employment with the Trust.

Training Needs Analysis for the policy for the development and management of Trustwide procedural / approved documents

Please tick as appropriate

There is no specific training requirements- awareness for relevant staff required, disseminated via appropriate channels (Do not continue to complete this form-no formal training needs analysis required)				✓
There is specific training requirements for staff groups (Please complete the remainder of the form-formal training needs analysis required- link with learning and development department.				
Staff Group	✓ if appropriate	Frequency	Suggested Delivery Method (traditional/ face to face / e-learning/handout)	Is this included in Trustwide learning programme for this staff group (✓ if yes)
Career Grade Doctor				
Training Grade Doctor				
Locum medical staff				
Inpatient Registered Nurse				
Inpatient Non-registered Nurse				
Community Registered Nurse				
Community Non Registered Nurse / Care Assistant				
Psychologist / Pharmacist				
Therapist				
Clinical bank staff regular worker				
Clinical bank staff infrequent worker				
Non-clinical patient contact				
Non-clinical non patient contact				
Please give any additional information impacting on identified staff group training needs (if applicable)				
Please give the source that has informed the training requirement outlined within the policy i.e. National Confidential Inquiry/NICE guidance etc.				
Any other additional information				
Completed by	Eileen Wedgwood	Date	01/10/2021	

APPENDIX 1 – Application for an Employment Break

(To be submitted to Employee's Manager)

Name of Applicant	
Occupation	
Place of work	
Date of Commencement	
Hours of Duty	
Requested duration of Employment break	
Purpose of Employment break. Please provide as much information as possible to support your application (use separate sheet where appropriate)	
Signature of Employee	
Date	
Comments of Manager Is the application supported or not. If not please give reasons	
Proposed action to cover the resulting vacancy	
Signature of Manager	
Date	
Associate Director of Directorate	Approved / Not Approved
Signature of Associate Director of Directorate	
Date	

Appendix 2 - Flexible Working Application Form

I wish to apply to work a flexible working pattern under statutory provisions.

Last Name: First name:

Department: Manager

1 Please describe your current working pattern, e.g. No of days/hours/times that you work:

2 Please describe the working pattern you would like to request and the date you wish this to commence. Please state if you would like this arrangement to be permanent or temporary (provide a time frame if temporary). Working hours should be compliant with the Working Time Directive. **Use separate sheet if required.**

3 Impact of the new working pattern

Please describe how you think this change in working pattern will affect the area in which you work and your colleagues: **Use separate sheet if required.**

4 Accommodating new working pattern. Please describe how you think the change in your working pattern on the Trust and colleagues can be dealt with: **Use separate sheet if required**

5 Reason for the request(Optional but helpful to specify if this is for an Equality Act 2010 reason):

Please complete as fully as possible, you will be expected to discuss the situation in detail with your line manager, you are entitled to have a staff side representative or colleague support you during the flexible working application discussion.

Applicant Signature.....Date

Date form received by manager (note the request process, including appeal must be concluded within 3 months from date of receipt unless an extension is agreed with the employee)

Signature.....Date.....

Name.....Designation.....

Flexible Working Application Form (continued)

Exploration Stage

To be completed by manager within 28 calendar days from receipt

Following receipt of your flexible working application and our meeting on
I have seriously considered your request and:-

- ☐ ***I am pleased to confirm that I am able to accommodate your application.***
- ☐ ***I am unable to accommodate your original request. However, I am able to offer the alternative pattern which we have discussed and you agreed would be suitable to you.***

Your new working pattern will be as follows:

Your new working arrangements are a **permanent/temporary** *change to your employment contract.

Your new working arrangements will commence on

*Your new working arrangements will cease on (complete for temporary change)
....., when you will revert back to your current working pattern.

**delete as appropriate*

☐ ***I am sorry but I am unable to accommodate your request for the following business reason(s):***

These reason(s) apply in the circumstances because:

NB You should explain why any other work patterns you may have discussed at the meeting are also inappropriate and confirm which relevant protected characteristics under the Equality Act have been taken into consideration and how these have been taken into account. For example, women continue to bear greater responsibilities for child and dependent care than men and therefore refusing an application for flexible working that relates to these responsibilities may constitute indirect discrimination if the decision cannot be objectively justified. Include an assessment of the potential impacts of declining the request. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Therefore, in line with the next stage of the Flexible Working application process, I am escalating your request to: [insert next level manager's name]

Line Manager name and designation.....

Signature Date

Escalation Stage

To be completed by manager within 28 calendar days (unless an extension is agreed)

Escalation outcome:

You have the right to appeal against this decision and if you wish to do so you should write to the next in line manager_____ setting out the grounds of your appeal within 14 calendar days of receiving this written notification.

Senior Managers Name and designation.....

Signature.....Date.....

**RETURN THIS FORM TO THE EMPLOYEE, RETAIN A COPY ON THE
INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL FILE AND SUBMIT A COPY TO THE PEOPLE
OPERATIONS TEAM VIA EMAIL HUMANRESOURCES@COMBINED.NHS.UK**

Appendix 3 - Examples of Flexible Working

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works.

The following flexible working options are considered to be the typical arrangements that employees will request but the Trust recognises that there may be alternatives or a combination of options which are suitable to both the organisation and the employee:

Earlier or Later Start and Finish Times

An employee might ask to vary their hours to allow an earlier or later start or finish time, whilst still working the same number of hours.

Part Time Working

The Part Time Work Directive defines part-time working as working “less than the normal hours of work of a comparable full time worker.” There are a vast variety of patterns of part time work, these can include working a reduced number of hours each day or a reduced number of days each week or month.

Job Share

Job share is an arrangement where a full-time post is divided into two part-time roles. The two job holders then share the overall duties and responsibilities. Their skills and the hours each employee wishes to work must be compatible, and meet the needs of the organisation. Pay and benefits are shared in proportion to the hours each works. Job sharing can be considered where the creation of a single part-time post is difficult, or where two individuals wish to work part-time. The suitability of posts for job-sharing will be stated in any internal or external advertisements. An important aspect of job sharing is the ability for either job share partner to cover the absence of the other.

If a job share partner leaves, the post can revert back to a full time post if the remaining partner wishes to take on the additional hours, or the job share vacancy will be advertised. Where it is not possible to recruit a partner the Trust will consider employment alternatives in line with the Managing Change Agreement.

Annualised Hours

Annualised hours is a system where the total number of hours for a post during a year is calculated. The number of hours worked can vary from month to month as long as the total hours have been worked by the end of the twelve month period. An employee will not be required to work more than 48 hours on average over a 17-week period in accordance with the Working Time Directive (WTD). A contract of this type may be considered in services where there are identified fluctuations in workload.

Home Working

Home working is where employees carry out their work (or the majority of it) remotely (normally from their home). Communication with the work place is usually aided by the use of technology such as computers, email, Microsoft Teams, the internet etc.

Flexi Time

Flexi time is a system that allows employees to vary their actual working hours outside certain core times each day. This usually means that employees can vary their start and finish times to fit around their commitments outside work.

Self-Rostering

This is the practice of allowing employees greater control over the pattern of their working week. Parameters are set in advance to determine staffing levels, employees can then request that they would want to work within these parameters.

Flexible Rostering

Using periods of work of differing length within an agreed overall period.

Longer working Days / Compressed Hours

Any arrangement where employees work full time hours but over *less than* the standard 5 days by working longer days when on duty e.g. 4 days made up of 9.5 hour shifts instead of the more traditional 5 x 7.5 hour shifts.

Nine Day Fortnight

A variation on the Compressed Hours theme. A nine day fortnight is a system whereby the unit of working time is classed as a two week period during which employees work an alternating pattern of one five day week and one four day week.

Longer Days

Employees may request to work their contractual hours in longer days/shifts in order to have additional time off each week.

Variable Time Working

A variation on the annualised hours theme. An employee may have a weekly or monthly contract to work for a fixed number of hours, but the times and days at which this work may be undertaken varies according to service needs and the needs of the individual on a daily basis. Many shift workers already work a form of variable time working.

Agile Working

Working from a variety of bases which may include home, please refer to the [Agile Working Policy](#) for more details.

Appendix 4 - Flexible Working Discussion Template

Name and designation of employee:

Name and designation of Line Manager:

Third parties in attendance:

Date of Meeting:

Appendix 3 of the Flexible Working policy provides a non-exhaustive list of flexible working options. The applicant is entitled to be accompanied by a colleague or staff side representative for this meeting if they wish.

Record below

- work patterns/options discussed, both requested and any alternative considered
- rationale for any decision an option would not work,
- ensure and confirm which relevant protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 have been taken into consideration and how these have been taken into account e.g. women continue to bear greater responsibilities for child and dependent care than men and therefore refusing an application for flexible working that relates to these responsibilities may constitute indirect discrimination if the decision cannot be objectively justified
- potential impacts of declining the request

Our principles for new working arrangements



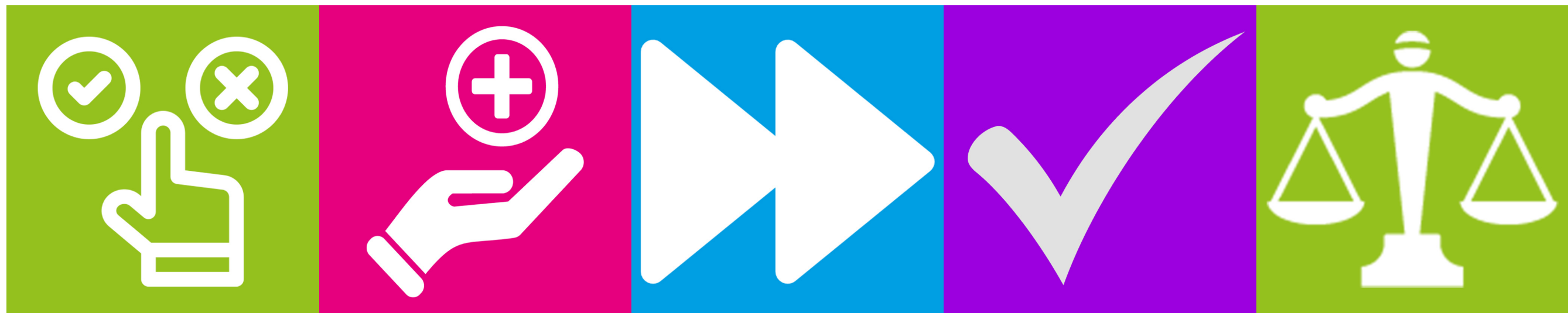
High Quality

People

Innovation

Agile/Flexible Working

Digital First



Support Choice

Fulfil duty of care

Look forward not back

Can Do Approach

Be balanced and fair



High Quality

High Quality

**We will embed quality in all our work across the Trust -
irrespective of clinical specialism or corporate role**

1. We will have clear cycles for reviewing the effectiveness and responsiveness of our service provision with key partners across health and social care, including most importantly our service users and carers.
2. We will use QI methodology to identify, test and implement changes required to tackle complex issues
3. We will have effective operational management which will monitor performance and quality metrics and intervene when necessary to ensure quality is maintained.



People

People

**All of our teams - Clinical and Corporate - will work collectively
to drive our continued transformation**

1. Our clinical and corporate management practice and behaviours will be focused on distributed leadership, effective multidisciplinary team working and continuous improvement, all with the core purpose of providing outstanding care for our service users and their families and carers.
2. We will build on the successes of our Exec Drop-In sessions with teams, to receive first hand, respond to and act upon all feedback and ideas.
3. Staff Training will ensure all staff have the knowledge to access and use the systems and technology they require to effectively support their role

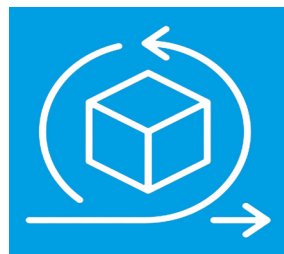


Innovation

Innovation

**We will continually look to relentlessly innovate, innovate, innovate
- as part of our overall commitment to being Outstanding**

1. We will ensure clinical practice is based upon the best evidence and innovative practice, using our clinicians, service users and local, regional and national networks.
2. We will encourage and support staff to challenge the norm and identify improvements they can make to the way they work and deliver care
3. We will develop our Research & Development capability and empower staff to develop ideas in a structured way and provide more opportunities to share their innovative ideas.



Agile/Flexible Working

Agile/Flexible Working

**We will champion Agile/Flexible working in ways that meet
both the individual and collective needs of our people, teams and service users**

1. We will progress via Agile Working Conversations, instigated by the employee or the manager and confirmed in Agile Home Working Agreements - based around 4 workstyles - Home, Fixed, Mobile, Flexible
2. Employees will be provided with necessary ICT equipment and technology - including laptop, docking station, monitor, keyboard, mouse (and if necessary voice recognition and larger monitor) and Device Mobility will expand the Trust's mobile device estate and dedicated applications to support staff
3. We will support our staff to achieve a healthy work life balance leading to potentially greater job satisfaction and motivation which can lead to improved morale and productivity, not necessarily working standard office hours, but mutually agreed working patterns



Digital First

Digital First

We are a Digital by Choice organisation developing a national reputation as a leader in the use of digital technology

1. Our technology will support the delivery of high quality, safe, effective care, fit-for-purpose for today and future proofed
2. Clinical Portals will optimise and enhance our existing EPR platforms to provide staff with the ability to access and record information into the system in line with clinical pathways and Patient Portals will deliver public citizens, patients and service users with integrated social platforms, information management, tasking and scheduling activities, alerts and notification
3. We will develop Digital leadership to integrate digital thinking at the highest levels within our organisation and ensure senior level representation and responsibility for overseeing digital technologies are implemented effectively and safely better use of buildings and estate.



Support choice

Support choice

We are opposed to adopting a “one size fits all” approach and will not do so

1. We will support and promote choice and flexibility of working locations
2. Where an individual does not want to work at home, other elements of agile working must be considered, for example, working at a flexible office base or hot desking
3. Our technology will be personalised to satisfy individual requirements supporting flexibility of working practices



Fulfill duty of care

Fulfil duty of care

**We will always fulfil our most important duty
- to care for each and every one of us**

1. We are totally committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, patients, contractors and members of the public who are in any way affected by work or activities undertaken by the Trust
2. Our staff are our most important resource and should not be made ill by work. The health, safety and welfare of staff directly contribute to organisational success
3. We will continue to prioritise investment in support and materials to enhance the Health and Wellbeing of all our people



Look forward not back

Look forward not back

**We will embrace the future, not the past -
recognising that our best days are ahead of us**

1. The changing landscape of health and social care and the development of Integrated Care Systems, will require our people to work in different ways, working more collaboratively and develop more effective partnerships
2. We will deliver high quality care today, but we will also plan for tomorrow to ensure we are still able to deliver this high quality care to the people in our local communities and their changing demographics.
3. We will invest in staff to have pathways to further their knowledge, skills and careers



Can Do Approach

Can Do Approach

We have done amazing things together and will continue to succeed together

1. We will have a positive learning culture, which supports people to work effectively in teams and leaders throughout the organisation who feel empowered to take decisions and drive positive change.
2. We will ensure that all we do is in collaboration with service users and carers, with co-production driving improvement for staff and service users alike
3. We will develop an innovative capacity for 'knowing what we know' across the Trust via a knowledge management approach



Be balanced and fair

Be balanced and fair

**We will be both balanced and fair in our approach -
recognising and respecting the range of perspectives of all of us**

1. We recognise that there are genuine issues, pros and cons and trade-offs involved between remote/digital working and office-based/face-to-face
2. Decisions and choices around modes and locations of work will be taken against clearly understood and consistently applied criteria
3. We will decide on the most appropriate risk control measures and where reasonably practicable put them in place, providing a safe place of work, safe healthcare premises and equipment and maintaining them and ensuring everyone is competent to carry out their tasks

A large, stylized rainbow graphic composed of several thick, overlapping brushstrokes in shades of magenta, purple, blue, green, and yellow, arching across the top half of the page.

AGILE WORKING GUIDE

This guide has been developed by staff for staff

COMMUNICATION

As agile working and working from home is becoming the norm for more staff, it is important that we make available our contact details. This should include:

- Email signature strips should include your job title, place of work, contact telephone number and days of work (if part time), this should be kept updated on all devices ie desktop, laptop, iPad, mobile
- Email 'Out of Office' automated replies should be activated when on leave or for part time staff when not in work, the replies should state who to contact in your absence and provide their details
- Trust mobile phones should be forwarded to a colleague when on leave/not in work
- CAT should be regularly reviewed to ensure any staff changes or contact details are updated for your area
- Harplands and Lawton House reception should be updated with your correct contact numbers

MS TEAMS

With the move to agile working many colleagues are using Microsoft Teams as their main collaboration and communication tool. Teams offers some really useful functionality but colleagues can become overwhelmed with the sheer volume of messages they receive and meetings they attend, therefore we need to ensure that the use of Teams remains appropriate, respectful and considerate towards one another.



MS TEAMS MEETINGS AND CALLS

When booking meetings/calls via MS Teams consider:

- NOT Booking meetings/calls back to back - leave time between as sitting in front of a screen all day is not good for your physical and mental wellbeing
- Leave time in the diary to complete work between meetings/calls
- Avoid having meetings/calls over the lunchtime period
- Remember to add comfort breaks to meeting times if it is a long meeting/session
- Take breaks away from the screen
- Consider adding reading time to diaries 30 minutes before meetings eg SLT to give people the opportunity to view the papers prior to the meeting
- Add 'working time' into your diary to prevent people assuming you are available for meetings

MS Teams Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Check a person's status before audio or video calling. Use the chat/message to confirm if they are free or to let them know you would like to speak to them.
- Use Teams messaging where an instant response is required
- Change your MS Teams status if you do not want to be disturbed

Do not

- Do not over-invite people to your MS Teams - Make sure you have the right people in your MS Team and remove people should they leave the Trust to ensure accuracy is maintained
- Feel obliged to answer every call or be available at all times
- Use Teams messaging for requests that are not urgent. Consider using email for non-urgent requests.
- Share confidential information.
- Share Patient Identifiable Information. Teams should never be used to upload written clinical information about patients or share documents with patient data on chats or sessions containing clinical conversation that have been audio recorded

MS TEAM MEETINGS

- Papers will still, in so far as possible, be sent out well in advance of the meeting
- Members /meeting attendees will be expected to have read the papers prior to the meeting
- Meeting attendees should ensure that they conduct/join the meeting from a safe and confidential environment where they and other attendees cannot be overheard. Please remember that the use of headphones only prevents one side of the conversation being heard.
- Meeting attendees should be punctual in joining the MS Teams meeting a few minutes prior to the allocated time
- If conducting a formal Board meeting the use of a corporate background should be considered



MEETINGS (Continued)

- Please be aware of being 'on camera' during the meeting especially if the meeting is being recorded and will be available online. If you need to complete other tasks in the background turn your camera off. The chair of the meeting must be visible throughout the meeting
- All attendees will be asked to mute their microphones unless speaking
- The MS Teams Chat function should be kept to an absolute minimum during the meeting and only used to make relevant comments on the current agenda item. If the chair suggests comments should be added to the chat, consideration should be given to the minute taker who will need to capture the chat whilst taking minutes
- Agenda items will continue to be introduced by the Chair

MEETINGS (continued)

- Presenters will be asked to present their report highlighting the salient points. This information should be presented as succinctly as possible.
- As it is not possible for the minute taker to share their screen whilst minuting, it should be confirmed beforehand who will do this should presentations need to take place during the meeting.
- The Chair will invite any questions, comments, queries from members who will be asked to 'raise their hands' using the facility on MS Teams and wait for the Chair to address them.
- Maintain a professional approach at all times and interact with other attendees in a courteous manner
- All meetings held MS Teams will be recorded and minutes produced.

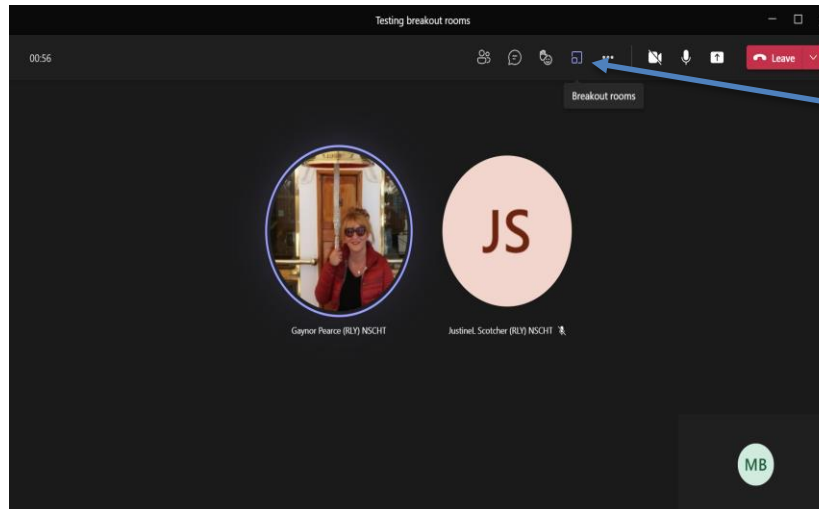


MS Teams Breakout Rooms

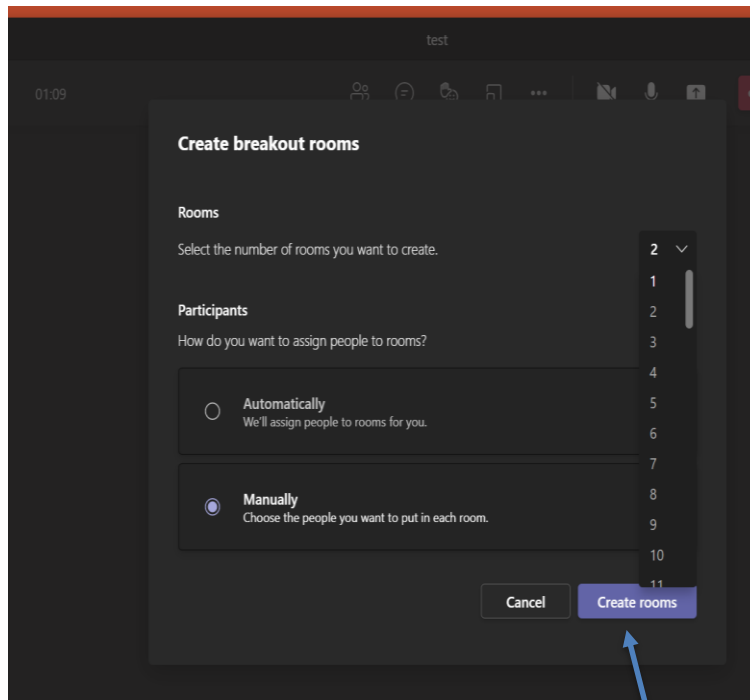
You can create breakout rooms from MS Teams to allow different/individual sessions to take place within a meeting.

The person who sends the meeting invite is the **only** person who can manage the rooms and assign people to each room, therefore ensure you know who this will be prior to sending the invite. The organiser is also able to join any of the rooms.

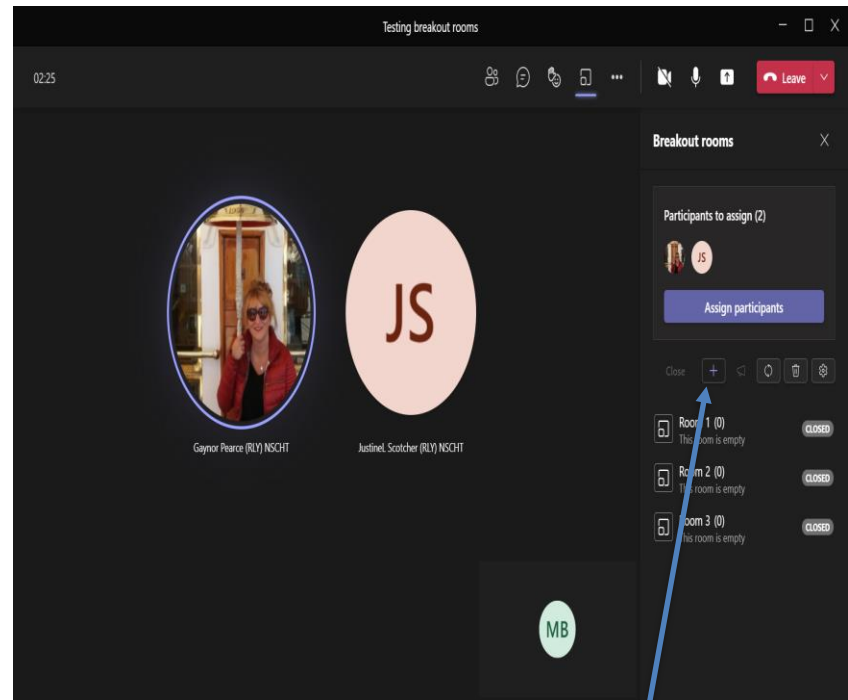
Ideally decide which attendees will be in each room prior to the session.



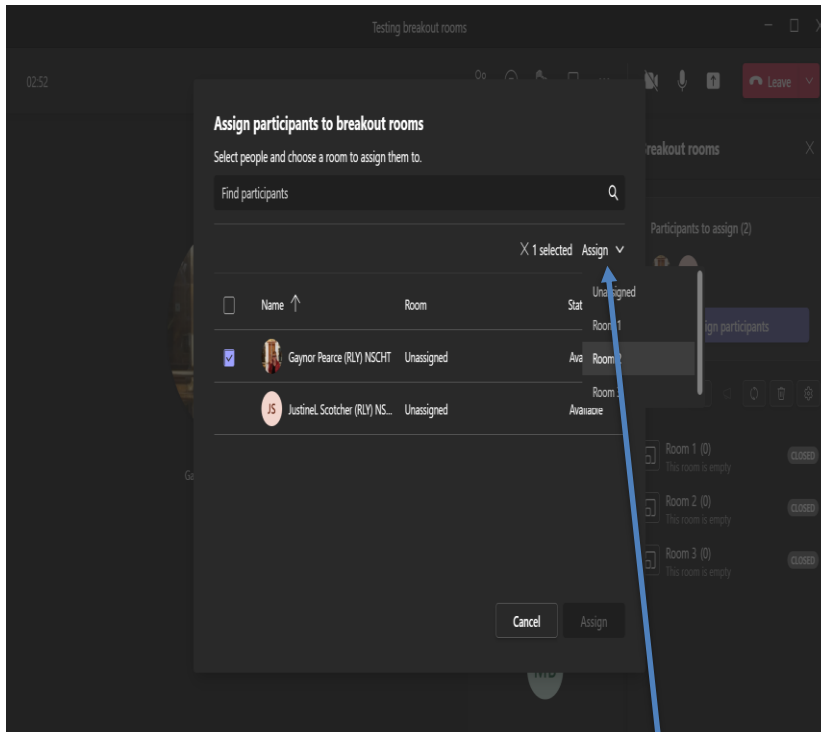
From within the MS Teams meeting, select the breakout room icon



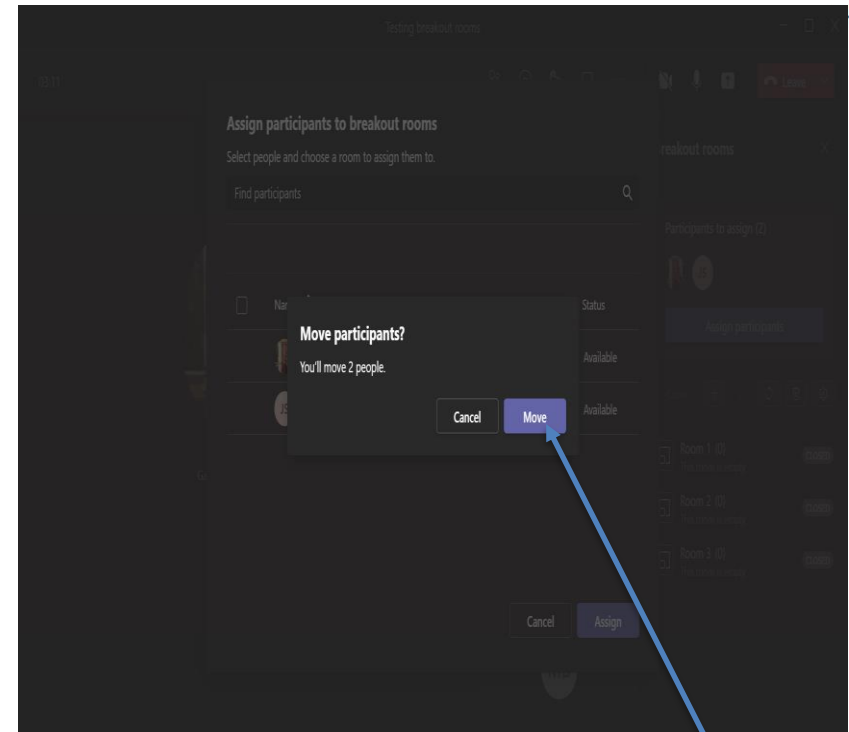
Select the option to create rooms (manually) and the number of rooms required



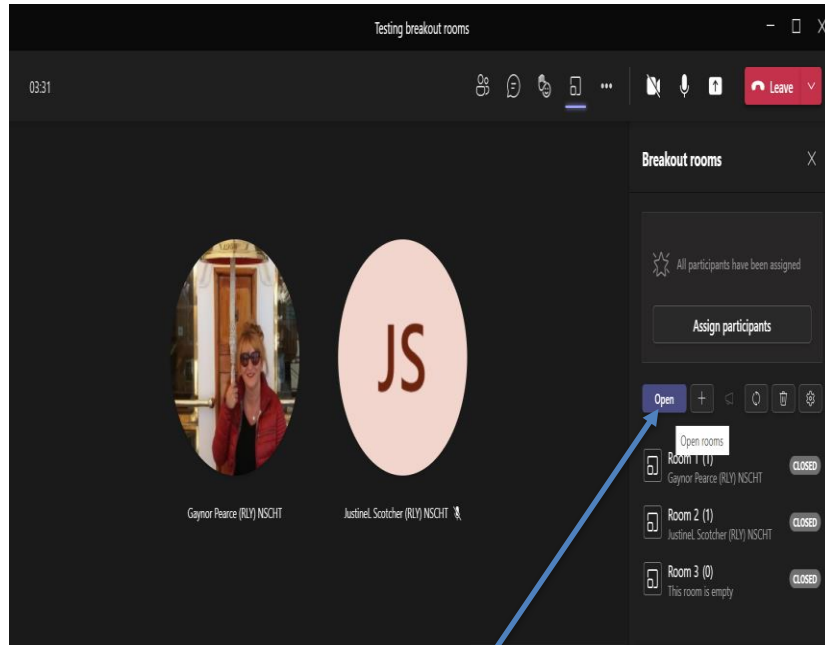
You can add to the number of rooms by using the plus icon



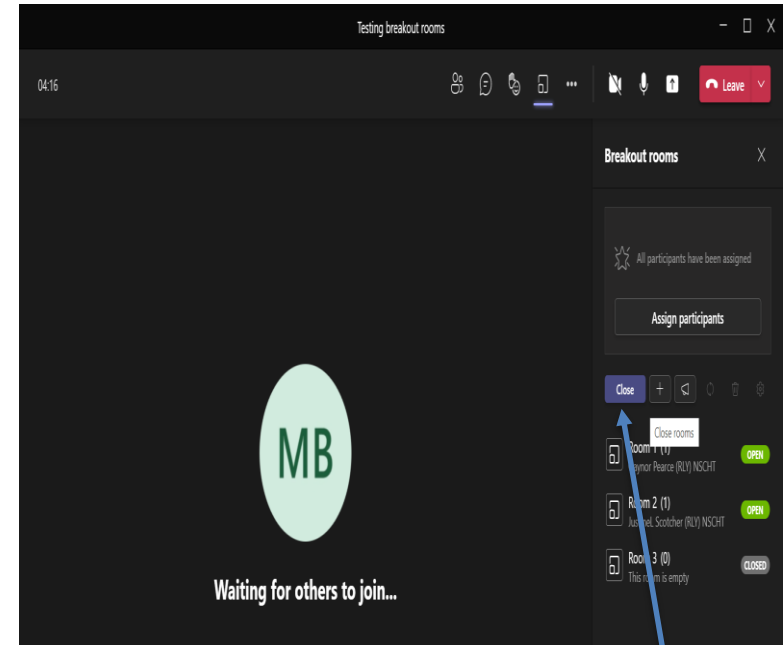
You can assign attendees once they have joined the meeting by ticking the box next to their name and assigning to a room number



When you have assigned your attendee it will ask you to confirm to move



When you are ready to move attendees to the breakout rooms press the open button – the attendees will get a message stating that they will be moved within 10 seconds



When you want to bring your attendees back to the main meeting press the close button. You can open and close the breakout rooms as many times as you want to

HOT DESKING

Bookable spaces:

- It is preferable that desks be booked in advance.
- Follow the process for reserving bookable spaces by using the booking system.
- Do not book spaces on the basis that '*you may just need it*'.
- No block booking of desks with specific colleagues on a regular basis
- No booking of the same desks for more than 2 consecutive days potentially prevents ownership creeping in.
- Team bookings will be coordinated through a separate process so that we are able to meet the needs of Finance, and other teams, who might need a run of desks booking together for a period of 2-3 days say.



HOT DESKING (continued)

- Do not double book - If you are unsure about what room you need or what time works best for you, you should not book double spaces or multiple time slots. In the workplace, every reservation should be respected and be on a needs led basis
- Be punctual and make sure you arrive and leave on time. Just because there is no one coming into the room straight after your reserved time does not mean you should run your booking beyond the booked slot. This applies to booking meeting spaces and all staff attending.
- Cancellations - It is imperative that individuals cancel as early as possible if the space is no longer required. If your meeting has been postponed to a different day or cancelled, then free up that space for someone else to make use of.
- Always be respectful of colleagues, show respect to colleagues and their work space requirements. Please use individual headsets, and consider things like noise levels and confidentially at all times.



HOT DESKING (continued)

- Utilise the space correctly - think wisely before you book your space, it can be tempting to take yourself off to a meeting room for a call or to get some work done in a quiet zone, however you could be preventing a team from getting together to collaborate in a larger bookable room setting.
- The *use it or lose it* approach – do not leave work stations unattended or use personal belongings over chairs/stations as a way to reserve the desks.
- Leave the space as you found it - every individual is responsible for leaving the space as they found it. Before you leave please ensure that you wipe down the space with the cleaning materials provided and dispose of any waste.
- Just because a room looks empty does not mean that it is not reserved – follow the process



INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

- Follow the Trust's Data Protection and Security Policies – all policies can be found on the staff intranet site.
- Only used approved technology for handling personal information – use your Trust-issued equipment for the best protection.
- Consider confidentiality at all times – even when at home confidential conversations both on and off screen should be held away from family members/friends.
- Be careful if printing from home – if you print personal information it must be disposed of securely. No confidential information should be disposed of in household waste. Transport securely and dispose of in office confidential waste consoles.

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE (Continued)

- Be safe - MS Teams is designed to support secure networks, therefore, do not over disclose personal information and protect yourself against identity theft.
- Safeguard data you share – It is not advocated that we use MS Teams to share personal identifiable information, but if personal identifiable information is to be shared in a Team, the Team owner is responsible for managing the members of that Team and ensuring the appropriate safeguards are in place.
- Only post to appropriate members - All MS Team channels and discussions are visible to all members of the MS Team site. Private messaging is available to send direct messages to selected members



INFORMATION GOVERNANCE (Continued)

- Safeguard all data - MS Teams provides a file storage location for files posted within conversations and channels. This provides a time limited repository and should not be used as a substitute for personal storage. The Trust and Microsoft cannot guarantee data previously saved to this location can be restored after the site is closed.
- Be aware - When sharing images and videos - ensure that the sharing of images and videos does not breach image rights and copyrights. Seek permission from anyone included in personal photographs prior to sharing them.
- Sharing information - Do not share information outside of your private teams - information shared within your private Team is for use by the Team members only and should not be shared outside without appropriate permission. No confidential, personal or sensitive information should be shared outside of your private teams

