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Author: K. Beeston			

CHSS Procedure

Lone Worker (incorporating home workers)

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The aim of this procedure is to outline CHSS' responsibilities towards colleagues and volunteers working alone by:

- Defining what lone working is
- Taking action to reduce risk to lone workers
- Ensuring that all volunteers and colleagues are aware of their responsibility to use CHSS systems in place to assist lone workers
- Providing a mechanism to assess the risks to lone workers and to take steps to avoid or control the risks where necessary
- Ensuring that a robust system of incident reporting and auditing of incidents is adhered to.

1.2 Scope

This procedure will apply to all CHSS colleagues and volunteers, including temporary workers and those employed on a casual basis.

1.3 Definitions

Lone Working: the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone working as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

1.4 References

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

HSE how to control the risks of working alone, INDG73

Suzy Lamplugh Trust Website

1.5 Responsibilities

- Directors are responsible for ensuring their Directorate have all the necessary resources to ensure all lone working is managed safely
- Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring any lone working in their areas is identified and the resources required to manage this are available for line managers.
- The Health & Safety Lead and Safeguarding Lead are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of this procedure and advising on any legislative change for CHSS

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- Line Managers will ensure that this procedure is communicated to colleagues and volunteers and is implemented so all lone working is risk assessed and that any lone workers are following the process and risk assessments put in place

Colleagues and volunteers have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and others in lone working situations and to actively participate and follow the risk assessments put in place for them

2. Procedure for lone working roles

2.1 The term ‘lone worker’ applies to those colleagues and volunteers identified by each Directorate who work by themselves without close or direct supervision from others within the organisation. Within CHSS, there are numerous situations where lone working may occur. Below are example of situations that are classed as lone working:

- When colleagues or volunteers are away from CHSS premises requiring independent travel and attending other premises alone
- All colleagues and volunteers who are home-based
- People who work away from their fixed base without colleagues e.g. visiting people in their homes
- Peripatetic workers who have a fixed base but by the nature of their duties are required to travel to various locations
- Colleagues or volunteers working in isolated locations
- Duties which may extend out with normal working hours
- Colleague/volunteer drivers
- Colleagues/volunteers conducting walking groups

2.2 The definition can cover colleagues and volunteers in situations with varying degrees and types of risk, which will form part of the risk assessment.

3. Lone working hazards

3.1 We recognise people who work alone will, of course, face the same hazards in their work as others doing similar tasks. However, additionally they may encounter the following:

- Accidents or sudden illnesses may happen when there is no one to summon help or first aid
- Violence or threat of violence

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- Animals
- Vulnerability to false accusations of improper conduct
- Driving
- Fire
- Severe weather

3.2 We recognise that these hazards are not restricted to lone working. However, if a person is alone the consequences of an adverse event may be more significant. Risk assessments must take account of any extra risk factors.

3.3 Line Managers must ensure that they have communicated their expectations to lone workers and trained them appropriately. The line managers will set out and explain the limits as to what can and what cannot be done whilst working alone.

4. Risk Assessment

4.1 There are two important aspects of risk assessment: generic risk assessment; dynamic risk assessment.

4.2. Generic risk assessment: a generic lone working risk assessment will involve identifying potential hazards associated with specific work tasks or activities, assessing the level of risk based on impact and likelihood of occurrence, and determining any controls in place to minimise the risk.

4.2.1 Generic lone working risk assessments should be undertaken across all directorates, using the template risk assessment available on SharePoint. Line Managers must ensure an up-to-date lone working risk assessment is in place for their direct reports' roles, when working alone poses an actual or potential risk to colleagues and volunteers.

4.2.2 Line Managers must ensure that colleagues and volunteers are involved in the risk assessment process.

4.2.3 The results of assessments and risk reduction strategies should be communicated to all colleagues and volunteers and reviewed annually or in response to changes in circumstances.

4.2.4 Line Managers should take into consideration any physical, psychological or diversity issues that may make an individual person more vulnerable to the

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risks of lone working. Short or longer term management strategies should be put in place to mitigate against any such risks. Lone workers have a responsibility to inform managers of issues that may place them at an increased risk.

4.2.5 CHSS will base a level of supervision for lone workers on the findings of the generic risk assessment.

4.2.6 When undertaking the risk assessment, line managers should consider the following:

- Where risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back-up need to be put in place.
- When planning safe working arrangements for lone workers, the line manager needs to give special attention to whether the risks of the job can be adequately controlled by one person and whether the person is medically fit and suitable to work alone.
- Lone workers new to a role, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks or dealing with new situations will need to be accompanied at first.

4.3 Dynamic risk assessment is the type that is undertaken continuously during work activities and is reactive to the changing working environment and conditions.

4.3.1 It is essential that lone workers feel empowered to make decisions based on a dynamic risk assessment regarding the safety of working conditions. Decisions made may include withdrawing from a situation or seeking guidance from line managers before working alone. This includes taking appropriate personal safety precautions (See Appendix 2). This also includes accessing all available information, for example service user records and referrals, prior to undertaking any lone working. Assessing this information will potentially highlight any risks that the lone worker should be aware of.

4.3.2 The process detailed in Appendix 1 will be used in conjunction with the risk assessment to support effective assessment of the risk involving lone working.

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5. Training

5.1 Lone worker training is provided to all colleagues and volunteers who undertake lone working as a regular part of their role.

5.2 Adequate training on the role or task is required to ensure competency in safety matters, especially where colleagues/volunteers need to deal with new or unusual circumstances.

5.3 Lone working colleagues and volunteers should be capable of responding correctly to emergencies and be trained in CHSS reporting procedures.

6. Buddy Systems and Emergency Reporting

6.1 This procedure has been developed to provide all colleagues and volunteers in a lone working environment with the necessary structure and support measures to ensure their personal safety as far as is practicable.

6.2 Line Managers should ensure effective buddy systems or check-in procedures are in place for all colleagues and volunteers operating in a lone working or home working environment. This may include documenting or communicating location details, as well as calling or texting upon arrival and departure.

6.3 CHSS recognise that some volunteers and colleagues may undertake their roles outside of normal business hours – for example, fundraising or kindness calls. Line Managers should ensure appropriate support is available, for example arranging for the individual to check in with another colleague and/or using a personal safety device.

6.4 In the event of an emergency, the colleague or volunteer can be contacted or details as to their last appointment/whereabouts can be provided for the emergency services or family member who may require to make emergency contact with the lone worker.

6.5 Safeguarding incidents - in the event of a safeguarding incident or concern, for example violent, aggressive or abusive behaviour:

6.5.1 If the lone worker or another individual are in immediate danger, the lone worker should phone the police or emergency social worker/agency, as appropriate. A personal safety alarm may be used if available.

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6.5.2 If the lone worker or individual are in less immediate danger, the lone worker should follow the agreed check in procedure, record the information securely and inform their Line Manager and the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

6.6 In line with dynamic risk assessment guidance, the lone worker should feel empowered to remove themselves from any situation which feels unsafe.

6.7 In the event of an accident or incident follow the accident incident procedure.

Appendices

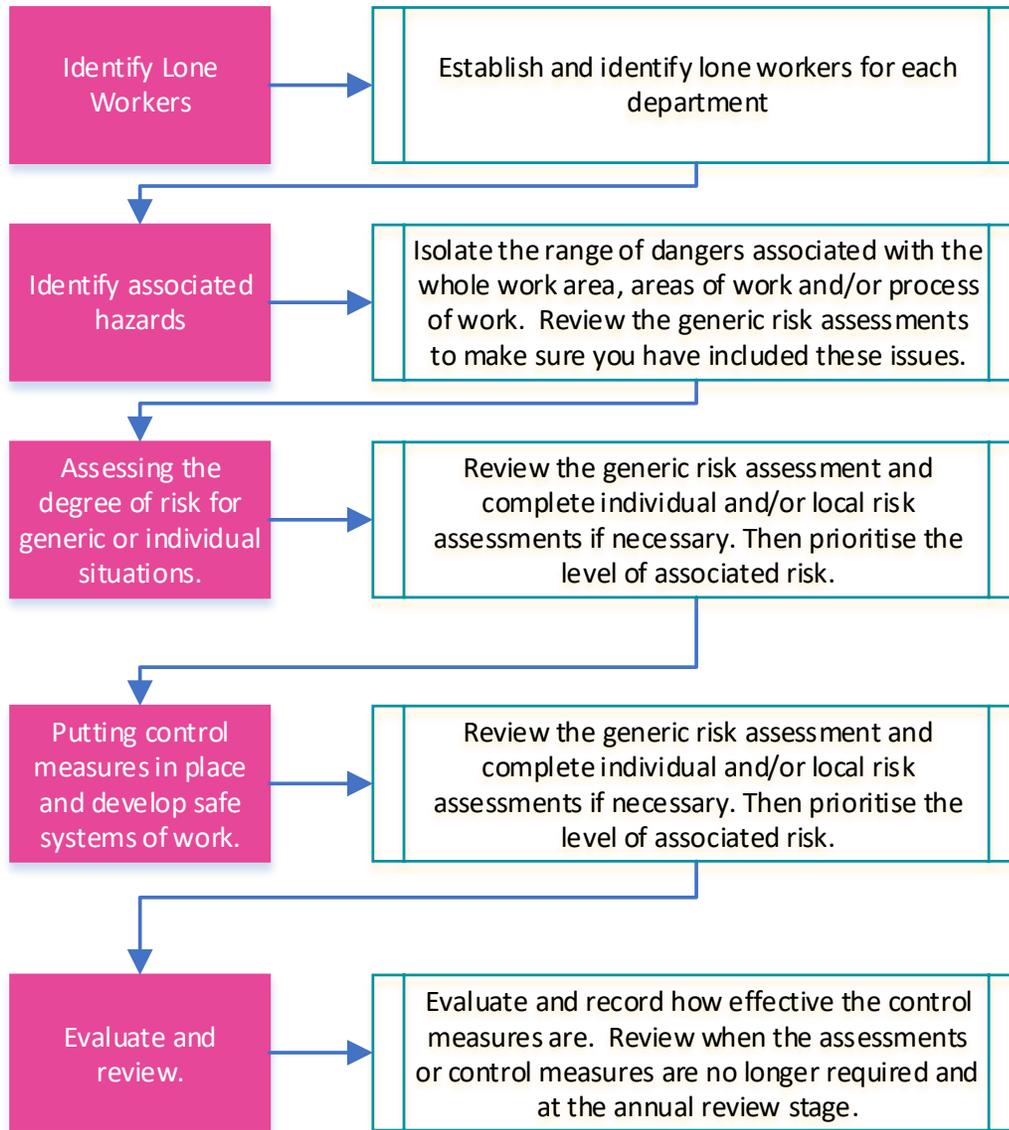
Appendix 1 – Lone working risk assessment process

Appendix 2 – Personal safety guidance

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Appendix 1 – Lone Working Risk Assessment Process



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Appendix 2 – Personal safety guidance

1. Using taxis or minicabs

- Always use a registered taxi or mini cab
- Carry the telephone number of a trusted, registered company with you.
- If possible, book a taxi in advance. When booking ask for the driver's name, as well as the make and colour of the car.
- Confirm the driver's details when they arrive
- If you are ordering a taxi from a public place, try not to let people overhear your name and address.
- If you chat to the driver, be careful not to give out any personal details.
- If you feel threatened in a taxi or if you are at all worried - ask the driver to stop in a busy area and get out of the car.
- If the driver refuses to stop, use a mobile (if you have one) to call the police and alert other drivers by waving out the window.
- Always ask the driver to wait until you are inside your home before they drive away
- Report any incidents

2. Personal safety on foot

- Always take the route you know best and try to use well lit, busy streets.
- Avoid danger spots like quiet or badly lit areas, pathways or isolated car parks.
- If you do have to pass danger spots, think about what you would do if you felt threatened. The best idea is to head for a public space where you know there will be other people, for example a shop, or if not available use a mobile phone if you have one.
- Avoid passing close to stationary cars with their engines running and people sitting in them.
- Try to keep both hands free and do not walk with your hands in your pockets
- Keep alert to your surroundings
- Walk facing oncoming traffic
- Wear appropriate clothing
- It is a good idea to have a mobile phone, a phone card, or some spare change with you to enable you to make a phone call.
- Be careful when using cash point machines. Make sure nobody is hovering nearby and do not count your money in the middle of the street.

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- If you think that you are being followed, trust your instincts and take action. As confidently as you can, cross the road, turn and look to see who is behind you. If you are still being followed, keep moving. Make for a busy area and tell people what is happening. If this is not available, use your mobile phone if you have one. If necessary, call the police.
- Always carry your personal alarm if you have one

3. Working alone in a retail store

The following provisions should be made in all CHSS retail stores.

- The emergency contact numbers for managers, local police and 999 should be displayed on the notice board and at the till point.
- When any colleague is working alone in a CHSS shop they should: -
 - Ensure a telephone is nearby in case of emergency
 - Advise Line Manager that they are working alone
 - Have shop door keys attached to them
 - Have either door or curtain to the back shop closed when on the shop floor
 - Ensure there are no slip/trip hazards
- When any colleague is working alone in a CHSS shop they should not:
 - Leave the shop floor if anyone is in the shop
 - Allow anyone access to the back shop
 - Cash up on the shop floor at any time
 - Climb a step ladder (to avoid accidents)
- Should any lone worker be aware of any danger from any member of the public, they should close the store and dial 999.

4. Driving a car, personal safety & parking your car

Prior to setting out:

- Ensure your car is serviced and maintained
- Ensure you have sufficient fuel for your journey
- If you are a member of AA/RAC or similar carry their emergency telephone numbers
- If you have a mobile phone make sure that it is charged and switched on; however, this must not be used whilst driving.
- Plan your journey and carry a map
- During winter months carry a torch, spade, and waterproof, warm clothing, blanket, drinking water, food sustenance, suitable footwear and hazard triangle.

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- Check weather and road conditions with the Met office and police websites. Please also refer to CHSS adverse weather guidelines.
- Always lock car doors and ensure that bags and valuables are out of sight when vehicle is unattended

During journey and on arrival:

- If caught in extreme weather conditions, abandon journey and book into nearest hotel. Follow reporting procedures.
- Take a break from driving every two hours
- Park in a well-lit area near to venue if possible
- Try to have someone meet you if you are carrying equipment, and to assist you back to the car after visit.

After visit:

- Have keys ready to unlock the car
- Check the back seat of the car before you get in
- If possible, phone ahead with your estimated time of arrival.

Car parks:

- Avoid poorly lit and isolated car parks
- Whenever possible, choose a staffed car park and park as close as you can to the attendant.
- Make sure the interior light is working. Shut all windows. Lock all doors.
- Note exactly where you have parked your car
- If you collect a ticket on entering the car park, do not leave it in the car, as this will make it easier for a thief to steal your vehicle.
- When returning to your car, have your keys in your hand so that you can get in quickly.
- Doors - lock them every time you leave your car.
- Ignition keys - remove your ignition key on every occasion you leave your vehicle.
- Luggage and valuables - do not leave any luggage or valuables on display, as they will catch the eye of the opportunistic thief. Credit cards should never be left in the car.

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5. Using Public Transport

- Know where you are going and which stop you need. Check departure times, especially of last buses or trains.
- Try and have your ticket, pass or change ready in your hand so your purse or wallet is out of sight.
- If travelling at night or in an unfamiliar area, try to arrange for someone to meet you at the bus stop or station. Otherwise try to walk near other people and walk purposefully to your destination.
- If possible, wait for a bus or train in a well-lit place near other people if possible.
- Take note where any emergency alarms or cameras are and try to sit near them
- Carry extra money in case you get stranded and need to take another bus or train or ring for a lift
- If a bus is empty or you are travelling when it is dark, it is safer to stay on the lower deck and sit nearer the driver or conductor. On trains avoid compartments which have no access to corridors or other parts of the train.
- Try to sit with other people and avoid empty carriages
- If you feel uneasy, move to another seat or carriage or get off at the next stop if you know the area.
- If you feel threatened on public transport, make as much noise as possible to attract the attention of the driver or guard. Sound the emergency alarm if there is one.
- Always carry your personal alarm, if you have one.

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