

Thursday 19 May 2022

Smarter Working update The last two years has seen a significant change in how and where many of us work. As well as creating new expectations and preferences, this has also raised several questions. This update has been prepared to provide more information. Firstly, it is important to say our core message has not changed: work from home, if you can, until 31 July. Please continue to meet virtually, using MS Teams. Face-to-face meetings should be the exception, not the rule, and should only happen if there is clear requirement for in-person meeting. Attendance at – or the arrangement of – in-person conferences should be risk assessed and consideration given to mitigations such as use of FRSMs.

Operation Iris (the most recent phase of our pandemic response) will end on 6th June 2022. A period of transition will follow which includes planning how best to de-activate our policy for management of the workforce in a major incident including pandemic. This has been active since March 2020. We are taking our work on flexible and hybrid working forward under the banner of Smarter Working. If we get this right, we're confident Smarter Working will deliver better work-life balance, greater ability to focus with fewer distractions, save commuting time and costs, and make NHS Grampian more attractive to both current and prospective employees.

However, introducing Smarter Working also has wide-ranging implications on, for example:

- our organisational culture
- our local and national policies
- national terms and conditions of employment.

There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes, both locally and nationally. Locally, a group of early adopters from Public Health and the Directorate of People & Culture, along with Partnership reps, are working their way through the introduction of Smarter Working. These teams will help us to understand what works and what doesn't. This, in turn, will help inform the wider system of some of the opportunities and challenges Smarter Working presents.

Whilst we know you are looking for clear guidance, we still await some key pieces of information, including:

- publication of a single NHS Scotland Flexible Work Location Policy
- information from the Scottish Terms and Conditions Subgroup, who are specifically considering the T&Cs of flexible working.

So, what can you do in the meantime?

Start with a 1-1 discussion between line manager and team members. At its core, Smarter Working is straightforward; it aims to match service needs (the work to be done) with personal preferences (how and where that work is best done).

During this discussion, consideration should be given to:

- What are the business/service needs of your team? Where/when can work be carried out? For example, there may be a need for emails to be monitored between 8.30am-5pm Monday-Friday, or the work being carried out can be more flexible to fit a different work pattern.
- Some work may be required to be carried out in an office, e.g., due to software used. However, that may be only part of the role and other elements of that role may be able to be carried out away from an office. It is at that point that personal preference comes into play.

The only way to meaningfully work through this is via a combination of team and 1:1 meetings.

Don't forget: Whilst at its core Smarter Working is relatively simple, there are layers of complexity to be considered including:

- inclusion, diversity, and accessibility
- access to appropriate technology
- the health and wellbeing of colleagues working remotely
- managing the performance of colleagues working remotely

This is only the start of our move to Smarter Working and we will issue regular updates. In the meantime, we hope you find this information useful. However, if you have any questions please contact: gram.smarterworking@nhs.scot

LFD test kit collection – Acute Sector Following last night's item on a change in pick-up location for LFD kits, please note the ARI General Office will become the collection point from **next** Monday (23 May). Kits should be collected from the current location in the ARI Yellow Zone until then. Apologies for any confusion.

Guidance on bruising in infants and young children New guidance on this topic is now available. The Child Protection team have adapted this guidance for NHS Grampian staff and it is relevant for all medical and nursing staff, neonatal and midwifery services, Emergency Departments, all Paediatric Wards and Community Child Health. This includes all Primary Care and Community based staff working with young infants to older children and young people. It is available on the [Child Protection intranet site](#) (networked devices only).

Nursing & Midwifery Post Registration Funding - Application Window Now Open Applications are now being accepted from registered nurses and midwives to help fund post registration degrees and professional development courses during the academic year 2022-23. The closing date for applications is **9am on Friday 10 June 2022**. The application form can be found on the Practice Education intranet site [Pages - PostRegistrationCoursesFunding \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#). If you have any questions, or cannot access the link, please do not hesitate to contact us at gram.practiceeducation@nhs.scot

Tune of the day I don't know about you, but there wasn't a dry eye in the house last night at the conclusion of Derry Girls. As someone who grew up in Northern Ireland over the same period as Erin and the gang it had particular resonance for me, but a glance at social media shows you didn't have to be born and raised there to be struck by the poignancy of the episode. [Dario G's Sunchyme](#) was used to great effect in the episode so that, combined with the continued good weather, makes it our tune of the day. If you want to request a tune, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via gram.communications@nhs.scot (EP).