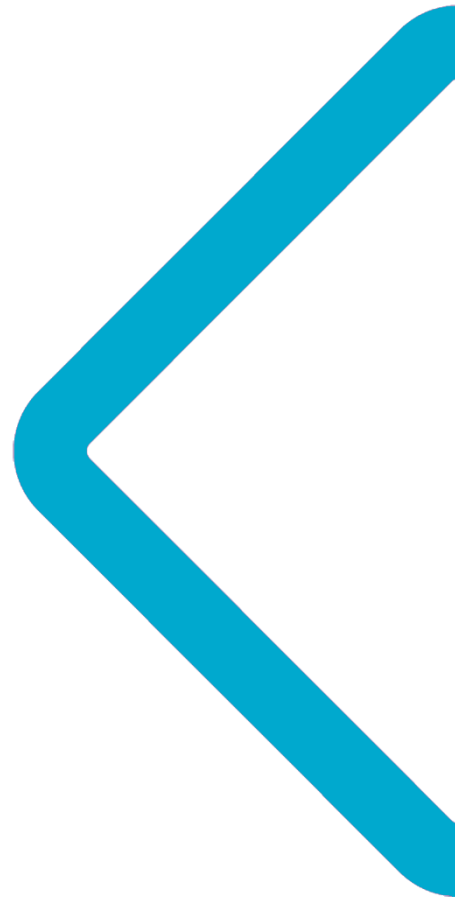


# Agile Working Guidance for Staff

v1.0



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# 1. Foreword

## 1.1 What is the ICBs Vision for How We Work?

The way we all work needs to reflect the changing requirements and challenges of the ICB we work in. Our priority is to ensure the populations we serve receive the best standards of care possible and the colleagues we work with are able to carry out their work as effectively and efficiently as possible; and for that work to be as fulfilling and enjoyable as possible.

## 1.2 About Agile Working

Agile working is a way of working in which the organisation empowers its employees to work with maximum flexibility and minimum constraints in order to optimise performance and deliver the best value and service. It includes the following enablers:

- The ability to travel to and access appropriate office bases
- Appropriate IT Equipment
- Appropriate Phone provision
- Appropriate storage to facilitate working flexibly across offices
- Appropriate estates facilities

Whilst we have all been working hard to create efficient and effective organisations delivering real and tangible improvements for our public and patients there are a number of serious system wide challenges that have emerged which we must consider and understand the impacts they have on the way that we need to work. These challenges include:

- the desire to support the establishment of Integrated Care Partnerships which will effectively bring together community services, voluntary sector, primary care, mental health, acute health and social services to better support our population. The ICBs would be able to resource this more effectively if we can realise the efficiencies that a merger/closer working would provide.
- the need to make services safer, deliver better health outcomes and meet expectations of patients in light of an increasingly constrained financial outlook across the whole public sector, not least in the Local Authorities.
- the continued demand for health care that is consistently growing faster than current income and budget levels.

Alongside these challenges, the NHS Long Term Plan states that ICBs are expected to become leaner, more strategic organisations that support providers

to partner with local government and other community organisations on population health, service redesign and long term plan implementation.

### 1.3 Key Principles and Drivers for Agile Working

As part of the foreword to these guidance notes it is useful to identify some key principles and drivers that will support the implementation of agile working.

- It is important to note that the ability to fully implement agile working for all our staff will be an evolving process as we roll out any possible changes to office base, IT and phone equipment. As such this guidance needs to be considered alongside the enablers of agile working. For example some of the guidance may not be able to be fully optimised until such time as IT equipment is rolled out.
- As soon as circumstances allow there will not be the ability for any one person to have a set desk. Line managers will work with colleagues to understand if there is a necessary exception to this.
- There will need to be a system to book onto a desk. To start with this would be a basic system that asks colleagues to have a card on the desk showing availability. In time we would aspire that to develop into an effective booking system that all staff members can use.
- In time, all staff will operate with a lap top computer. Line managers will work with colleagues to understand if there are necessary exceptions to this.
- There needs to be a detailed implementation plan for each team to work through as material circumstances such as office space, storage, phone and IT equipment change.

The link to Information Technology will determine how and when we implement stages of agile working and the key approach will be as underlined below.

- **User/service led requirements** – working with staff to identify business change owners to define requirements, benefits and changes for all.
- **Validate benefits** - work directly with staff to validate benefits based on changes to working patterns and adapt the solutions to support.
- **Platform and devices** – understand user requirements through device evaluation and software testing to ensure functionality meets business need.
- **Security of data** - evaluate requirements against NHS Information Governance and security guidelines. Use appropriate safety assessment.
- **Infrastructure** – Consideration of interoperability. Ensure infrastructure is adequate e.g. VPN (remote access), Wi-Fi access, Telephony, Video conferencing and secure printing available in all Agile working identified buildings

- **Mobile network** - Mitigate network challenges by roaming across networks or mapping hotspots to enable connection, ensuring quick connections from all locations.
- **Support and maintenance** – We have considered changes to the support and training offered by the CSU to support new technologies and software.

## 2. Agile Working Guidance

### 2.1 What is Agile Working?

Agile working is intelligent working. It is a way of working in which the organisation empowers its employees to work with maximum flexibility and minimum constraints in order to optimise performance and deliver the best value and service. Agile working is based on the concept that work is an activity we do, rather than a place we go and is a tool for managers to use to allow their teams and ICBs to work smarter. It is a transformational tool which will allow smarter working by eliminating the barriers to working efficiently.

Agile working is not about being prescriptive. It is about creating a culture where employees are empowered to work in an intelligent way. So, whilst we have provided some guidelines to help adopt the principles of agile working this is not exhaustive.

A key principle is that agile working must be balanced with the needs of the ICB's business, which always takes priority and is ultimately determined by team managers who have the ultimate discretion to determine if members of their team can work in an agile way.

Agile working is reliant on communications and information technology to enable individuals to work in ways which best suit their needs, and the needs of the organisation, without the traditional limitations of where and when tasks must be performed. With the use of technology, there are numerous tools to aid working in new and different ways to meet business needs, reduce costs, increase productivity and improve sustainability.

To maximise agile working, the key factors are engaging and communicating with each other, being clear about the objectives and KPIs and how these can be met using some of the principles of agile working.

### 2.2 What is the aim of Agile Working?

The aim is simply to create a more responsive, efficient and effective organisation which ultimately improves business performance and increases employee satisfaction.

## 2.3 Is it the same as Flexible Working?

Agile working may incorporate flexible working practices, but the aims, drivers and scope are different.

Flexible working is a working pattern which has been designed for an individual, usually to help that person balance work and home life. Flexible working tends to be driven by the employee and usually only involves changes in working time, patterns and location.

Agile working is based on flexibility of work, to drive long-term organisational success. While it can unlock value for both the employer and the employee, agile working is driven by business needs which team managers and senior leads in Directorates determine

## 2.4 What are the benefits of Agile Working?

There are many benefits to be gained from changing work practices, utilising technology and creating new working environments.

### **Some benefits for the ICB are:**

- Increased productivity and efficiency
- Space savings
- Reduced property costs
- Reduced cost of fuel and parking
- Extended business hours
- Meeting patient's expectations
- Ability to match workforce to fluctuating demands
- Better utilisation of skills
- Increased innovation
- Reduction in organisational and personal carbon footprint
- Improved business continuity – less disruption due to weather, office security issues, travel problems etc.
- Improved staff performance
- Ability to attract and retain high quality talent
- Reduced absenteeism and related costs
- Reduced staff turnover with associated costs and reduction in lost knowledge, skills and experience
- Increased motivation and engagement of staff

### **Some benefits to ICB employees are:**

- Reduced travel time and related cost
- Personal productivity – fewer distractions, improved focus, concentration, creativity, better use of skills and less frustration linked to fewer barriers
- Improved work-life balance
- Increase in wellbeing, health and happiness – reduced stress, better sense of control, ability to integrate healthy eating and exercise into the day
- Increased engagement as a result of the autonomy and trust at work

Empowering employees with the ability to work agilely supports the aims of the ICBs by managing time, workloads and work-life balance. Not only are we creating a culture of trust, honesty and transparency, we are creating an organisation where people want to come and work. This in turn will lead to a more dedicated, loyal and committed workforce that will strive to go the extra mile, providing high quality services and adding value for our patients.

It is at the line manager's discretion as to who is eligible to be an agile worker. Line managers can monitor and amend this as appropriate.

## 2.5 What are the drivers for Agile Working?

There are several key drivers:

- Changing service needs
- Changing demographics and workforce
- Increasing demand for work life balance
- Cost and efficiency
- Sustainability

## 2.6 Anchor Roles

Although there are many roles within the ICB that lend themselves easily to agile working, there are some that require the postholder to work from their base or a specific location or work core business hours due to the type of work they perform e.g. those who are patient facing, deal with the public or support scheduled meetings such as Remuneration Committee. These are known as anchor roles and are determined by line managers based on business need and service delivery. However, there may be occasions when staff in these roles are able to work in a more agile way and this can be discussed with their line manager.

It is at the line manager's discretion as to who is eligible to be an agile or have an anchor. Line managers will identify anchor roles in their teams using the criteria above and they can also monitor and amend this as appropriate and in line with this guidance.

## 2.7 How Can People Work in an Agile Way?

### **2.7.1 Location – working somewhere different from your normal base including:**

- Working from another ICB, NHS or partner/stakeholder office
- Members of a remote team, meeting half-way to carry out some work such as a 1:1
- Working off site for periods of time
- Working from home on occasion to complete a specific piece of work

For example, if an employee has a meeting at 9:30am in a ICB 10 minutes from home, but their base is 30 minutes from home, it makes sense to either

work from home before the meeting, work from another ICB or suitable location at their normal start time or to start work at 9:30am that day. It would not be a sensible use of time, or money to travel to the 'work base', to then travel to the ICB where the meeting is. Agile working also means that employees can connect to the ICB drives from a variety of NHS locations.

### **2.7.2 Time – consider when your team can do the work**

Depending on how this fits with the business needs of the team, different start and finish times can be considered. For example, some teams are able to accommodate 8am-4pm, 9am-5pm and 10am-6pm shifts. The decision on when or what times your team can do the work will be made by your manager based on delivering the team objectives and service need.

### **2.7.3 Role – how the role can be designed to be more agile**

While it is acknowledged some roles have more flexibility than others, there should be scope for some agile working in most roles within ICBs. For example, within most teams there is a requirement to answer the telephone between 9am and 5pm. However, this does not *always* mean *all* team members need to be in the office between 9am and 5pm. To support agile working, team managers could consider shift patterns or utilise IT solutions (if available) to enable work numbers to be connected to your laptop, PC or mobile phone.

## **2.8 How do we embed Agile Working into our teams?**

Agile working is a management tool that can aid productivity within teams. It is based on a culture of trust and transparency, measuring employee outputs and performance rather than their presence in an office. Just because an employee is sat at their desk it does not mean they are being productive!

Agile working is already embedded into the ICBs at an Executive level. It is championed from the very top and underpins the values and behaviours of the ICBs and the NHS. In order to embed this into day-to-day working practice, employees and team managers are encouraged to champion the values and utilise mechanisms currently in place

## **3. Support**

### **3.1 1:1s – how often is 'regular'?**

We know from the staff survey those people who have a regular 1:1 are more engaged and feel more valued than staff that do not have them. 1:1s are a good way of checking in on the following:



- Progression of agreed priorities and objectives in the next period so everyone is clear of what is expected of them and what people are working on
- Health and well-being of the individual
- How the relationship is working between manager and team member
- What is working well and not working well
- Skills, knowledge and behaviour needed to meet the role and career progression.

### 3.2 PDRs / Appraisals

This enables managers to ensure all employees have clear objectives and priorities to work towards so employees in turn will know what is expected of them. Agreeing objectives also allows managers to assess progress against these objectives and to measure performance.

### 3.3 Team Meetings

Team meetings can be a good way to see how agile working is working in your team. What is working well, what is not working so well and how this impacts on performance.

By utilising these systems, managers are in a strong position to really understand where time is being spent and measuring if performance is on track. For example, if a project needs to be delivered by a certain date, as a manager, your systems allow you to ensure time is being spent on these activities and progress against the objective is being made.

## 4 Myths Around Agile Working

You can only work from home if you are a manager – **FALSE!**

As outlined in this guidance agile working operates for everyone in the ICB whose role is suitable and is not necessarily about working from home. See section 2.7.

If you are not in the office, you are not being productive – **FALSE!**

Our focus is on results and agile working is a way of maximising everyone's time to meet the objectives and priorities agreed between managers and staff

You have to return to your work 'base' if you have been to an offsite meeting – **FALSE!**

Unless there is a particular reason for you to return to the work base, such as a team meeting or ICB business need, then consider where is best to carry on working. This could be the off-site location; working from home or the nearest ICB

Agile working is just working from home –**FALSE!**

As can be seen from the above agile working is not just working from home. This is about how to make the location, timing and role work for you and the ICB's business needs

## 5. Considerations

- There is lots of evidence on the benefits of team working. For example, a lot of learning takes place when people are in the office together in terms of problem solving and so you still need to make sure that team working is not compromised by working in an agile way.
- Within some teams, working away from base would need to be agreed beforehand by the line manager to ensure there is adequate cover in the office and to ensure that the benefits of team working are not compromised.
- Within some of our teams there is a requirement for a physical presence, and this will always need to be factored into how best the team can work in an agile way.
- Health and well-being. Constantly working in an agile way and not spending time with the team can sometimes lead to people feeling isolated. Agree as a team and with your manager how this can be managed.
- Information governance – please refer to the IG handbook but the key procedures and principles are below.
- IT requirements – Consider what IT systems and hardware are needed for teams to work efficiently and effectively in line with agile working principles. The IT team can provide advice on this.
- Hot-desking – The key thing to consider is to involve your team in designing the rules for hot-desking so everyone is clear.
- Agile working may not be suitable for everyone. For example, if a team member requires a specific piece of kit to aide with a medical condition and this kit is based in the office, managers may decide agile working may not be suitable if it is putting the health of the staff member at risk.
- Staff must complete the ICB Agile Working Health and Safety Self-Assessment (appendix 1) prior to working at a non-NHS location
- Staff may be referred to Occupational Health for support and advice on whether agile working is suitable for them if they have a medical condition or disability

## 6. Information Governance

- No person identifiable or sensitive information should be worked on remotely unless using an NHS issued device
- Staff must use hardware provided by the organisation when working remotely.
- Information should be saved to an encrypted and NHS issued laptop, or an encrypted and NHS issued USB stick.
- Do not email work to personal email accounts.
- Accessing information belonging to the organisation in public areas is discouraged, due to the threat of “overlooking”. Staff are responsible for ensuring that unauthorised individuals are not able to see information or access systems.
- Computer equipment should not be left unattended if working in a public space and should always be stored securely when not in use. Refer to the ICBs IT Equipment Policy for best practice guidelines for securing your IT equipment.
- Records and IT equipment must always be transported in a secure way e.g. in the boot of the car and not visible to the general public. No records or IT equipment should be left in the boot of the car overnight.

## 7. Summary

Agile working removes the barriers and restrictions around having to be based in a certain place at a certain time. Agile working creates a more responsive, efficient and effective organisation, which ultimately improves business performance and increases patient and employee satisfaction. Agile working empowers staff to take control of how they work. It creates an environment of trust which in turn can lead to increased productivity and efficiency, extended business hours, the ability to meet patient expectations, the ability to match the workforce to fluctuating demands and ultimately improved staff performance, increased motivation and engagement.

Agile working is a transformational tool which will allow ICBs to work smarter by eliminating the barriers to working efficiently.

Agile working is in line with the values and behaviours of the ICBs and should be actively encouraged where possible. This will also depend on if it is the best thing for the mental health and wellbeing of the individual – it won't suit everyone!

At the same time agile working must be balanced with the needs of the ICBs

business, which always take priority and are ultimately determined by team managers. Team managers therefore retain the ultimate discretion into determining if members of their team can work in an agile way.

Advice and guidance can also be sought from the Human Resources Team, the IT Team and IG Team.

Empowering the workforce will lead to a dedicated, loyal and committed workforce that will strive to go the extra mile, providing high quality services and adding value for our patients.

## 8. Practical Application

### 8.1 Desks

- Only staff in anchor roles will have a specific desk.
- All desks should be cleared when you finish using them- please remove any personal items, papers, coffee cups etc. and leave it as a clear, clean working space for the next person.
- If working from a location other than a ICB base, such as a GP surgery, please contact them to check there is a desk available for you to work from at least 24 hours before you arrive.

### 8.2 Equipment

- The appropriate IT equipment such as a laptop or mobile phone will be provided to those staff who are able to work agilely.
- Staff should aim to keep printing to a minimum and only print from a printer in a ICB location.

### 8.3 Locations

- Staff who wish to work from an alternative location, such as a GP practice should seek permission from their line manager and the practice at least 24 hours before they arrive.
- If working from a non-NHS location staff should use the NHS Guest wi-fi to ensure confidentiality.
- Staff should share their Outlook calendar with their line manager and their team so colleagues know where they are working from.
- If staff are regularly working from locations other than their base, they should speak to their line manager to discuss the need for an access card for those sites.

## 8.4 Confidentiality

- Staff must adhere to Information Governance guidelines, Data Protection and GDPR regulations at all times and especially in a non- NHS location.
- Consider if you can be overheard or your screen can be seen by others when working from locations other than ICB bases.
- Ensure that your laptop screen is locked and any papers and documents you are working on are secure if you leave your workstation e.g. to go to the toilet or a meeting.
- Ensure you have collected all papers and documents when you leave the place you have been working from.

## 9. Equality and Diversity

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the ICB's Equality and Diversity policy.

In applying this policy and procedure, the ICB will have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act (2010), in addition to offending background, trade union membership or any other personal characteristic.

The ICB values the diversity of its workforce and aims to ensure that all staff understand this commitment and adhere to the standards.

## Appendix 1: Agile Working Health and Safety Self-Assessment Checklist

<b>Name</b>			
<b>Date of Assessment</b>			
<b>Type of work activity</b>			
<b>Duration of Agile working</b>	<i>Occasional</i>	<i>Part Time (i.e.1 – 2 days)</i>	<i>Full Time</i>
<b>Line Manager</b>			
<b>Hazard Checklist</b>		<b>Please Tick ✓</b>	
<b>Working environment of area where agile working takes place</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is there sufficient ventilation, can windows be opened without risk to the employee or others?			
Is there sufficient lighting for the task?			
Is there sufficient heating? Are heating systems/ portable heaters maintained in good working order? <i>Gas appliances must be maintained by a Gas Safe qualified engineer.</i>			
If portable heaters are used, are these positioned to prevent toppling and away from combustible materials?			
Is there sufficient space for all the furniture & equipment used? <i>There should be at least 3.7 sq. metres.</i>			
Is flooring in good condition and free from trip hazards?			
Is there sufficient safe & secure storage space for equipment and documents used?			
Is the work area subject to noise at a level which is likely to affect the employee's concentration?			
<b>Comments:</b>			

<b>Electrical safety</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is the fixed electrical system in good condition e.g. no signs of scorching or arcing on sockets?		
Are there sufficient numbers of sockets to prevent overloading?		
If extension leads are used, are these the fused and switched type? <i>Cables and extension leads should be positioned so that they are not subject to excessive wear or damage and do not present a trip hazard.</i>		
Is electrical equipment used in good condition and free from any visual faults?		
Does the employee undertake visual checks of electrical equipment to identify any obvious faults such as worn or damaged leads or plugs?		
If any equipment is to be provided by the Organisation, are there arrangements in place for it to be PAT tested?		
<b>Comments:</b>		
<b>Safe Posture</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Has the employee received training/information on how to set up their workstation to avoid poor posture?		
Does the user have access to a suitable and comfortable chair and is aware of the importance of taking regular breaks?		
Is the work surface of a sufficient size to accommodate all the equipment to be used?		
Is there sufficient space in front of the keyboard for the employee to rest their hands in between keying?		
Does the employee have to read/refer to/copy from documents placed flat on the desk? <i>This is likely to lead to awkward neck movements and should be avoided by using a document holder.</i>		
Is there sufficient space below the work surface for the employee's legs to enable them to stretch and change position?		

Can the employee's feet rest on the floor or do they need a footrest?		
If the employee must use a laptop, do they use a docking station, separate keyboard, mouse and monitor?		
Is the employee likely to regularly use the telephone whilst using the keyboard or mouse? If yes, a headset should be provided		
Is the employee aware of the importance of taking regular breaks from computer based work before fatigue sets in?		
Has the employee experienced pain or discomfort when using the computer agilely?		
<b>Comments:</b>		
<b>Visual fatigue</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is the screen positioned at the correct height and viewing distance? <i>The employee's line eye-line should be just below the top of the screen and the screen should be positioned directly in front of the user at approximately an arm's length away.</i>		
Is the screen free from glare or reflections? <i>Ideally the screen should be at right angle to windows, windows should be provided by blinds or curtains to prevent glare from falling onto the screen.</i>		
Is the screen free from flicker & are images clear & stable? <i>IT can advise how to adjust the settings to suit the needs of the user.</i>		
Does the employee require an eye-sight test?		
Has the employee suffered from headaches or visual discomfort when working agilely at the computer?		
<b>Comments:</b>		
<b>Stress</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is there sufficient segregation from disruptions e.g. noise, other people, pets?		



Are there arrangements for keeping in contact with the agile worker?		
Are there arrangements in place to conduct regular supervision/ personal development reviews with the agile worker?		
Is support / advice readily available to the agile worker to deal with either IT problems or other specific work queries?		
Does the agile worker have access to sufficient training, information & instruction to enable them to undertake their work safely?		
<b>Comments:</b>		
<b>Emergency arrangements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Does the accommodation used for agile working have a smoke alarm?		
Has the agile worker identified what they will do in the event of a fire? <i>They should plan their escape route and what they would do if the route was unavailable.</i>		
Has the agile worker got access to a first-aid kit?		
<b>Comments:</b>		
<b>Action taken by employee to address any issues</b>		
<b>Action taken by manager to address any issues</b>		
<p><b>If any concerns arise regarding the completion of this agile working self-assessment then a further risk assessment should be completed with the staff member</b></p>		

<b>Further Action Required</b>		<b>Yes / No</b>	
<b>Follow up action completed on</b> (insert date)			
<p>Please complete the attached checklist which is designed to enable you to carry out a self- assessment of your agile working. Your views are essential in order to enable us to achieve our objective of ensuring your comfort and safety at work. Please tick the answer that best describes your opinion, for each of the questions listed.</p>			
<p><b>Declaration by user</b></p> <p>I confirm that I have undertaken this self-assessment of my agile working venues and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The responses recorded on this form are correct; and</li> <li>• I understand that I should report any health concerns that I may have in connection with agile working to my line manager at the earliest possible opportunity</li> </ul> <p>I understand that the information provided by me on this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be released without my consent to any unauthorised person.</p>			
<b>Signature of user</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Signature of Line Manager</b>		<b>Date</b>	