

Lone Ranger; the impact and challenges of lone working in social care.

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Today we want to...

- Share what we already know about the impact of lone working on people's health and wellbeing
 - look at how this links to our wider work on 'healthy workplaces'
 - start to think about what additional 'resources' could help employers in these two areas.
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We also want to..

- explore your experiences of lone working and supporting lone workers – what are the challenges and how do you support lone workers?
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Structure of today's session

- Initial presentation to set the scene.
 - Outline of research underway
 - work on targeted areas to share our own knowledge and experience.
 - Drawing together core themes from our discussions.
 - Presentation of the next steps for the project.
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Background and context

Lone workers are those ‘who work by themselves without close or direct supervision’ (Health and Safety Executive), and who are unaccompanied for long periods of time.

In adult social care this includes:

- mobile workers
 - home workers (who visit people in their own home)
 - shift workers – for example those who work weekends or nights when there are fewer staff
 - remote workers
 - workers away from home.
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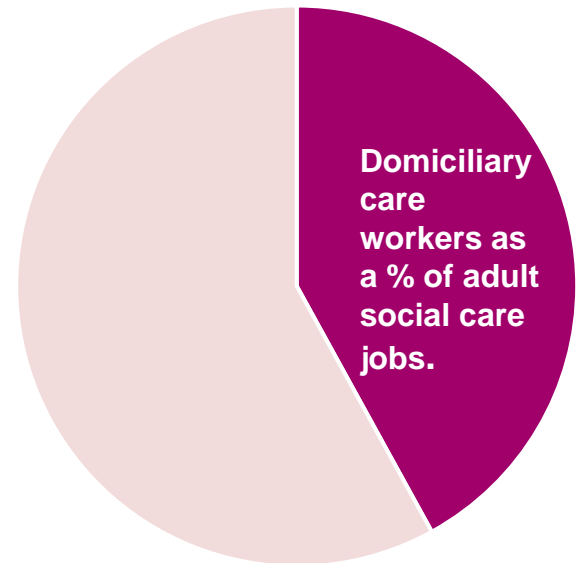
How many?

It's difficult to estimate but ...

We do know that lots of domiciliary care workers work alone.

Domiciliary care workers make up **42%** of adult social care jobs in England, that's **665,000 jobs**.

Therefore the welfare, motivation and retention of lone workers is a major issue for adult social care services.





Employers duties and responsibilities

The Health and Safety Executive (2013) advise:

Employers have a duty to assess risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control where necessary.

Involve workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them	Take steps to make sure risks are removed where possible, and if not possible, measures to control them
Provide instruction, training and supervision	Review risk assessment periodically or if significant change in working practice



Our evidence review

The literature highlights a number of challenges which are specific to lone workers:

- health and safety
 - psychosocial impact including stress, isolation and loneliness
 - musculoskeletal symptoms
 - organisational and management factors including supervision
 - abuse and violence at work.
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Gaps in the evidence

1. Lack of understanding of the impact of policies focused on supporting lone workers.
 2. What are the health effects associated with remote and isolated working?
 3. What organisational/ management factors impact on health and wellbeing of lone workers ?
 4. What psychosocial effects are associated with remote and isolated working?
 5. Information on working patterns of lone workers in adult social care and current policies.
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Links to healthy workplaces

Many of the challenges of lone working can be alleviated by creating a 'healthy' workplace.

A Healthy workplace can flex and adapt to the needs of all of it's workers.

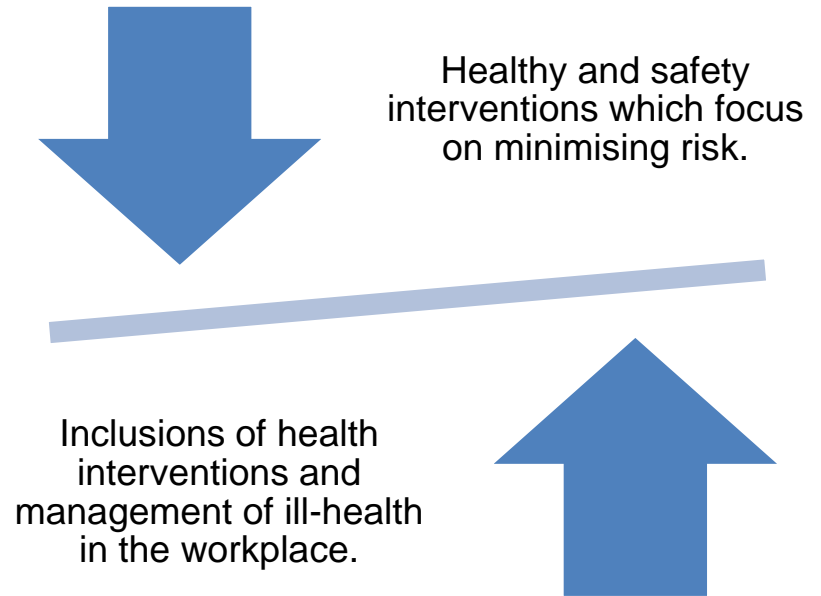
Having a healthy workplace approach is more likely to acknowledge and prioritise some of the challenges that lone workers face.



What is a 'healthy' workplace

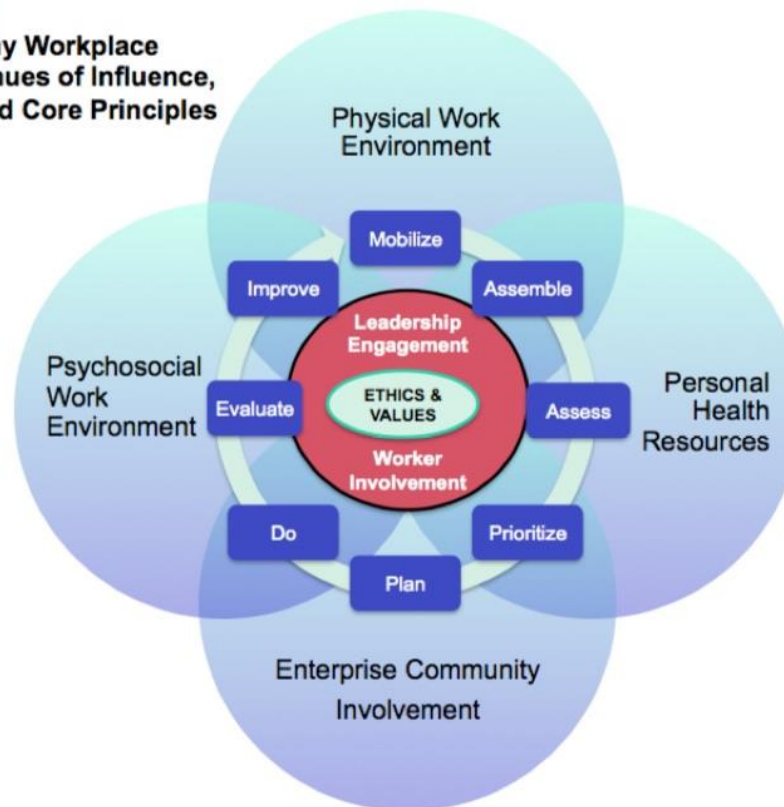
Shift in our attitude and approach to health and work.

Now reflects on the importance of the **working environment** and the subsequent impact on **physical and mental health**.



Model of 'healthy workplaces' from the World Health Organisation

Figure ES1
WHO Healthy Workplace
Model: Avenues of Influence,
Process, and Core Principles





Examples of healthy workplace

- Physical work environment; gloves and protective equipment issued to lower the impact of chemicals used.
 - Personal health resources; a lunchtime smoking cessation clinic is offered to employees.
 - Enterprise community involvement; the organisation donates to a local after school club, that several of it's employees use.
 - Psychosocial work environment; flexi time working is introduced to lessen stress.
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Research into lone working in adult social care

Tim Allan

12th November 2018

Contents

1. Research overview: what, how and when
2. A summary of emerging findings
3. Effective support for lone workers: what works?
4. What *else* works?
5. Resources

Research overview

Research overview

What:

	Lone workers	Managers
Views towards/key concerns about lone working	X	
Impact of lone working on health and wellbeing	X	X
Current offer of support for lone workers	X	X
Learning and development/resource gaps	X	X

How:

- Qualitative consultations with lone workers and managers
- Online surveys of lone workers and managers

When:

- September 2018 to January 2019

Summary of emerging findings

Job satisfaction and morale

- A difficult and challenging role(s)....
-but job satisfaction and morale regularly cited as the main positive impacts

The reward and satisfaction of providing one-to-one, personalised care

Rapport and relationships with users of care and support services

Fits well with certain personalities and professional preferences

Health and wellbeing

- Loneliness, isolation and worries over personal safety.....
- ...but limited evidence in the research so far of these issues being severe

Improved self-
confidence

Feeling more relaxed
at work

Not worrying about
tensions with
colleagues or
managers

Communication and escalation

- Generally working well – a consequence of the ‘interest group’ approach to sampling?
- Where issues exist, they include:
 - Accessing face-to-face support from managers
 - Learning from, and sharing experiences with, colleagues
 - Having an equal role/say in decisions

Autonomy

Likes

Planning and structuring the working day

Empowerment and efficiency

Dislikes

Sole responsibility for making decisions about clients can be challenging

Absence of immediate (face-to-face) support

Effective support for lone workers

Effective support for lone workers

Employee Assistance
Programmes

Compassionate
support

PA liaison workers

Regular face-to-face
reviews

Out-of-hours phone
support

Intranets and forums

CEO lunches

Performance and
loyalty rewards

Staff surveys and
updates

What *else* works?

Resources





What do Skills for Care want to do?

- To work with stakeholders to co-produce ‘top tips’ or practical guidance and case studies, to encourage adult social care employers to consider, create and implement a positive health and wellbeing programme in their workplace.
 - To develop practical guidance that supports adult social care employers to improve staff retention and productivity where they have workers who are predominantly working alone.
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Next steps

Thank you for your work today. Now, we will:

- analyse your comments, suggestions and input from today to identify the core themes that we need to add to our research
 - invite to you to advise/test out possible resources that may be useful to address the core themes identified.
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Thank you