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26 March 2024

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[www.lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk](http://www.lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk)

Dear Blessy Frank

**Re: Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**  
**Ref no: FOI-3898-LSC**

Thank you for your request dated 27 February 2024.

We can confirm that the ICB does hold of the information you requested.

Please find our response to your questions below:

Q1	Your Question:  Could you please provide the current policy the ICB has on working from home for non-patient-facing staff.
	Our Response:  <b>In the Flexible working and special leave policy, the following is stated:</b>  <b>Working from Home - Some posts may be suitable for working from home on a full time, part time or ad hoc basis for example to complete a particular piece of work. This enables employees to work flexibly, for example, in the evenings or at weekends – to allow for time off during the week. Working from home could make one feel very isolated but if it is the right job to enable working from home and the time is used wisely, it can be beneficial to the employee and the organisation.</b>  <b>Points to consider include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The nature of the work that may be done at home.</li><li>• Equipment that can be used at home, such as a computer, whether equipment can be borrowed.</li><li>• Security, confidentiality, and safety issues connected with using IT equipment off site.</li><li>• Contact arrangements e.g., attending team briefing and statutory training, and for regular meetings with their manager.</li><li>• Health and Safety issues</li></ul>

Q2

Your Question:

What rules/ expectations/ policies are set by the ICB in terms of employees working from the office?

Our Response:

**Our Ways of Working: next steps on developing our agile working principles**

**December 13, 2022**

As we now move to settle into agile working for the long term following the pandemic, we are looking to combine the best of coming together face to face with the ability to work remotely, to meet the needs of our health and care system. Firstly, it is important to establish what we mean by agile and hybrid/blended working – what it is, and what it is not.

Agile working focuses on removing boundaries traditionally placed between staff and their goals, in order to make our operating model as adaptable and efficient as it can be.

Hybrid working combines remote including home, office and public space (third space working, which is anywhere that has an internet connection that you could visit with your laptop, for example a local café).

Blending office working with remote working enables us to work in a more agile way, connecting in ways which we couldn't do previously across the geography of Lancashire and South Cumbria, and it helps colleagues establish a better work/life balance and contributes to our net zero commitments.

We are now moving into the next phase of Our Ways of Working (OWOW), where we settle into adaptable and efficient ways of working becoming the norm. One of the priorities for the new year will be to work closely with the People Team to develop a set of agile working principles, which will provide a framework for how teams will work in the future and recognising the need to find the right balance that best delivers in their area of work. Once the principles have been developed, we will carry out a process of engagement with teams on how this will work in practice for them.

It is important to note that at the moment there is no agreed 'fixed time' that staff should be attending an office, though teams may already have arrangements in place and should continue to work in the way that best meets their needs. However, we recognise the need to provide clarity on what the expectation is of staff and teams going forward. This includes arrangements for coming into the office as part of a hybrid working approach and how this will be agreed with team and project leaders and line managers. There are benefits for teams to meet face to face regularly or periodically and there is also a recognition of the efficiency and flexibility that an agile working pattern has for staff, the work itself, and a work-life balance.

To further develop our OWOW agile working principles we would like to carry out a short survey to understand current working patterns and hear staff views and for these to contribute to a set of principles that are flexible enough to allow for different needs within directorates and teams. The principles will provide a clear framework for staff to understand what the expectations are for them – and ensure that the business needs of our organisation are suitably met.

Q3	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>Are any staff groups exempt from these rules? If so, please give details</p>
	<p>Our Response:</p> <p><b>No exemptions are stated</b></p>
Q4	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>When was this policy issued?</p>
	<p>Our Response:</p> <p><b>December 2022.</b></p>
Q5	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>Please could you detail any changes to the WFH policy from</p> <p>a) April 2020 and</p> <p>b) September 2022</p>
	<p>Our Response:</p> <p><b>There is no working from home policy but WFH is referenced in the Flexible working and Special leave policy as above. This policy was last reviewed in Nov 2023.</b></p>
Q6	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>Do you plan to change your work from home/ office policies in the next year? If so, please detail the changes</p>
	<p>Our Response:</p> <p><b>Not at present</b></p>
Q7	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>How regularly is the ICB monitoring office attendance/working from home?</p>
	<p>Our Response:</p> <p><b>Office attendance and working from home is not monitored although there is a desk booking system in place. Patterns of work would be discussed with line managers.</b></p>

Q8	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>How many staff in non-patient-facing roles are currently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working full time from the office</li> <li>• Working full time from home</li> <li>• Working from office 1 day a week</li> <li>• Working from office 2 days a week</li> <li>• Working from office 3 days a week</li> <li>• Working from office 4 days a week</li> <li>• Working from office 5 days a week</li> </ul>
	<p>Our Response</p> <p><b>We do not hold records of this as staff now work flexibly and do not need to put in a flexible working request for changes to proportions of office/ home working times. This is managed through the line manager working relationship.</b></p>
Q9	<p>Your Question:</p> <p>Has there been any disciplinary action taken against any member of staff for not working in the office? Are any cases being investigated?</p>
	<p>Our Response</p> <p><b>No.</b></p>

### **Right of Appeal**

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are dissatisfied with the response, you are entitled to request an internal review which should be formally requested in writing and must be within 40 working days from the date this response was issued.

### **To request an internal review**

You can request this by contacting the FOI team by email at [MLCSU.FOITeam@nhs.net](mailto:MLCSU.FOITeam@nhs.net) or by post to Leyland House, Lancashire Business Park, Leyland, PR26 6TR, specifying why you require a review.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the CCGs FOI complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

**Lee Radford – Chief People Officer**

**On behalf of Kevin Lavery  
 ICB Chief Executive**

