Lone Worker Policy

Reference Number:	This will be applied to all new ICB-wide PPSs by the Governance and Corporate Affairs Team and will be retained throughout its life span.
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VERSION HISTORY

Date	Version	Changes made to previous version	Consulting and Endorsing Stakeholders, Committees / Meetings / Forums etc.
16.03.22	1	New Policy	

Contents

1. Policy Statement

1.1 NHS Coventry and Warwickshire ICB (the ICB) recognises that during their work, it may be essential for employees to work alone. This may occur as a regular part of an employee's working practice or may occur on an occasional basis. In either situation it will arise from an understanding that this is the most appropriate and effective way of delivering a particular ICB's services.

1.2 The safety of employees is paramount. The ICB is committed to minimising the risk of lone working for all employees.

1.3 All possible steps will be taken to ensure that staff who work for the ICB are not put at unnecessary risk through lone working. Managers within the ICB will ensure that staff attend training and will carry out risk assessments on lone workers to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable they work in a safe environment.

1.4 The policy applies to all employees regardless of their workplace.

2. Introduction

2.1 The ICB acknowledges its duty to make adequate provision for the Health and Safety of lone workers. It is the policy of the ICB to fully implement the general requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) and associated regulations.

2.2 The duty to implement this policy may be delegated to individuals in a manner that accurately reflects their existing levels of competence and responsibility. In addition a key role in implementing this policy lies with service line managers, team leaders etc who must ensure all of the following requirements are addressed and implemented. Individuals must plan, organise, control, monitor and review their Health and Safety lone working system. However in certain circumstances, the advice and assistance of a specialist advisor may be required.

2.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant ICB policies including: Security Management Policy; Risk Management Strategy; Health and Safety Policy; Serious Incident Management Policy and Procedure; Complaints Policy.

3. Equality Statement and Due Regard

3.1 The ICB aims to design and implement policy documents that meet the diverse needs of our services, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others. It takes into account current UK legislative requirements, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998, and promotes equal opportunities for all. This document has been designed to ensure that no-one receives less favourable treatment due to their personal circumstances, i.e. the protected characteristics of their age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation,

marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity. Appropriate consideration has also been given to gender identity, socio-economic status, immigration status and the principles of the Human Rights Act.

3.2 In carrying out its functions, NHS Coventry and Warwickshire ICB must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This applies to all the activities for which the ICB is responsible, including policy development, review and implementation.

4. Scope

4.1 All staff who regularly work alone and those staff who on occasions are alone in office and reception areas. It applies to employees in all locations and includes Lay Members, Officers, temporary employees, contractors and locums.

5. Purpose

5.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and take suitable precautions in relation to lone working.

5.2 It should be read in conjunction with the ICB's Health and Safety Policy which sets out the framework of responsibility for Risk Assessment.

6. Definitions

6.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone working as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

6.2 Lone working occurs when employees travel by themselves, carry out work in the community by themselves or work away from their base. It is a common employment feature that takes place in offices, laboratories and workshops.

7. Hazards of Lone Working

7.1 Working alone can sometimes put people in a vulnerable position because it may be more difficult for them to summon help if things go wrong or their health and safety is at risk.

7.2 People who work alone face the same hazards in their daily work as other workers. However the degree of risk of harm is often greater than for other workers.

7.3 Hazards which lone workers may face include:

- accidents or emergencies arising out of work for example verbal abuse, physical assault, road traffic accident etc.;
- fire;
- inadequate provision of rest, hygiene and welfare facilities;

- manual handling.

8.   Responsibilities

8.1 Chief Executive Officer – The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring the ICB puts in place the necessary management systems for the effective management of lone working, for ensuring the provision of sufficient resources to implement the Health and Safety Policy and for ensuring the ICB complies with the requirements of Health and Safety legislation.

8.2 Managers – Managers are responsible for ensuring that lone workers for whom they are responsible are not placed at increased risk. Where staff undertake lone working, managers must ensure that structures and procedures are in place and adhered to in order to demonstrate as far as is reasonably practicable that staff are safe if something untoward occurs. Managers are responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of this policy.

8.3 Employees – Employees are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understood this policy and for reporting any incidents relating to lone working and undertaking risk assessments, so that risks can be identified and suitable measures developed to control those risks as far as is reasonably practicable.

8.4 Local Security Management Specialist (LSMS) – The LSMS is responsible for liaising with police in the event of a physical or non-physical assault, to assist with the investigation, undertaking an investigation if the police are unable to do so, and providing feedback to the victim on the progress of any investigation. The LSMS will provide security advice to the ICB and provide support and advice to staff and managers to enable effective risk assessments to be carried out in relation to lone workers.

9. Employers' Legal Duties

9.1 Although there is no legal prohibition on working alone (although it should be noted that in certain high risk types of work there may be specific prohibition on working alone), the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) says that the employer must ensure as far as reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of employees and those affected by the work, e.g. visitors such as contractors and self-employed people with whom the ICB may engage.

10. Employees' Legal Duties

10.1 Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their work and to cooperate with their employers in meeting their legal goals.

11. Arrangements

11.1 All employees must be instructed to report any incidents which could affect their safety as such information is essential when reviewing the adequacy of working arrangements. Staff should be informed of the procedures used within the ICB and should be given support by their line manager with regard to the reporting procedure.

Assessing the Risk – The need for staff to work on their own in or out of normal hours should be discussed with their line manager. Some of the factors that need to be addressed within the risk assessment include;

- Communications (how to summon assistance if required)
- Is anyone notified that there is a lone worker in the area?
- Is the line manager aware that the person will be working alone especially if outside normal working hours?
- What emergency arrangements in addition to existing ones are required?
- Are the means of access to the area adequately controlled to prevent unauthorised access?
- Are those activities being carried out suitable for one person?
- The ability to facilitate or maintain flexible working.

11.2 When considering these issues and identifying areas of risk they should be discussed with the line manager to consider any possible solutions and actions which can be taken to minimise the risks.

11.3 Prior to carrying out the overall service risk assessment a lone worker survey can be carried out with staff identifying potential risks. Appendix 2 provides Risk Assessment Consideration and provides information on the potential hazards to be considered.

11.4 Post-incident advice for managers:

- Take concerns of people seriously even if the incident seems to have been minor.
- People not at the accident cannot judge how serious the incident was to the people involved.
- Hold regular team meetings to discuss problems and learn from them.
- Conduct a debriefing session with staff involved; allow staff to talk through the incident. Do not apportion blame. Provide support to ensure they are coping.
- Make a full investigation into the incident and examine how procedures can be improved to prevent recurrence.
- Staff to complete formal report forms for all incidents, including apparent minor ones.
- Be aware that minor problems can sometimes be the precursor to more serious incidents.
- Follow up at a later date to ensure staff are fully recovered and working normally, and that any amendments to procedures are being followed.

12. Procedures

12.1 Following the completion of the risk assessments each service must establish clear local procedures and set limits as to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone. There must be agreement as to the circumstances in which it is correct to stop and seek advice.

13. Training

13.1 Where applicable Conflict Resolution training should be made available to those staff who may need it as part of their working practices. Training is vital in areas where there is limited supervision to control and guide in situations of uncertainty. Managers must identify the training needs of lone workers and provide training to ensure the individual can carry out their job safely.

14. Scheme of Delegation

14.1 All incidents relating to Lone Worker activities will be reported to the Joint Commissioning Committee.

14.2 Details of all incidents including lone worker incidents will be produced by the Risk Manager/LSMS, this will go directly to the Joint Commissioning Committee.

15. Data Protection Act

15.1 The Data Protection Act 2018 protects personal data which includes information about staff, patients and carers. The NHS relies on maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of its data to maintain the confidence of the community. Unlawful or unfair processing of personal data may result in the ICB being in breach of their Data Protection obligations.

16. Review

16.1 This policy will be reviewed in 3 years' time and/or in the event of any changes in legislation or Health and Safety Executive Guidance or as a consequence of a major incident.

16.2 Early review may be required in response to exceptional circumstances, organisational change or relevant changes in legislation or guidance.

17. References

17.1 Suzy Lamplugh Trust - Mission is to reduce the risk of violence and aggression through campaigning, education and support.

https://www.suzylamplugh.org/

18. Associated Documentation

18.1 In addition to the above, all staff should ensure that they are aware of the ICB policies on: Security, Health and Safety, Incident Reporting, Incidents, Risk Assessment.

19. Staff Compliance Statement

All staff must comply with this ICB-wide policy and failure to do so may be considered a disciplinary matter leading to action being taken under the ICB's Disciplinary Policy. Actions which constitute breach of confidence, fraud, misuse of NHS resources or illegal activity will be treated as serious misconduct and may result in dismissal from employment and may in addition lead to other legal action against the individual/s concerned.

A copy of the ICB's Disciplinary Policy is available on the Intranet and ICB websites.

20. Equality & Diversity Statement

In applying this policy, 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 characteristics protected by the Equality Act (2010); age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation, in addition to offending background, trade union membership, or any other personal characteristic.

21. Ethical Considerations

The ICBs recognise their obligations to maintain high ethical standards across the organisations and seek to achieve this by raising awareness of potential or actual ethical issues through the PPS consultation and approval process.

Appendix 1

Lone Worker Guidance Notes

Section 1 – Guidance for Managers

Risk Assessment Process

1. The risk assessment will provide an indication as to whether the work can or cannot be done safely alone. If the risk assessment indicates unacceptable levels of risk then the work should not be undertaken unless further safe working arrangements are implemented, for example, two people visiting together.
2. Risk assessments should take account of both normal work and foreseeable emergencies including fire, potential risks such as violence, aggression and containment as well as illness and accidents. The format of the assessment will become a written record and will show any significant findings of any person who may be particularly at risk. The 5- step process, outlined below, should be followed when assessing risk:
    *   Identify any hazards.
    *   Decide if the person/s may be affected /harmed and how.
    *   Evaluate the risk arising from the information you have already gathered.
    *   Record your findings and eliminate the risk or put control measures in place to reduce the level of risk to the lowest level practicable.
    *   Review the assessment on a regular basis.
3. Some of the hazards you may wish to consider may include:

    *   **Workplace:** hazards specific to the workplace / environment, which may create particular risks for lone workers, e.g. remote areas, laboratories, workshops, confined spaces, lack of emergency call systems. Consider access requirements, means of escape in case of fire, transport and parking arrangements, etc.
    *   **Process:** hazards specific to the work process, which may create particular risks for lone workers, e.g. work on electrical systems, hazardous substances, work in the community, interaction with people with a known history of violence or aggressive behaviour.
    *   **Equipment:** hazards specific to the work equipment, which may create particular risks for lone workers, e.g. manual handling, operation of essential / emergency controls, mechanical failure.
    *   **Individual:** hazards specific to the individual, which may create particular risks for lone workers e.g. medical conditions, disabilities, female employees, expectant mothers, age, inexperience, is there access to adequate rest, hygiene, refreshment, welfare and first aid facilities, etc.
    *   **Work Pattern:** the lone worker's work pattern and how it relates to those of other workers, in terms of both time and geography.

4. Risk assessments must be carried out in all areas of work where working alone poses an actual or potential risk to staff. Risk assessment should be carried out by trained and competent persons, they must be documented and evaluated at managerial level and communicated to all whom the contents may have a bearing upon during the performance of their work.

Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include the following:

- Does the activity need to be carried out alone?
- Does the activity need to be specially authorised before lone working can commence?
- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a record or history of violence, aggression, verbal and physical abuse or racism at the location, either from the client, relatives or neighbours?
- Is there a potential risk of violence/aggression?
- Does the task being undertaken with the person have the potential to cause them to become angry?
- Is the area being visited a known trouble spot?
- Is there a safe way in/out for one person?
- Can the building be secured to prevent entry but still maintain sufficient emergency exits?
- Are there known drug, alcohol or mental health issues, which need to be considered?
- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
- Can the equipment, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- What training is needed to make sure the staff member is competent in safety matters?
- Have staff received the training necessary to allow them to work alone?
- Are staff aware of the Fire Procedures for the building?
- How will the person be supervised?

- Are people of a particular gender especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are new or inexperienced staff especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are younger workers especially at risk if they work alone?
- What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?
- Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who work alone?
- Will the visit/meeting be taking place out of hours?

5. Details of the risk assessment should be recorded on a general risk assessment form:
   - The extent and nature of the risks.
   - Factors that contribute to the risk including job content and specific tasks and activities.
   - The numbers of staff and others affected by the activity.
   - Any changes, recommendations, training, policy and procedural reviews necessary.
   - Who is responsible for ensuring the identified actions in the risk assessment are followed through to a logical conclusion; and
   - Environmental factors, lighting, temperature, noise, floor conditions etc.

6. Information from the risk assessment should be circulated to staff and included on Divisional Risk Registers as appropriate. Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated each year, or sooner should circumstances change or there is an incident involving a lone worker.

Information Prior to a Visit

7. Where it is practicable, a log of known risks should be kept updated and reviewed regularly - in respect of the location and details of patients/service users/other people that may be visited by their staff, where a risk may be present. This log should be retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and only strictly factual information should be recorded. This log should be available to Lone Workers to inspect ahead of any visit they make. Consideration should be given to include, as part of a Lone Workers job description, a requirement that they should inform their manager or "buddy" if they have to make a visit to an address or person on that log.
8. Such information should, where legally permissible, be communicated with other agencies that may work with the same patients/service users, as part of an overall local risk management process.
9. Colleagues, who have worked alone in the same location, or with the persons/patients/service users before, should be contacted to help communication about any particular risks and inform action taken to minimise them.
10. If there are known risks with a particular location or patients/service users, Lone Workers and their manager should reschedule this visit to a particular time, place or location where they can be accompanied.
11. Whenever possible the time of day and day of the week for visits should be varied (if visits are frequent) to avoid becoming a target.
12. Lone Workers should remain alert to risks presented from those who are under the influence of drink, drugs, are confused, or where animals may be present. Being alert to these warning signs will allow the Lone Worker to consider all the facts at their disposal, allowing them to make a personal risk assessment and, therefore, a judgement as to their best possible course of action, for example, to continue with their work, or to withdraw. At no point should the Lone Worker place themselves, their colleagues, or their patients/service users at risk or in actual danger.
13. If a Lone Worker has been given personal protective equipment, such as mobile phone or similar device, they must ensure that the mobile phone is in full working order and they have it with them and that they use it before entering into a situation, where they have prior knowledge of risk or, at that point in time, consider themselves to be at risk.
14. It is essential that Lone Workers remain alert throughout the visit or the work that they are undertaking and ensure that they are aware of entrances and exits, in the event of an emergency. Such techniques are taught through conflict resolution training and allow staff to consider the correct positions they should place themselves in, should they reed to make good an escape. If a violent situation develops, then staff should immediately terminate the visit and leave the location.

High Risk Visits

15. Where there is a history of violence and/or the patient/service user location is considered high risk, the Lone Worker must be accompanied by: a colleague; or, in some cases, by the Police.
16. Where possible, the visit should take place at a neutral location or within a secure environment.

Section 2 – Guidance to Lone Workers

LONE WORKING ON-SITE

Staff

- Ensure that they are near a telephone to call for help if needed.
- Secure valuables in an appropriate place.
- Ensure that keys are secured and not accessible to visitors.
- If they become anxious regarding their safety call security or the police for help
- Avoid meeting people if they are alone in the workplace.
- If they are meeting someone, let other people know who they are meeting, when, where and telephoning them to let them know that the person has arrived and that they will get back to them at a certain time.
- Not tell anyone that they are alone in the workplace.
- Report any incidents to the relevant Manager as soon as practical after any events.
- Never assume it won't happen to them – plan to stay safe.

   Staff

   From time to time, employees may need to carry out their office-based work outside of normal office hours, such as weekends and evenings. The following precautions must be taken to ensure that your health and safety continues to be protected:

- Always let Security where available know if you are staying behind in the office at the end of the normal working day. They will then know to check in on you before they leave.
- If you are working at weekends or very late at night/ early in the morning let a friend or relative know your whereabouts and the time that you are expected back. Contact them at regular intervals to verify that you are OK. If you change your plans, let your contact know immediately.
- Ensure that all windows and doors are secured to prevent unauthorised access, so that the working environment is as safe as possible.
- Do not open the doors to any strangers no matter what identification they have.
- If they are meant to be there, they will either have keys or another means of access.
- Never give security codes or keys to any stranger. Again there are channels they can use to gather information if they are legitimate and are meant to have access.
- Make sure you are aware of the Fire Procedures for the building you are in and fire escape routes are available to you and not locked (as may happen outside working hours).

- Beware of using lifts at these times, as you may become trapped inside and unable to gain assistance or attention.
- Should the fire alarm activate whilst you are in the office alone, you must call the Fire Service by dialling 999/112 and leave the building immediately using the nearest available fire exit.

Make your way to the front of the building, a safe distance away and wait for the emergency services to arrive.

- Should you discover or suspect a fire, raise the alarm by breaking the nearest Fire Alarm Call Point and call the Fire Service by dialling 999 / 112 and leave the building immediately using the nearest available fire exit. Make your way to the front of the building, a safe distance away and wait for the emergency services to arrive.
- Should you discover any problems with equipment whilst in the office, do not attempt to repair or tamper with the controls. If possible, make it safe and leave signage to inform others. If it is not serious, report it to your manager the following working day.
- On leaving a Department, ensure that all windows are closed and doors locked.
- Ensure you have access to a phone in case you need to call the emergency services.
- Park close to the building in a well-lit area. Move your car closer to the building if necessary, to minimise the risks if leaving the building on your own.
- If an incident occurs, follow the incident reporting procedure.
- Never assume it won't happen to you – plan to stay safe.

INTERVIEWING CLIENTS IN THE OFFICE

In addition to advice already given above, when interviewing in the office consider the following:

- Use interview rooms with panic buttons where possible.
- Sit nearest the exit.
- Staff should make themselves aware of locks; bolts etc on exit doors and observe how they work.
- Ensure that colleagues are aware that an interview is taking place.
- If there is ever a need to take a client/visitor through a coded security door ensure that the client/visitor cannot see the code or knock on the door and be let through to maintain security.

LONE WORKING OFF-SITE

When making lone worker visits it is important to communicate with others about your intentions during the delivery of your services (the Buddy System).

The "Buddy System"

It is essential that Lone Workers keep in contact with colleagues and ensure that they make another colleague aware of their movements. This can be done by implementing the Buddy System. You must inform your colleague (buddy) of:

- The location of the visit/meeting.
- A contact telephone number, if possible.
- The time of the appointment.
- The likely or estimated length of the meeting/visit.
- The time when you are expected to return to the office/base or call in.
- If not returning to the office, the time and location of your next visit or the time when you are due to arrive home.
- If driving, the Registration number, Make and Model. The nominated buddy will:
  - Be fully aware of the movements of the Lone Worker.

- Have all the necessary contact details for the Lone Worker, including personal contact details, such as next of kin.
- Have details of the Lone Worker's known breaks or rest periods.
- Attempt to contact the Lone Worker, if they do not contact the buddy as agreed. Follow the agreed escalation procedure for alerting their senior manager or the Police, if the Lone Worker cannot be contacted, or they fail to contact their buddy within agreed and reasonable timescales.

Essential to the effective operation of the Buddy System are the following factors:

- The buddy must be made aware that they have been nominated and what the procedures and requirements for their role are.
- Contingency arrangements should be in place for someone else to take over the role of the buddy in case the nominated person is called away to a meeting, for example.
- There must be procedures in place to allow someone else to take over the role of the buddy if the lone working situation extends past the end of the nominated person's normal working day or shift.

VISITING CLIENTS IN THEIR OWN HOMES/PREMISES

Visits to a patient's home present a series of particular risks which a lone worker and the ICB should aim to minimise. Before making a home visit alone, staff should assess the risks and visit the area first to ascertain whether it is safe enough to attend alone and whether or not uniform should be worn during the visit. If they have any concerns regarding the safety of a particular home visit, they should take a colleague with them, or rearrange it for a time when the risks can be minimised.

This guidance is designed for all staff who visit patients within their own homes.

Prior to a home visit taking place the staff should:

- Obtain as much information about the patient/client, their families and the location to be visited.
- Review existing information regarding the patient such as case notes, GP records, previous referrals, etc.
- Review the last documented risk assessment, or if this is unavailable, contact the referrer to ascertain whether or not there are any relevant risk factors present and/or whether there is any reason why it would be unadvisable to visit the client alone.
- Double-check the address and telephone number.
- In the event that no information or records are available, consider whether or not it would be more appropriate to invite the client into the workplace or a safe place, therefore avoiding the need to make a home visit.

   If it is decided that a Home visit is required, the staff should:

- Carry out a risk assessment and determine whether the patient is high risk/potential high risk.
- Arrange all first appointments over the telephone wherever possible. This is to enable initial screening and start the process of getting to know the patient.
- Remember to check the address and any specific access details.

- Consider whether it would be appropriate to arrange to have another staff member present for the duration of the visit.
- Another staff member should be present if a particular risk has been identified or if this has been identified within a risk management plan.
- Always ensure that fellow workers know where you are.
- Details should include: expected time of return, names and addresses of the clients being visited and time of appointments when visiting alone and the mode of contact (e.g. mobile phone numbers).

- Ensure sure that you carry appropriate personal identification e.g. name badge/ Identification card to verify your authenticity.
- Dress appropriately for the area or patient to be visited, particularly when the patient"s culture demands that women are covered, and do not wear expensive-looking jewellery items.
- Wear shoes and clothes that do not hinder movement or ability to run in case of an emergency.
- Ensure that the means of communication and any personal alarms are working and accessible.
- Programme the work base number into mobile telephones so they can be speed dialed.
- Work out your route before you leave your office including bus, train, tram routes and potential parking areas.
- Park your car close to the visit address without putting yourself at risk, say in a darkened road or cul-de-sac?
- Is it necessary to have an exit strategy in the event of an emergency arising?

Known High Risk Home Visits

- If any visit is deemed to be high risk, it may be necessary to visit in pairs. The need for such additional support should be discussed with your Manager so that appropriate arrangements can be made.
- For such visits it is recognised as good practice for the employee to report back to their work base to confirm that the visit has ended and that they have safely left the person. A record must be made of the times entering and leaving the patient's home.

Visiting a residential Home / Hostel / Hospital

• When visiting a patient / carer in a residential home you must liaise with the care worker before visiting the patient.

During the Visit:

- Be prepared and fully briefed, having concluded a necessary and appropriate risk assessment with your manager ahead of the visit, where appropriate risks have been identified. Carry an ID badge and be prepared to identify yourself.
- Carry out a "10 second" risk assessment when you first arrive at the house and the front door is opened. If you feel there is a risk of harm to yourself, you should have an excuse ready not to enter the house and to arrange for an alternative appointment. You should also be aware of animals in the house and ask for them to be removed prior to entry.
- You should ensure that, when you enter the house, you shut the front door behind you and make yourself familiar with the door lock, in case you need to make an emergency exit.
- You should try not to walk in front of a patient/service user. You should not position yourself in a corner or in a situation where it may be difficult to escape.

- You should remain calm and focused at all times and keep your possessions close to you.
- You should be aware of your own body language (as well as the body language of the client or patient/service user), as there is the potential risk of exacerbating the situation by sending out the wrong signals, particularly where there may be cultural, gender or physical issues to consider. Body language or other forms of non-verbal communication and mannerisms, play an important role in how people perceive and behave towards other people.
- Specific training in non-physical intervention skills, customer service, and de- escalation is essential and Lone Workers must be trained in Conflict Resolution, with additional training provided over and above this, depending on the risks they face and their own personal needs.

Escorting Patients / Service users

- Where there are known risks, or identified potential risks, about a patient/service user or a location to be visited, a full assessment of those risks should be made ahead of the Lone Worker making that visit, along with taking appropriate action to minimise those risks.
- Where there are known risks, the patient or service user should be looked after by a member of staff who is not the driver, so that the patient/service user's needs, can be catered for and the driver is allowed to concentrate on driving the vehicle safely. This could prevent incidents of passengers grabbing at handbrakes and steering wheels while the member of staff is driving.
- The Lone Worker should ensure that they are suitably insured for this business purpose, before patients/service users are transported in this manner.
- Consideration should be given to the most appropriate mode of transport, based on such risk assessments. It may not be appropriate for the Lone Worker to drive, unless in an emergency, and alternative arrangements may need to be made.
- If escorting a patient/service user by car, Lone Workers should always seat the Patient/Service user behind the passenger seat and ensure that their seat belt is fastened. Lone Workers should not escort a patient/service user by car if there are any doubts about their safety in doing so, nor should they agree to transport Patient/Service user's animals.
- If a conflict arises (or Patient/Service user becomes aggressive) while the Lone Worker is driving, they should pull over into a safe place and exit the vehicle, ensuring that the keys are removed. They should follow local procedures in place, which may involve calling the Police, their Manager, a Colleague, or their buddy.

Driving to a home visit - other than escorting Patient/Service users

- Before setting out, Lone Workers should ensure that they have adequate fuel for their journey.
- They should give themselves enough time for the journey to avoid rushing or taking risks, owing to time pressure.
- Items such as bags, cases, CDs, or other equipment, should never be left visible in the car. These should be out of sight, preferably stored in the boot of the vehicle.
- Lone Workers should always hold the vehicle keys in their hand when leaving premises, in order to avoid looking for them outside, which could compromise their personal safety.
- The inside and outside of the vehicle should be checked for possible intruders before entering.
- Once inside the vehicle all doors should be locked, especially when travelling at slow speed, when stopped at traffic lights and when travelling in built-up areas. Some staff may understandably feel that a locked door may prevent them from escaping or receiving help in the event of an accident. However, modern vehicles and rescue techniques make this less of a factor than it may seem.

- Lone Workers should always try to park close to the location that they are visiting and should never take short cuts to save time. At night or in poor weather conditions, they should park in a well-lit area and facing the direction in which they will leave. They should ensure that all the vehicle's windows are closed and the doors are locked
- Lone Workers should avoid parking on the driveway of the person they are visiting. The Health and Safety Executive's safe driver training programmes advise that Lone Workers should reverse into car parking spaces so that, if attacked, the door acts as a barrier.
- Lone Workers driving alone, especially after dark, should not stop even for people who may be in distress or requiring help. The Lone Worker should stop in a safe place, as soon as it is practicable to do so, and contact the emergency services as appropriate.
- If followed, or if in doubt as to whether they are being followed, Lone Workers should drive to the nearest Police station or manned and lit building, such as a petrol station, to request assistance.
- In case of vehicle breakdown, Lone Workers should contact their manager, colleague or "buddy" immediately. If using a mobile phone and the signal is poor, or there is no signal at all, they should put their hazard lights on. If they need to leave the vehicle to use an emergency telephone, they should lock their vehicle and ensure that they are visible to passing traffic.
- They should not display signs such as "Doctor on call" or "Nurse on call" as this may encourage thieves to break in to the vehicle to steal drugs, for example.
- Lone Workers should avoid having items in their vehicle that contain personal details, such as their home address.

Personal Safety:

- Park in well-lit areas.
- Do not take short cuts.
- Walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Avoid groups of rowdy people.
- Carry a torch in the dark.
- Have a personal alarm at hand.

    On return to the car:

- Have your keys ready.
- Check the interior before getting in.
- Lock the doors as soon as you get in.

Car jamming

- Car jamming is when a person or persons try to gain entry into your car, either when you are just starting off, stop in traffic, at lights or halt signs. The main objective is usually to steal any possessions that are within easy reach.
- Most car attacks are based upon what the attacker can readily steal: phones, handbags, briefcases, or other possessions. If they are not in view, the attackers may look for easier pickings. The following guidelines may help reduce the risk of attack:
- Be aware of your surroundings especially in traffic. Is anyone acting suspiciously? In potentially risky areas, keep your car doors locked; this includes the boot or the tailgate. Keep all possessions and goods out of sight.

- When stopping in traffic, at lights and halt signs, try not to get too close to the vehicle in front of you. Leave room to move if only a short distance, sudden movement can be a deterrent.
- Use your car horn to attract attention/help if needed and report all incidents to the Police.

Contacting the Team Following a Home Visit

• If for whatever reason you find you will not be back at the expected time you must ring and let colleagues know of any alterations.

• If you have to make a first visit at the end of a shift, ensure that you have a mobile phone, and report back to base or to another designated person.

When a Colleague does not return as expected

- If one of your colleagues has not returned back to the office or rung in to confirm their whereabouts, then the first and most important thing is to remember not to panic! It may be that they have genuinely forgotten to let you know of changes to their plans or have been delayed.
- In the first instance ask your colleagues whether they have heard from that person or have been properly notified of changes to their plans.
- If not, ring their mobile phone number and establish if they are safe.
- If you receive no answer, or they answer and sound distressed, then you should notify their Manager immediately. If they are not available immediately notify the most senior person on the premises and/or the Senior Manager on-call.
- If it has not been possible to obtain an answer from their mobile phone, the Manager should then try to contact the person at home or through their next of kin **before contacting the police**. In cases where the person answers but appears to be in distress, the police should be called immediately.

Lone Working and Public Transport

- Lone Workers should wait for transport at a busy stop or station that is well lit.
- Lone Workers should be in possession of a timetable for the mode of transport and route they are taking. They should leave details with their manager, colleague, or buddy of their intended route and mode of transport. If they have to vary their route or experience a significant delay, they should inform the aforementioned.
- They should always try to sit near the public vehicle driver, preferably in an aisle seat. They should also familiarise themselves with safety procedures in the event of an emergency and sit near the emergency alarm.
- They should avoid empty upper decks on buses or empty train compartments (and also avoid these situations if there is only one other passenger).
- If threatened by other passenger(s) they should inform the driver/guard. **Lone Working and Taxis**
  - Wherever possible, a taxi should be booked in advance.

- If a taxi has not been booked, the Lone Worker should go to a recognised taxi rank to hail a cab.

- They should never use a mini cab, unless it is a licensed or registered hackney carriage.
- They should sit in the back, behind the front passenger seat.
- They should not give out personal information to the driver (either through conversation with the driver or release sensitive information while talking on a mobile phone).
- They should be aware of child locks and central locking (although most black cabs will lock the doors while in transit) within the taxi.

Lone Working - Travelling by Foot

- Lone Workers should walk briskly, if possible and physically able to so, avoid dangerous shortcuts and do not stop in areas that are unknown to them, e.g. to look at a map or to ask for directions.
- They should keep to busy well-lit roads and face oncoming traffic. Turn and walk in the opposite direction if a vehicle pulls up alongside you – people on foot can change direction faster than a car.
- They should go into a "safe" establishment, such as a Police station, petrol station or reputable shop and ask for directions or, if necessary, to call for assistance from their Manager, Colleague or "Buddy".
- They should avoid using mobile phones overtly in any area (they should make a note of the SIM number for the phone in case of theft) and, if carrying equipment, should ensure that this is done using bags or holdalls that do not advertise what they are carrying.
- They should be aware of the location and remain alert to people around them – cross over to the other side of the street if you feel you are being followed.
- They should avoid waste ground, isolated pathways, and subways, particularly at night.
- They should avoid empty train compartments and isolated bus stops. Carry only what is necessary. If someone attempts to steal what they are carrying, they should relinquish the property immediately without challenge. They should consider keeping their house keys and mobile phone separately from their handbag or having an old purse/wallet with petty cash and expired credit cards. It is important that any theft, or attempted theft, is reported both internally and to the Police, as soon as is practicable and safe to do so. The Lone Worker should make a note of the date, time and description of events and the attacker(s), as soon as they are in a position to do so and retain it safely until it is requested by the Police or LSMS.
- Make as much noise as possible in the unlikely event of being attacked.

Lone Working – On the Motorway

- In an emergency, park the car on the hard shoulder and get out of the car by the passenger door.

- Put the hazard lights on.
- Phone for help! All emergency telephones are connected directly to the Police. Tell them you are alone or with family and children.
- Return to your car, leave the passenger side door unlocked and stand on the bank verge away from the car, this will help you out of danger from the traffic.
- If approached or feel threatened get into the car and lock the passenger door. Never cross onto the opposing carriageway.

Breakdowns

- Keeping the car well maintained will help prevent breakdowns, although any car can get a flat tyre or a flat battery.
- If your car does suffer a breakdown, other drivers may be only too willing to offer genuine assistance. You should talk to them through a partly opened window ensuring the door is locked. If you have any doubts, use the same good judgement and common sense that you use in everyday life.
- You may want to keep a set of waterproofs (warm jacket and trousers), gloves and a pair of suitable walking shoes.
- Make sure you have enough petrol/diesel.
- Make sure your spare tyre is kept at the correct pressure. It is advisable to join a breakdown service.
- **Carry an emergency pack to include for example; space blanket, set of waterproofs, snow shovel.**

Dealing with animals

- If there is a known problem with animals at a particular address or location, the occupants should be contacted and requested to remove or secure the animals before arrival. Clinical procedures may provoke a reaction from an animal or pet, so it may be prudent to request that it be removed or placed in a different room for the duration of the visit.
- If a Lone Worker is confronted by an aggressive animal on a first visit to a Patient/Service user's address, they should not put themselves at risk. If necessary, they should abandon the visit and report the incident in accordance with local reporting procedures.
- If a Lone Worker feels uneasy with animals being present, they should politely request that they be removed, bearing in mind that this could provoke a negative reaction. All possible efforts should be made to ensure that the situation is managed and de- escalated, should hostility become evident. If this is not possible, then alternative arrangements should be made to carry out the visit, such as rescheduling so that the Lone Worker can be accompanied or asking a colleague - more at ease with animals - to assist them.

Section 3 - Checklist for Working Alone in Buildings

Staff exposed to the risk e.g. group and number:

Ward/Department……………………………..Site………………………

Checklist completed by…………………………………………..

Date completed……………………………………………………

Review date…………………………………………

Main areas of concern	Yes	No
Do staff work alone?		
Do staff meet with patients or clients in isolated locations? Is there enough security provision? Is there poor access to the building?		
Do staff work outside normal office hours?		
Do staff activities involve working in confined spaces?		
Do staff activities involve handling dangerous substances? Are staff aware of the Fire Procedures the building?		
Control Measures for Consideration	**Yes**	**No**
Do you provide joint working for high risk activities (e.g. in confined spaces and with dangerous substances)?		
Do you carry out regular supervisor or colleague checks during activities?		
Do you use entrance security systems (e.g. digital locks, PAC, Swipe)		
Is there security lighting around access points and parking areas? Have you installed panic buttons linked to manned locations?		
Do you use reporting check-in systems?		
Do you use 2-way radios or other communications systems?		
Do staff have information and training on basic personal safety?		
Are staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence?		
Do staff have access to forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?		
Are your existing control measures adequate?		
Do staff know what to do in the event of discovering / suspecting a fire or hearing the fire alarm sounding?		

If NO, what modifications or additional actions are necessary?

Note: If you have identified a risk associated with this work activity please complete the ICB's Risk Assessment Form, advise your Manager of the outcome, and notify the LSMS

Section 4 - Checklist for Home Visits

Staff exposed to the risk e.g. group and number:

Ward/Department……………………………………………..Site……………………..

Checklist completed by

Date completed

Review date_

Main areas of concern	Yes	No
Do staff carry out visits in high-risk locations (e.g. areas with high crime rates)?		
Do staff visit unfamiliar clients or relatives?		
Do staff visit a high-risk or unstable or unpredictable client group? Do staff carry out visits during unsocial hours?		
Do staff carry valuables or drugs?		
Will staff be aware of potential fire hazards / risks?		
Do you provide accompanied visits when there are concerns about safety?		
Do you include potential or known risk factors, including fire risks / hazards in referral documents and care plans?		
Do you share risk information with other professionals and agencies?		

Control Measures for Consideration	Yes	No
Are there systems for monitoring staff whereabouts and movements for regularly reporting to base?		
Have you issued mobile phones or other communication device?		
Have you issued personal attack alarms?		
Do staff have information & training on basic personal safety?		
Are staff trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence?		
Do staff carry forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?		
Are your existing control measures adequate?		
If NO, what modifications or additional actions are necessary?		

Fire Safety and home visits

Should a home visit be necessary, staff need to be aware of potential fire risks in a client's home.

Hazards that may be encountered could include the following:

- Smoking materials not adequately disposed of
- Candles being used, either decorative, deodorizing or therapy
- Smokers using oxygen therapy
- Overloaded electrical sockets

- Excessive combustibles
- Combustibles close to heat or ignition sources
- Combustibles on top of cookers / microwave ovens
- Electrical or other types of heaters too close to furniture
- Portable LPG heaters in use
- The list is not exhaustive.

Should staff be concerned about the fire safety in a home they visit they should inform their line manager who may need to take further action.

The ICB has a patient referral scheme in place that may be utilized to help improve and monitor fire safety in the home of clients.

Note: If you have identified a risk associated with this work activity please complete the ICB's Risk Assessment Form, advise your Manager of the outcome and notify the ICB's LSMS.

Section 5 - Good Practice Summary for Managers and Staff

Preparation and planning can greatly reduce the risks associated with working alone. In many cases such planning can actually prevent violence and consequences of accidents. The following are some of the preparations that should be considered prior to working alone:

- Check the patient's/client's records – is there a risk indicator? Is there a risk indicator on the job ticket or file record (including electronic records)?
- When interviewing in the office clear the area of all objects that could be used as a weapon. When working in a person's home, where practicable, keep tools and equipment out of reach of anyone who could use them as a weapon.
- Arrange visits at an appropriate time, for example, if you know a client drinks alcohol at lunch times, schedule the meeting in the morning.
- If there is the slightest suspicion that there is a risk of violence from a client a risk assessment must be carried out. Following this, it may be appropriate that the visit is made in pairs. Office visits/interviews should be pre-planned.
- If there are any risks associated with a work activity that could be made worse by working alone, that work activity should be carried out by more than one person. Such activities should be identified and the number of workpeople specified.
- Never leave the office without ensuring your colleagues know where you have gone and when to expect you back. The use of an office diary or wipe board is a good idea. There should be a procedure to implement action if a person fails to return and cannot be located.
- Make sure you have all the information you might need for a visit. Try to anticipate any questions and prepare answers. If you cannot answer a question, state that you will find out the answer and let the client know as soon as possible.
- Always keep your word. Keep the appointment, apologise if you are going to be late or are late.
- When carrying out work for a client, make sure that you have all the equipment to do the work properly. Keep to appointments. Keep your word if you state you will have to go away and return. Keep the client fully informed about what you are doing.
- Inform the client of any hazards associated with the work.

- Make sure you have a personal alarm/mobile phone or other emergency communication device. If you have to use a personal alarm, activate it and throw it a short distance away. This is intended to distract the aggressor giving you enough time to make an escape.

If a member of staff is threatened or feels there is a potential for danger they should:

- Get help from other members of staff if appropriate.
- Extricate themselves from the situation.
- Inform their manager.
- Record in patients notes (record facts only).
- Record incident on incident reporting form.
- Discuss in team meeting as appropriate.

If a member of staff is verbally or physically assaulted they should:

- Seek medical advice straight away.
- Report to line manager.
- Record incident on Incident Reporting Form.
- Record the details in the patient's notes (facts only).

If a member of staff is verbally or physically assaulted Managers should:

- Ensure appropriate healthcare is provided e.g. GP, A&E, and Occupational Health. Ensure appropriate debriefing opportunity for staff.
- Ensure Incident reporting has been carried out.
- Ensure this information is shared with other teams as appropriate so that they can take appropriate action.
- Ensure action (preventative action) to avoid future incidents where possible (e.g. withdrawal of service policy, police liaison).
- Report a deliberate, intentional act of assault on staff to the Police.

Section 6 - Practical Suggestions on the Use of a Mobile Phone

- Where provided, a mobile phone should always be kept as fully charged as is possible at all times.
- The employee should ensure they know how to use the mobile phone properly, through familiarising themselves with the instruction manual.
- A mobile phone should never be relied on as the only means of communication.
- Lone workers should always check the signal strength before entering into a situation, where they are alone. If there is no signal, the lone worker should contact their manager or colleague ahead of a visit, stating their location and the nature of their visit, along with an estimate of the time they think they will need to spend at the visit. Once that visit is completed they should let their manager or colleague know that they are safe.
- Emergency contacts should be kept on speed dial as this will speed up the process of making a call to raise an alarm.
- The phone should never be left unattended but should be kept close at hand in case an emergency arises.
- The use of a mobile phone could potentially escalate an aggressive situation and the lone worker should use it in a sensitive and sensible manner.

- "Code" words or phrases should be agreed and used that will help lone workers convey the nature of the threat to their managers or colleagues so that they can provide the appropriate response, such as involving the police.
- The mobile phone could also be a target for thieves, and great care should be taken to be as discreet as possible, whilst remaining aware of the risks and keeping it within reach at all times.
- The mobile phone should never be used whilst driving. It is extremely dangerous and against the law. Employers should consider providing staff with hands-free equipment where appropriate, however as a general rule, employers should not contact an employee if there is a possibility that the employee may be driving at the time, also if during such a call it becomes clear that the employee is actually driving, then the call must be terminated.
- The lone worker should report any incidents where they have been threatened or assaulted.

Section 7 - Practical Suggestions on Other Forms of Lone Worker Protection Devices

- Managers should ensure lone workers have received appropriate training about the particular product or device they are using and satisfy themselves, as far as is possible, that the lone worker is confident in handling it, including familiarisation with procedures and systems in place to support its use. If in any doubt, instruction should be offered, and the lone worker should feel comfortable in requesting such training.
- Great care should be taken to ensure that the device is in good working order and, where it is battery operated, that it is as fully charged as possible or batteries are changed on a regular basis. The lone worker using the device should check and test the device as described in instruction manuals, training or as suggested by their manager.
- "Code" words or phrases should be agreed and used that will help lone workers convey the nature of the threat to their managers or colleagues so that they can provide the appropriate response, such as involving the police.
- The device should be kept close at hand so that it may be activated quickly, if needed.
- The lone worker should be familiar with the response they can expect if an alert is raised through the device, as well as any procedures that are associated with raising an alarm and responding to it.
- The lone worker should report any incidents where they have been threatened or assaulted.

Section 8 - The Process of Introducing a Lone Worker Protection System or Device

Before deciding to invest in the introduction or purchase of a lone worker system the following points should be considered and taken into account:

1. Identifying there is a need to introduce a lone worker system or device:

- Conduct a risk assessment in the area you are considering introducing a system or device into.
- Ensure an inclusive approach is adopted when assessing the risk. Make sure staff, their representatives, HR, and the LSMS are consulted.

2. The risk assessment should consider:

- The hazards, potential assailants and any high risk areas.
- The staff groups concerned.
- The existing preventive measures.
- Evaluation of the remaining risks.
- Any additional preventive or control measures identified.
- Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing.
- Measures already in place to protect lone workers, and their effectiveness.

3. Identify the purpose for which the lone worker system or device is being purchased.

Evaluate whether a lone worker system would actually be a solution to all, or just part of a problem. In the majority of instances systems are an important element but only part of a total solution.

Establish what form of training staff would need to undertake to become familiar with the system and to fully understand how to operate it effectively.

The impact of poor reception within a geographical area and limitations imposed by structures, such as being underground or working within heavily shielded rooms.

Establish what form of training those who would manage the system internally would have to undertake to ensure correct usage of the system.

Review local lone working procedures and identify if they need to be revised to accommodate local procedures or protocols about lone worker systems.

4. Determine which is the most appropriate system or device to purchase.

- Ensure that the device meets the BS 8484 requirements for lone worker devices.
- Make sure that all systems being considered are demonstrated to relevant groups of staff, management and safety representatives, and if possible run a trial of the equipment before taking purchasing decisions.
- Ensure that the device may be carried and activated easily in the event of a lone worker being threatened or attacked.
- Decide whether the system purchased is required to summon assistance to a lone worker via a central monitoring service, or whether a personal attack alarm that emits a high pitch sound is sufficient.
- If a decision is made to purchase battery operated personal attack alarms, choose a device that will alert the lone worker when the battery is running down.
- Gain an understanding of the limitations of systems that are demonstrated, find out what they can do and what they cannot.
- Determine whether you will need a system that locates the whereabouts of lone workers, and how accurate the positioning of an individual is required to be, and whether the location of the employee is fully reliant on technology, or whether the lone worker will also be required to provide verbal indications as to their whereabouts.
- If you are going to utilize a system that relies on mobile phone technology, make sure that it is used with the network that provides the best coverage in the geographical location in which the system is to be used.

- Determine how a device has to be powered – aerosol or battery and decide which is the best and most cost-effective method for the purpose the system is intended.
- If a battery-operated device is being considered, then determine whether it relies on the lone worker charging up the battery.
- Determine whether the device is provided with charging equipment that is suitable for use by the staff expected to operate it. If staff are required to frequently travel in vehicles to undertake their lone working duties, it may be appropriate to ensure that an in-car charger is provided. If the device runs on gas cartridges, make sure that replacements may be easily obtained at an affordable price.
- Gain an understanding of what and or who you are trying to protect before evaluating systems and devices, so that you are sure of your purpose. Understand that the operation of some devices may affect the functioning of medical equipment, and make sure that the system chosen will not have an adverse effect on equipment that lone workers may be required to utilize when performing their duties.
- Gain an understanding of why you need to purchase a system or device.
- Determine what level of budget is at your disposal for this type of purchase.
- Consider the features you would require in the system or devices you may purchase, by evaluating the work area into which they would be introduced.
- Determine how the device chosen is going to be carried. It may be a system that is operated through a mobile phone handset, a personal attack alert that needs to be handheld, or an alternative device that is covert, but may be worn openly about a person without drawing attention to itself.
- Remember that simply supplying staff with mobile phones provides them with a means of communication, not a lone worker system.

5. Ensure that an inclusive approach is adopted when choosing a lone worker system. All relevant staff and safety representatives need to be involved, so that it is clearly understood why a lone worker system is being introduced.

- The views of staff on all shift patterns that will be expected to utilise the system are essential to the decision process, it is also essential that staff are aware that the system may be used only for its intended purpose, which is to help to protect those in lone working situations. Failure to do this may result in staff failing to utilise the system, thus potentially compromising their security and safety.
- Staff also need to have a clear understanding of the response they may expect if they activate an alert.

Types of lone worker systems

TYPE	POTENTIAL BENEFIT	POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS
Personal attack alarm	There are numerous different types on the market to choose from. The loud, high pitched sound that is emitted may scare potential assailants, potentially allowing staff time to get away. May improve staff confidence in working in lone situations. Some double up as torches. Some fit comfortably in the hand. Some battery operated attack alarms will notify the user when their battery is running low.	They will not summon assistance from a third party. It is not possible to monitor the frequency with which devices are used. Not designed to deter or summon assistance but to halt an attacker. Some devices are too big or bulky to be handheld with ease. Some are not effective as they do not emit a loud or high enough alarm. Some come attached to a key ring which does not allow the lone worker to set it off, drop it and make their escape. It may antagonize a volatile situation further, particularly in a closed environment and/or the aggressor may have a learning disability or mental health disorder.
Mobile Phone Handset Activated Systems	In some instances, there may be no additional hardware purchase cost, as some may operate from handsets that have already been provided to staff. The lone worker may record their movements for the full day, at the beginning of the day.	In some instances, specific handsets have to be purchased which are costly. Mobile phone-based systems will only work where there is sufficient network coverage. GPS systems only work with unobstructed view to satellites i.e. they don't work inside buildings.

	Some systems will employ an escalation procedure if users do not log in at pre-specified times. Activity reports may be obtained in respect of some systems that show usage statistics to aid managers to identify training needs. A handset key may be set as a speed dial panic button to prompt the system that there is a potential problem and dial a pre-programmed number to an automated call centre, a staffed call handling/monitoring service or a manager. Some handset operated systems also incorporate GPS locator facilities. It is possible to check signal status and battery strength before entering a lone worker situation. Two-way communication can be afforded. Some systems allow for the user to play back details they have left to ensure that they are correct. Some systems allow for the recording of incidents that could potentially be used as evidence in prosecuting those who assault NHS staff.	Automated systems often require the input of passwords or pin numbers, which may be easily forgotten and result in a false alert situation. It is not always possible to carry a mobile phone handset so that it can be easily accessed. They are often carried in handbags or briefcases. The very action of picking up a mobile phone to make a call may exacerbate an already tense or potentially aggressive situation. Some systems allow calls to `drop off` if they are not cancelled, or if users do not call in at expected times, and no escalation or alert is raised. Devices that incorporate GPS facilities are often heavy. Keypad lock may prevent use of one touch speed dial in emergency situations.
Covert Devices that rely on	The device's covertness does not attract attention. Systems may be utilised to record whereabouts and details of working	There is no `play back` facility to check that details of visits have been recorded correctly. Reliant on mobile phone network coverage.

Mobile Phones.	pattern, or person being visited, prior to entering a lone worker situation. There is a facility to check signal strength and battery life prior to entering a lone worker situation. May be operated discretely without losing eye contact with aggressor. An alert may be raised at the press of a button. There is no audible or visible notification from the unit that it has been activated, therefore the assailant would not be aware that help had been summoned. Activation of the device allows for a situation to be monitored and recorded ensuring that the correct escalation procedures are applied. Device may be located by GPS technology. May be worn on a lanyard or by other means of attachment to clothing. Activity reports from the system are available to managers to allow them to identify training needs.	Specific hardware must be purchased.

Section 9 - General Security Advice for Staff

Proper security creates a better, safer environment in which to deliver healthcare, which benefits both staff and patients alike. A secure environment is safer and more efficient as it helps save money by reducing damage to property and equipment and losses through theft.

• Report all security incidents (If you see or hear anything suspicious, or are a victim of an incident, you should report as much detail as possible).

Reporting an incident

- Stay calm
- Give as much information as possible
- After the incident has been sorted out, complete the ICB incident return
- Details of the incident (the following information will be useful to the police or the LSMS)
- An exact description of what you have seen
- The time
- The place
- The person involved (approx. age, sex height, build, colouring, unusual characteristics, clothing and any other distinguishing features)
- Any vehicle involved (registration numbers, make model, colour and direction it was travelling)

    Preventing theft

- Personal belongings (many thefts are not planned – they happen because of opportunities created by carelessness)
- Keep credit cards with you, in a buttoned or zipped pocket
- Don't carry large amounts of money
- Keep your purse or wallet and any other valuable items in a locker if provided, or a locked drawer or cupboard
- Don't leave personal belongings lying around in offices or staff rooms
- Don't bring valuable items to work if you don't need them **Making sure ICB property and premises are safe and secure**

• Where there are physical measures in place, such as access controls, alarms and staff identity badges make sure you know how to operate them and make sure you use them

- Make sure that valuable equipment is locked away when not in use
- Make sure that doors and windows are locked when rooms and buildings are empty
- Close blinds and curtains, especially in ground-floor rooms so that people can't see in.
- Keep unattended offices and store rooms locked.
- Use keys, keypads and swipe cards properly. Make sure doors are locked behind you as appropriate.
- Look after keys and swipe cards. If they are lost or stolen, report to your manager immediately
- Return any keys and swipe cards if you stop working for the ICB.
- Report any suspicious behaviour, strangers or unauthorised staff seen in secure areas.
- **Where you feel it is safe to do so, challenge those who do not appear to have any rightful authority to be where they are or who may be acting suspiciously**. If you do not

feel confident to challenge someone, immediately inform your local security staff or a responsible manager.

Personal Safety

General safety rules when walking alone around ICB premises

- Keep to well-lit public areas as much as possible.
- Plan ahead, be alert, be aware of your surroundings.
- Consider carrying a personal alarm and have it ready to use.
- Try to look positive and confident, don't wait around longer than you have to.
- To keep handbags and valuables close to you.

General safety rules for Cars

- Always lock the car – even when paying for fuel
- Always have the car keys ready, so that you don't have to fiddle around looking for them.
- Park in well-lit areas if possible. If parking in day-light for a long time, think how the car park will look in the dark.
- When parking, reverse into the gap if possible, so you can pull away easily
- Listen and look around before getting out
- Keep car doors locked whilst driving and consider winding up windows when in slow moving traffic

- Be aware of what people are doing around you
- Use the middle lane, if there is one, when waiting at junctions or lights, so that your car is harder to get at from the pavement
- Do not stop to help if someone has broken down (pull over at the next garage or police station and call for help)
- If someone tries to pull you over for no reason, drive to the next garage or police station
- Sometimes car-jackers may "accidentally" bump into your car, aiming to get you out of the car so they can steal it. If this happens stay in the car and wind your window down a little bit to talk to them
- Keep valuables and bags out of sight and out of reach **Security of Information (protecting patient confidentiality at all times)**
    - Keep records safe
    - All paper-based records should be locked away in desks, filing cabinets or

        cupboards when they are not in use

    - Always keep keys in a safe place.

    Use equipment safely

    - Place equipment appropriately within secure areas – make sure people cannot see your computer monitor
    - When you are going away from your desk, close computer files, lock screen and lock documents away

- Know the security procedures for portable equipment such as laptops and mobile phones if you take them out of the workplace.
- Remove documents from printers, photocopiers and fax machines when you have finished
- Make sure only authorised staff can collect incoming letters, faxes and emails.

Computer users

- Make sure you follow proper log-on procedures
- Choose a secure password and change it often
- Never give anyone your password or use another person's password
- Do not give out details of codes, passwords and other information to those who are not entitled to receive it

- Do not let written information about codes or passwords be visible to others.
- Only use authorised software. Pirate software is illegal and can damage your computer
- Take virus controls seriously – always check files transferred from other machines, even those on the same network
- If there is a systems failure, tell your supervisor or manager immediately **General computer laptop advice**
- Don't leave a laptop in an unlocked vehicle, even if the vehicle is on your driveway or in your garage, and never leave it in plain sight. If you must leave it in a vehicle for a short time, the best place is in a locked boot.
- Be aware that extreme temperatures can cause damage to computers.
- Carry your laptop in a nondescript carrying case, briefcase, or bag when moving about.
- If going to lunch or taking a break, don't leave a meeting without your laptop, take it with you.
- **Don't let unaccompanied strangers wander around the workplace.**
- **Offer assistance and deliver the visitors to their destinations.**
- Be aware that if your computer is stolen, automatic log-ins can make it easy for the thief to send inappropriate messages with your account.
- Be vigilant that you lock the laptop in the boot, if you no longer need it.
- This should be done before your journey begins, so that when you arrive at your destination, an opportunist does not see you leaving and locking your valuables in the car.
- Do not use your laptop in a home or any other location, if you feel vulnerable.