

<b>Reference Number:</b> IMS-11-03-CAV UHB 362 <b>Version Number:</b> 2	<b>Date of Next Review:</b> September 2026 <b>Previous Trust/LHB Reference Number:</b> N/A
<b>Lone Worker Procedure</b>	
<b>Introduction and Aim</b>  <p>To ensure the Health Board delivers its aims, objectives, responsibilities and legal requirements transparently and consistently we will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff and others who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risk to their health and safety.</p> <p>The aim of this procedure is to provide a structure for the management of staff who undertake lone working. Lone working exposes staff and others to certain hazards. The intention is, where practicable, to entirely remove the risk from these hazards or, where complete elimination is not practicable, to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.</p>	
<b>Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the safety of lone workers or staff who work alone, by minimising the risks that they face and putting in place appropriate measures to improve their safety.</li> <li>• To increase staff awareness of safety issues associated with lone working.</li> <li>• To ensure that risk in relation to lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place.</li> <li>• To encourage reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.</li> </ul>	
<b>Scope</b>  <p>This Procedure includes all people acting as lone workers, working or acting directly or indirectly, for or on behalf of, the organisation. For ease of this procedure, from now on all these groups will be referred to as staff.</p> <b>Policy Review</b> <p>The Policy will be reviewed within three years of implementation or as the Health Board changes and/or when legislation, codes of practice and official guidance dictate, by the Head of Health and Safety in collaboration with the Chief Executive.</p>	
<b>Equality Health Impact Assessment</b>	An Equality Health Impact Assessment has not been completed. This is because a procedure has been written to support the implementation the Health and Safety Policy EHIA.
<b>Documents to read alongside this</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Violence &amp; Aggression (Personal Safety) Policy</li> </ul>

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<b>Procedure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident Hazard and Near Miss Reporting Policy</li> <li>• Security Policy</li> <li>• Violent Warning Marker Procedure</li> <li>• Care of Adult Patients with Capacity who are Violent or Abusive Procedure</li> <li>• Microguard Lone Worker Device Procedure</li> <li>• Lone Worker Risk Assessment Guidance</li> </ul>
	Health and Safety Committee / Operational Health and Safety Group

<b>Accountable Executive or Clinical Board Director</b>	Executive Director of People and Culture
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<b>Author(s)</b>	Case Manager / Senior Case Management Officer
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**If the review date of this document has passed please ensure that the version you are using is the most up to date either by contacting the document author or the [Governance Directorate](#).**

<b>Summary of reviews/amendments</b>			
<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date of Review Approved</b>	<b>Date Published</b>	<b>Summary of Amendments</b>
1	25/04/2017	08/09/2017	New Procedure
2	05/09/2023	04.10.2023	Review of existing Procedure. Review date extended as a result of the pandemic.

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## 1.0 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Health and safety legislation currently in force does not prohibit lone working, except in a few specific circumstances e.g. working in confined spaces. The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 provides the legislative framework to promote, stimulate and encourage high standards of health and safety at work. Under health and safety laws, employers have a range of legal duties including keeping employees safe at work; providing a safe working environment; assessing any risks to employee health and safety and taking reasonable steps to eliminate or reduce those risks

## 2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Chief Executive** is ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated legislation, and that this procedure is implemented and effective within the UHB.

The **Executive Director for People and Culture** is the Health Board Champion for violence and aggression and lone working and has board level responsibility for health and safety.

The **Clinical Board Directors, Clinical Board Nurses and Head of Operations and Delivery** are responsible for ensuring that relevant staff within their Board are briefed on their individual and collective responsibilities for ensuring arrangements are in place to implement the Lone Worker Procedure.

**Directorate Managers and Department/Line Managers** are responsible for cascading this procedure to staff. They are responsible for establishing and supervising safe systems of work; ensuring staff have received appropriate training; and ensuring that other policies and procedures are observed. They should ensure that a proper risk assessment is conducted (in consultation with the relevant personnel) to ensure that all risks from lone working are identified and that proper control measures have been introduced to minimise, or mitigate the risks before staff enter a lone working situation. They must ensure local procedures are introduced and safe systems of work are adopted.

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All **employees** who are issued with a lone worker device are responsible for properly utilising their lone worker equipment which has been provided for their own personal safety and ensuring that they are trained in the use of the equipment and associated support services. Staff must follow the procedures of the Health Board for the use of this equipment in particular the Microguard Lone Worker Device Procedure.

All incidents or near misses, even those considered to be minor, should be reported using the Health Boards incident reporting system. to enable appropriate follow up action to be taken. All employees have a responsibility to do all they can to ensure their own safety and that of their colleagues and adhere to the control measures implemented to minimise, or mitigate the risks before entering a lone working situation.

### 3.0 Identification of Lone Workers

Lone workers are likely to be found in a wide range of situations. The HSE definition of lone workers is:

‘A lone worker is someone who works by themselves without close or direct Supervision’

**Health and Safety Executive (2013)**

The following table contains examples of staff groups:

Staff Working Arrangements	Examples
Work alone at a fixed base	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reception staff</li> <li>2. Facilities/Maintenance staff</li> <li>3. Laboratory staff</li> <li>4. Security Staff</li> </ol>
Work separately from other people on the same premises or outside normal working hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Housekeeping staff</li> <li>2. Waste Management staff</li> <li>3. Nursing and Medical staff</li> </ol>
Work at home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrators</li> <li>2. Managers</li> </ol>
Mobile workers working away from their fixed base:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community nursing/specialist nursing/midwifery staff/ health visitors</li> <li>2. Podiatry staff</li> <li>3. Speech and language therapy staff</li> <li>4. Occupational Therapists</li> </ol>

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	5. Pharmacists 6. Physiotherapists 7. Mental Health Nursing
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#### 4.0 Incident Hazard and Near Miss Reporting

Reporting incidents helps us to understand how and why things go wrong, and how we can make our systems safer. Any adverse incident and/or near miss should be reported through the line management structure and reported through the recognised UHB incident reporting mechanisms, this being the DatixCymru system available on the CAVUHB Sharepoint. It is important to ensure that if an adverse incident involves a lone worker, specific reference should be made to that fact when completing the report.

Where someone has been assaulted, the line manager should ensure that the staff member is properly de-briefed, undergoes a physical assessment, any injuries are documented and that they receive access to appropriate post incident support. Where appropriate, the UHB Case Management Team should be informed and involved in the follow up of the case.

If a lone worker device is activated during an incident the Case Management Team must be notified immediately to ensure that the audio recording of the event is gathered as evidence. Please click [here](#) for the Case Management Team details.

Following an adverse incident or near miss where identified an investigation must be undertaken as appropriate, and risk assessments should be carried out as soon as possible and immediate control measures put in place. This is prior to a formalised review of lessons learnt following an incident.

#### 5.0 Risk Assessment

There should be a clear documented departmental risk assessment in place which identifies and assesses risks faced by lone workers, implements measures to reduce those risks and evaluates control measures. The key to maximising safety wherever lone work is being considered is the performance of a satisfactory risk assessment, which should address two main features:

- Whether the work can be done safely by lone workers;

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- What arrangements are required to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the lone worker is at no more risk than employees working together.

Click [here](#) for guidance on risk management and assessment for lone workers.

## 6.0 Local Procedure / Guidance

Each department with identified lone workers should develop and adopt local Procedure / Guidance to inform lone workers about the arrangements in place to protect them. See [Appendix 1](#) for template documents including a Departmental Lone Worker Procedure. It is vitally important that lone worker procedures are kept under review to take account of changes in the external environment, introduction of new technologies and the lessons learnt from the investigation of incidents that occur, where they cannot be deterred or prevented from happening. Lone working procedures must offer a framework for the assessment of risks that staff may face.

## 7.0 TECHNOLOGY

### Microguard Lone Worker Alert System

Staff that have been identified as high-risk lone workers should have effective means of calling for assistance and where identified will receive a Microguard lone worker device. The criteria for identifying high risk lone workers are:

*Those staff who work alone in the community or away from their hospital/clinic base and have regular direct patient/client contact where the level of incidents demonstrates a continued need to control the risk of violent and aggressive attacks AND any of the following:*

- *Visit patients without prior knowledge of the patient or venue e.g. first visits*
- *Visit patients/families with a history of violence, drug or alcohol abuse or clinical conditions which may heighten the risk*
- *Work alone in darkness hours*
- *Visit areas of social deprivation or that are geographically isolated*
- *Unplanned visits Wales wide*

The Peoplesafe Microguard Lone Worker device is a discreet two-way communication device. When the SOS button is activated an alarm containing the device's location is sent to the Incident Management Centre. Trained controllers listen to the call and determine the

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appropriate action to take, including the deployment of emergency services if needed. In addition to this, audio evidence can be secured and used in cases that are progressed through the criminal justice system.

Lone worker protection devices will not stop incidents from occurring, nor should they provide the user with a false sense of security, where they may put themselves at further risk, however they are effective when combined with a package of measures to protect lone workers.

Training and allocation of devices is arranged through the Health and Safety Unit. All employees who are issued with a lone worker device are responsible for properly utilising their device which has been provided for their own personal safety.

[Link to Procedure when published](#)

## 8.0 HOME WORKING

Home workers are also considered lone workers and managers must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to manage their safety. Please find further guidance in the [Cardiff and Vale Agile Working Framework](#).

## 9.0 TRAINING AND COMPETENCY

Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty. Information should be provided to an adequate level to ensure that lone workers understand the risks of their work, the precautions that are needed, including if necessary the use of any equipment provided and what they should do in an emergency. It is essential that departmental lone worker arrangements are communicated at induction.

Training should also be comprehensive enough to ensure that employees are competent to deal with circumstances that are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training, for example, when to stop working and seek advice from a supervisor and how to handle aggression.

All lone workers should undertake Module B (online) and Module C violence and aggression training if identified within the lone worker risk assessment.

Line Managers are required to make adequate arrangements to ensure that staff complete training and that training is regularly updated.



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Training records will provide evidence that training has taken place and training will be recorded on the individuals Electronic Staff Record.

[Health and Safety Training Information](#)

Competency can be defined as “the combination of training, knowledge and experience and the ability to recognise when additional or specialist advice is required. It is the responsibility of the line manager to assess competency.

## 10.0 RESOURCES

This Procedure provides an update of current practices and is therefore an on-going resource.

## 11.0 REFERENCES

**Legislation - Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974**

**Website - [Lone working - HSE](#)**



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## Appendix 1 - Example Departmental Lone Worker Procedure

<b>DEPARTMENTAL LONE WORKER PROCEDURE</b>	
<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	
<b>STAFF GROUP</b>	
<b>1. Training</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details on training requirements for the position to included in this section.</li> <li>• <i>All staff must have received appropriate Training i.e. Modules A, B and C.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>2. Contact with Base</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on how staff are expected to maintain contact with base e.g.</li> <li>• <i>A list of mobile phone contact numbers must be kept by your line manager. If you change your number it is your responsibility to provide your manager with it.</i></li> <li>• <i>For community staff, a list of car registration numbers and makes of vehicles must kept by your line manager. If you change your vehicle it is your responsibility to provide your manager with your new details.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>3. Daily Movements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on staffs daily movements e.g.</li> <li>• <i>All staff must ensure that they provide a list of their daily movements to their line manager. This is achieved by:</i></li> <li>• <i>At the end of the working shift, all lone workers must have a procedure in place for "signing off". This is achieved by:</i></li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>If you change your schedule, it is your responsibility to notify your line manager of this change.</b></p>	
<b>4. Motor Vehicles - For Community Staff</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It is the individual members of staff personal responsibility to ensure that their vehicle is kept in a safe and roadworthy condition e.g. oil and water levels topped up, tyres inflated to correct pressure, regular servicing. It is</i></li> </ul>	

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*recommended that you hold personal membership of breakdown organisation.*

- *Always park your vehicle in an easily accessible and well-lit area.*
- *You should always hold the vehicle keys in your hand when leaving premises, in order to avoid looking for them outside, which could compromise your personal safety.*
- *You should try and approach your vehicle from the rear, checking, the outside and inside 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 inner-city areas.*

#### **5. Individual Environmental Risk Assessments – For Community Staff**

- *It is the responsibility of each staff member to ensure that an Environmental Risk Assessment form is completed on the first visit and regularly updated as and when required.*
- *If a problem is found this must be communicated to your line manager as soon as practically possible.*
- *Once completed, this form must be shared with all other staff who may attend the premises.*
- *Lone workers should also carry out a "10 second" dynamic risk assessment when they first arrive at the house and the front door is opened. If they feel there is a risk of harm to themselves, they should have an excuse ready not to enter the house and to arrange for an alternative appointment.*

#### **6. In The Event of an Emergency**

- *Dependent upon the nature of the emergency it may be necessary to contact the emergency services (999/112) prior to contacting your line manager.*
- *Utilise your lone worker device as per instruction and training.*
- *In all cases your line manager must be contacted as soon as possible.*

#### **7. Incident Reporting**

- *Should an incident or near miss occur, staff **must** report this, in line with the organisations incident reporting procedure.*

**PROCEDURE PREPARED BY:**

**DESIGNATION:**

**DATE:**

**REVIEW DATE:**

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