

Hot Desk Policy



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1 Introduction and Purpose

BNSSG CCG, in line with good sustainable practices wish to improve our 'hot-desking' and flexible use of space in each of our office locations.

This will enable the CCG to operate more efficiently and cost effectively in order to reduce costs, which can be invested into patient care.

The majority of the CCG's office space has been designed to support agile working practices rather than individual activity, by using both hot-desk and shared desk principles rather than conventional workspace allocations.

Given the dynamic and frequent change culture inherent within the NHS, the adoption of hot-desking initiatives is appropriate and relevant. This flexibility provides alternate ways of working, including hot-desking, mobile working, shared desks and a variety of meeting zones, supported by relevant policies.

The term 'hot-desking' has many definitions but generally refers to an arrangement at work where individuals do not have a desk specifically allocated to them, unless by exception where the needs of individuals that require special adjustments to a workstation in order to maintain a safe working environment following a Display Screen Assessment (DSE).

The number of workstations has been allocated to each directorate based on the ratio of 8 workstations per every 10 WTE based on the agreed establishment list for the CCG and it is for the directorate to determine how these are allocated out. Staff are required to work flexibly in order to ensure space is utilised to its maximum capacity.

Temporary additional or project resource is not included in the ratio calculation as this can flex in any one month. Directorates should look to accommodate any temporary resources within their directorate allocation or by use hot desks not allocated to individual directorates.

The potential popularity and success of implementing this policy will be underpinned by adoption of our flexible working policy.

Every member of staff is eligible to use a hot-desk or share a desk regardless of their profession or post to facilitate the most effective way of working. All workstations offered by the CCG will be configured with a standard set up.

2 Scope

The policy applies to all directly and indirectly employed staff within the CCG and other persons working within the organisation. This includes independent contractors or our partners.

The CCG is committed to the principles of equality and diversity and will strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination in all its forms. We will strive towards demonstrating fairness and equal opportunities for our staff and will ensure that relevant Health & Safety legislative requirements are met.

3 **Organisational Approach**

In order to support the flexible working policy and maximising use of office space, all workstations and office space is deemed usable by any staff (exception to this will be those staff that require specific workstations adjustments for health reasons, which are identified by notices).

Work patterns and the time people spend in the office vary, with some individuals being largely static while others are highly mobile.

The number of workstations allocated to each directorate is based on their optimum need for space rather than simply on a one to one basis, enabling the overall space available to be used to best effect.

Directors and Heads of Department/Teams will need to review where necessary, staff that are part-time and the days of the week they work to support business continuity and optimum space utilisation, so all part-time staff are not in or out on the same day.

Organisational benefits:

For those staff for whom working across a variety of sites, hot desks will support them to have the opportunity to find a work space easily to enable them to work effectively wherever they need to work. In addition, this will support the organisation to maximise its estate by better desk utilisation as well as:

- Support employees to work in areas that best suit the task in hand
- Support improved productivity
- Reduce estate running costs
- Improved communications as staff can hot desk with transient team colleagues
- Increase employee satisfaction so staff can work from other sites, which supports the needs of the business.

Employee Benefits:

- Ability to organise working day around meetings and existing commitments
- Traffic/commuting considerations – freedom from travelling during the working day
- Relaxation of time parameters in which to work
- Ability of employees to better balance work and home life
- Variety of work zones to support staff to utilise space based on the work being undertaken (break out areas, meeting rooms, meeting booths, project table, height adjustable workstations).

Hot desk / Shared Desk Principles

Hot-desking principles can take a number of forms depending on the responsibilities and procedures adopted for allocation of space and desks on a daily basis within a directorate or team.

The basic premise behind 'hot-desking' or flexible use of space is that office resources are no longer individually allocated, but are available to all within a group or function on the basis of practical, day to day need. Each directorate has been allocated a number of workstations. The number of workstations provided is based on an optimum rather than maximum requirement, and are a reflection of the day to day work patterns within the CCG and has improved space standards on a consistent basis.

Staff clinically assessed by Occupational Health that require individual workstations adjustments to safeguard against hazards such as Muscular-skeletal disorders, visual fatigue and stress are likely to be allocated a specific desk. These needs will be taken into account by line managers as part of planning desk allocation within their directorate and appropriate signs added to these desks to identify them as priority users when they are in the office.

Workstations not allocated to Directorates

Aside from hot-desking in your own directorate and team there will be designated hot desk locations throughout the floor plates, which are not allocated to any individual directorate or team and can be used by all staff and partners. These will be clearly identified by the appropriate signage.

- There will be no storage facilities for work documents or personal effects at these hot desk locations and these should be kept in personal lockers.
- Access to these workstations will be based on a first come first served basis, unless needed by a priority user.
- You are responsible for ensuring the security of your own belongings and for the equipment issues to you or associated with the workstation you are using. The CCG cannot be held responsible for any personal belongings going missing.

4 Relevant Legislation

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Section 7

"It shall be the duty of every employee whilst at work to take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others, who may be affected by their acts and omissions whilst at work".

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, Regulation 12
"Employees should make use of appropriate equipment provided for them".

Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992

"Employees responsibilities include attending any training provided, to complete a DSE (risk assessment) and report any issues to their line manager or office manager. All employees should use equipment provided correctly and adjusted to suit their needs. Any problems or ill health that may be work related should be reported.

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 require the organisation to: -

- Identify “Users”. Perform risk assessments on all workstations and provide ergonomic control measures as appropriate.
- Provide “users” with eyesight tests if requested and to provide help with the cost of corrective spectacles if required
- Provide information to “users” regarding the hazards, risks and control measures associated with work on display screen equipment

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (1992)

Require general precautionary measures to be taken within all workplace environments including offices. The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 are concerned with specific precautions to be taken in respect of the use of display screen equipment, the main hazards of which are Muscular-skeletal disorders, visual fatigue and stress.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

Corporate Services

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the office environment. The Office Manager in the Corporate Services Team will support and promote the policy throughout the organisation and will be responsible for the implementation of the policy, producing and monitoring action plans aimed at reducing the CCG estate.

The Corporate Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring compliance with this policy.
- That the office and meeting zones are being used in an appropriate manner.
- Managing and the implementation of any infrastructure changes.
- Promoting awareness and engagement throughout the CCG.

Please speak to the office manager if you have any questions or concerns.

All Staff

All staff must ensure that workstations they use are left clear ready for other users. Everyone will be expected to keep workstations clean and disinfectant wipes will be provided to facilitate this. Completing mandatory training on DSE and taking the necessary steps to complete dynamic risk assessments based on their learning and when using different space to promote their own safety.

Managers

It is important for managers to consider the following key factors when determining the suitability of hot-desking or sharing workstations to individual posts in their directorate.

- Risk factors to individual’s health.

- Whether or not the individuals need to travel frequently
- Whether or not the type of work is process based or information data inputting and whether it needs to be carried out confidentially
- Whether or not the work is location dependent – a limited requirement to be in specific or fixed places at predictable times
- Whether there is a defined output or need to be supervised

Health and Safety

Employees are required to carry out an on-line workstation assessment (DSE assessment) and to take any necessary corrective actions. An employee needs to use the information checklist when setting up at a new workstation to remain mindful of the need to observe safe working practices, e.g. adjust the chair and height of the display screen to a comfortable level, whenever sitting at a hot-desk. We would only expect employees to be complete the DSE assessment if they are going to be present at the hot-desk for more than one hour.

The regulations require employers to carry out a risk assessment of users' workstations, which should consider the entire workstation, including equipment and furniture, as well as the work environment, e.g. lighting, temperature and leg room. The tasks that are being performed at the work station should be considered as should any special needs of individual staff.

Display screen equipment (DSE) risk assessments should also consider those factors that may contribute to repetitive strain injuries such as:

- Sitting in the same position for a long period
- Awkward positioning of the wrist and hand in relation to the keyboard
- High workload for a prolonged period of time

In addition to the responsibilities of manager and employee there are teams to help support:

Occupational Health (OH) shall:

Support employees with work-related health problems and advise management on any work adjustments.

Work in close co-operation with Health & Safety, Human Resources, Health and Safety Representatives and Managers to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the prevention of work related ill-health.

Health and Safety (H&S) Advisor shall:

Provide advice and guidance on DSE issues to employees in consultation with the OH and H&S representatives as appropriate. Undertake ad-hoc visual and formal planned audits to ensure Display Screen Initial Checklists are completed and processed appropriately.

6 Workplace Offer

Staff will routinely have access to the following:

- Workstation
- Adjustable screen or screens
- Replicator to support network access
- Adjustable tilt keyboard
- Mouse
- Fully adjustable chair with lumbar support
- Access to a telephone
- Access to a photocopier /printer / scanner
- Adequate space, heating and lighting
- Access to kitchen/washroom facilities
- Access to information relating to risk assessment, set up and safe working techniques to assist with the safe adjustment of the workstation to suit individual needs
- Personal Locker / Pedestal (For specific roles only)

These items should be available at each office location. If anything is missing please contact the Office Manager.

7 Office Etiquette

When working in a hot-desk and open plan office environment. It is important that we are respectful and consider the impact we have on others around us. We have developed 6 guidelines to help support this way of working.

Respect another's need to work.

Just because others are sitting nearby doesn't mean they are available for conversation at all times. Respect one another's privacy. Act as if there is a door between you and if they appear to be busy, ask if they have a moment to talk.

Keep noise and distractions to a minimum.

Noisy conversations (either between individuals or on the telephone) or habits such as tapping on the desk, fidgeting or getting up and down often can create an annoying distraction to those trying to concentrate.

If you want to listen to music, podcasts or videos, use headphones or ear buds.

If you are planning a conference call or video conference, try use a location where you will not disturb everyone or book a room.

Be tidy.

A messy workstation can be a distraction to others and will detract from the professional image the CCG is trying to establish. Keep your belongings confined to your own personal space.

Tidy up your immediate area, including papers or personal items if you are going to be away from the workstation for more than two hours or before leaving work, to ensure the workstation is left clear for others to use.

Respect another's space.

Just because another's workstation is within reach of your workstation doesn't make it common domain. Treat workstation as if it was a private office. There are hot-desks available throughout the floor plates, which are not allocated to individual directorates.

Do not help yourself to anything on another workstation. Ask first or go to the stationery store located outside the kitchen on the 4th floor, east floor plate if you need a pen or a stapler. If the item you are looking for is not available, talk to the Office Manager.

Be considerate.

Respect is key when working in an open plan office and hot-desk environment. Act respectful and expect others to act in the same way.

It's best to address problems and concerns directly and diplomatically when they happen. If you are not comfortable doing this, please discuss any issues with your line manager so they can raise these on your behalf.

Do not unplug any cables from the replicator, screens, keyboard or mouse, where you do need to do this, please ensure that the workstation is put back together correctly and left for the next user. If equipment is not working correctly at a workstation, please speak to the Office Manager.

Be tolerant.

The open plan office and hot-desk environment brings together myriad personalities, with different working styles. Be tolerant of these differences and find ways to adapt. Everyone is not going to agree with you one hundred percent of the time, so keep an open mind, listen with the intent to learn and focus on the positive aspects of working in this way.

8 Training

The CCG recognises the importance of appropriate training for staff.

If you require training on the use of any equipment or the chair, contact the Office Manager who will undertake this training with you or arrange for it to be undertaken, where more specialist training is required. Mandatory training is available on ConsultOD for DSE safety

9 Equality Impact Assessment and Mental Capacity

An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment (EDIA) has been carried out on this policy using the CCG approved Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). No adverse impact was identified and therefore a full EDIA was deemed not necessary.

10 Success Criteria / Monitoring Effectiveness.

This policy has been developed with input from the Staff Partnership Forum.

Audits will be carried out on a regular basis by the Office Manager to review the effectiveness of this policy with feedback encouraged from staff groups and individuals to ensure we maintain a successful working environment.

Audits will involve walking around the offices and monitoring empty workstations and the use of rooms. The information will then be collated and reports produced as and when required. Any subsequent issues / findings resulting from the review will be incorporated into any revised version of the document.

11 Review

This document may be reviewed at any time but will automatically be reviewed on a bi-annual basis unless organisational changes, legislation, guidance or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

12 Definitions

The definitions which apply to this policy are:

Ref	Term	Definition
a	Flexible working	Flexible use of space, time and location
b	Flexible Worker	A mobile worker, routinely away from their work place or office to a greater or lesser degree.
c	Designated Workstation	A work station allocated to a specific individual
d	“Hot Desk”	A work station available to anyone
e	“Shared Desk”	A work station shared by two or more individuals by agreement.
f	Designated office	An office allocated to a specific individual.
g	Workstation ratio	Staff to work station ratio is determined by 0.8 workstations to WTE Directorate staff level as set out on the agreed establishment.
H	Workstation	Desk

13 References and links to other documents

- Flexible Working policy
- Health and Safety policy
- DSE Assessment
- Chair Adjustment Guide