**Lone Working Policy**

The Queen’s Nursing Institute Scotland takes extremely seriously the health, safety and welfare of all its staff. It recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community or in isolated work areas. The purpose of this policy is to enable QNIS to meet its obligation to protect such staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

This policy applies to all staff including temporary and agency staff, contractors, volunteers, students and those on work experience. It forms an integral part of QNIS’s Health and Safety policy and applies along with specific local guidance on lone working. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of our staff.

**Definition of Lone Workers**

QNIS defines lone workers as:

'Staff whose working activities involve situations where they are without any kind of close or direct supervision.'

**Policy Aims**

This policy aims to:

* Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
* Make sure that appropriate training is available to staff in all areas, that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;
* Make sure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;
* Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working;

**Responsibilities**

Lone working environments present a unique health and safety problem. Although there is no specific legal guidance on working alone, under the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974*, and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, as amended*, QNIS must organise and control the health and safety of lone workers.

The CEND is responsible for:

* Making sure that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updates and refresher training as necessary;
* Making sure that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident; and
* Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

**Staff responsibilities**

All employees have a responsibility to take care of their own safety and to co-operate with QNIS procedures. Employees should not knowingly place themselves in situations which expose them to additional risk by working alone. If a person finds that they are placed in a situation, which may be considered to be that of a ‘lone worker’, then they should ensure that a colleague or their Line Manager is made aware of the circumstances at the earliest opportunity. Where possible, steps should be taken to prevent the lone worker situation from arising, or, if this is not possible, precautions should be taken as necessary to ensure their own safety. Lone workers have a responsibility to inform their Line Manager if they have any concerns over the effectiveness and efficiency of the agreed arrangements and also if there are any reasons why they would not be able to work alone or to continue to work alone in safety. Staff are responsible for reporting any dangers they identify, or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

A common-sense approach should be adopted when working alone within the office. If a lone staff member does not feel safe to leave the premises, they should not do so. If required, staff can telephone 101 to contact the Police.

If driving for work, staff should ensure that it is safe to leave before doing so and follow the safest route possible even when this may not be the quickest. Details of the journey and expected arrival time should be shared with a trusted person. Equally, employees should share their work/travel plans with a trusted person ensuring that another person is aware of their whereabouts.

**Reporting and Recording**

Staff should report all incidents (including near misses) to their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity. All reports should be recorded and investigated. In order to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and associated local protocols, local statistics and incident reports should be reviewed regularly.

**Monitoring and Reviewing**

QNIS will monitor and review this policy to make sure that the aims are being achieved. This will be done with our appointed Competent Advisor where applicable. The review processes will include:

* Collecting and monitoring all reported incidents by the Business Support Manager;
* Reporting to the Staff Liaison Trustee as required, incident statistics and safety improvement measures which have been introduced, the outcomes of risk assessment and details of training provided; and
* Reporting to Council annually on progress in reducing risk and incidents and making recommendations for the forthcoming year.

August 2025