

# Staff Guide

## Working from home using Display Screen Equipment (DSE)



### OFFICIAL

## Introduction

In this transitional period when we are adopting home working as a strategy to manage the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) situation, we recognise that as an employer, we have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers - as for any other workers.

Some employees will be working from home for the first time, which means communication is key between yourself and your manager. Having regular conversations with your manager and outlining clear work expectations will help to make sure that productivity is safely delivered whilst you are working from home.

Advice from the Health and Safety Executive – the UK government agency responsible for the regulation of workplace health and safety and welfare, is that there is no increased risk from using display screen equipment (DSE) for those working at home temporarily. As a result employers do not need to do home workstation assessments for staff using this equipment.

All staff working from home should follow the simple steps listed below:

- **break up long spells** of DSE work with rest breaks (at least 5 minutes every hour) or changes in activity
- avoiding awkward, static postures by **regularly changing position**
- **get up and moving** or doing stretching exercises
- **avoid eye fatigue** by changing focus or blinking from time to time
- **report any symptoms of discomfort** that maybe associated with your use of portable display screen equipment as soon as possible to your manager
- if you are an **employees with specialised DSE equipment** needs, you should where possible:
  - take equipment home that you use in the office - such as keyboards and a mouse
  - try other ways of creating a comfortable working environment using larger items such as a different chair or table.

## GOLD

If you are working from home you may benefit from completing the **online GOLD Display Screen Equipment Awareness e-learning course**.

You can login to GOLD from home on any device at

<https://tracking.brightwave.co.uk/LNT/Glasgow/Login.aspx?ts=637207316113663300>

## Support

Managers please share this message with all staff working from home.

The attached infographics are from Posturite – they outline advice on the best way to set up your temporary workstation at home using the equipment you may have available.

## Working from home short term Helpful Hints

Many people already work from home some or all of the time, and are well set up to do so. If you are not, there is lots you can do to work well at home to prevent discomfort.

There are many equipment options to support people working away from the office, but these may not always be available if working from home is needed to be implemented quickly. There is a lot we can all do to look after ourselves in this situation.

**You are likely to fall into one of these four categories**



### Good equipment already provided or in place

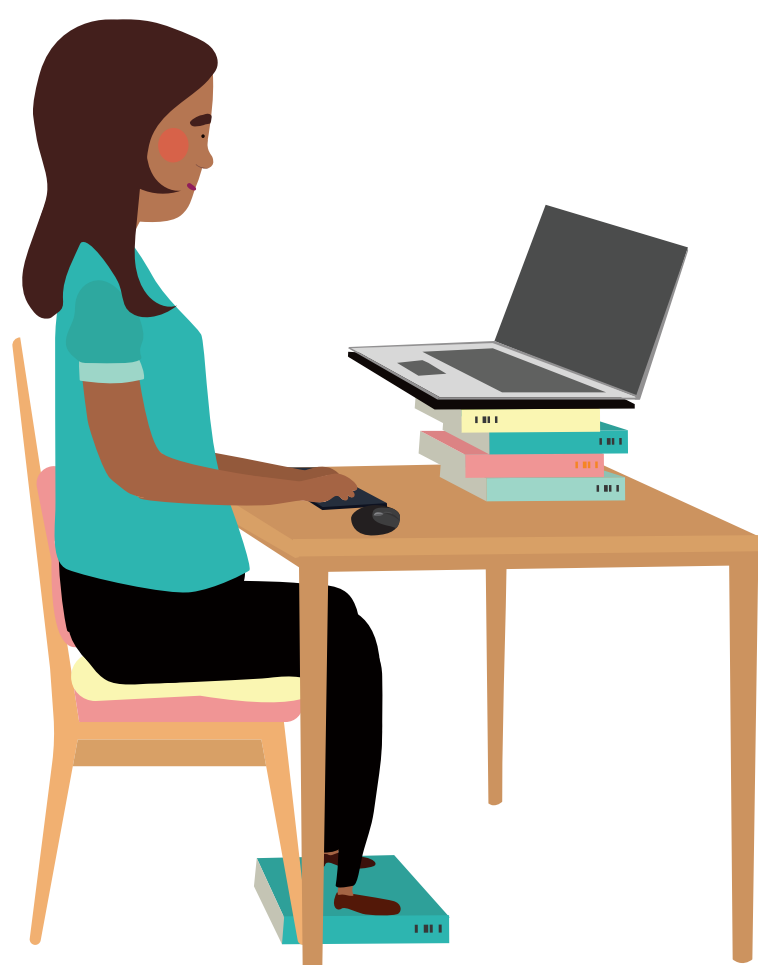
Desk, adjustable office chair, screen raiser or laptop stand, separate keyboard and mouse

- ✓ Take the time to set up the equipment you have to support your position.
- ✓ Adjust your chair so your elbows are keyboard height, forearms are level and back is supported.
- ✓ Top of screen about eye level.
- ✓ Keyboard and mouse close so your arms are relaxed by your body.
- ✓ Make sure you move regularly whilst working, look away from your screen at least every 20 minutes and try to get up at least every hour.

### Some equipment provided

Screen raiser or laptop stand, separate keyboard and mouse

- ✓ Follow the above advice and...
- ✓ Be creative to achieve a well supported and good seated position.
- ✓ Use towels, cushions, pillows or a wedge to get your seated height to the suitable level.
- ✓ Make sure your back is supported with a cushion.
- ✓ If you need foot support consider using an old book, file or box as a footrest.



### Separate keyboard and mouse only

- ✓ Follow the above advice and...
- ✓ Find a way of raising your laptop. A tin, plastic box, books or file can do the job but if the items are flammable please make sure you use a mat or tray between the laptop and the item.

### No additional equipment

If you only have your portable device, you can still take care of yourself.

- ✓ Use the tips above to get a better position and support from a chair.
- ✓ Can you borrow a keyboard and mouse?
- ✓ Perform some simple exercises.
- ✓ Try to move at least every 15 minutes if your posture is compromised.
- ✓ Any concerns, you must let your manager know as soon as possible.



### The worse your position is, the more you must move!

No matter the situation, you can look after yourself by regularly moving and taking breaks.

Plan your day and if any tasks do not require you to be using your device, move away. Tasks like conference calls, reading documents, thinking, making notes could be done on a sofa, easy chair or even lying on the floor. We all get so used to staying in one place during the day, we do not change our habits when we can.

For further support visit [posturite.co.uk](http://posturite.co.uk) and find out how we can help.

## Exercise

With the increasing amount of technology in the office, more time is spent working with the body in fixed and static postures, thus reducing physical movement. There is therefore a need to introduce short muscular stretches (pause gymnastics) into the daily routine of work.

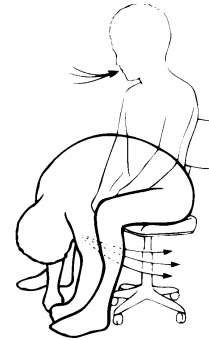
Exercise and stretching will increase circulation, improving blood flow and oxygen supply to the muscles thus reducing muscle fatigue and joint stiffness. When performed regularly throughout the day, they will not only reduce the risk of injuries, but will also improve an employees efficiency and productivity.

Employees working in fixed postures for extended periods can experience muscle ache and fatigue, due to the effects of static muscle contraction. Any hand-intensive duties can cause specific aches and pains in the arm, neck, shoulders and upper back, when undertaken for long periods. Specific stretches done regularly throughout the day will maintain the elasticity of muscles.

The increased circulation will deliver energy to the muscles and remove waste products, enabling you to work more comfortably and efficiently.

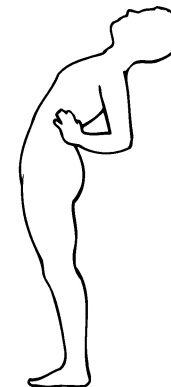
**Note:** These exercises are designed to prevent occupational injuries. Any employee who has an existing injury, pain or who is under medical treatment should seek specialist advice before attempting any exercises.

## Exercises to reduce tension and relax the back



# A

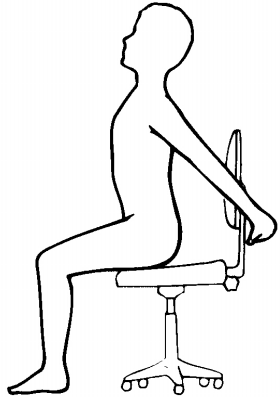
Take a deep breath while sitting straight, exhale slowly and slump forward in your chair lengthening your spine, releasing all the tension. Hold this posture for a slow count of 10. Repeat this three times daily.



# B

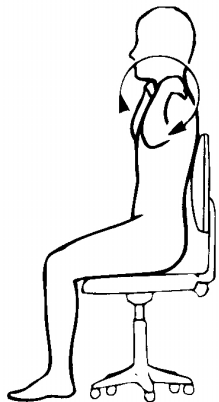
Stand up regularly throughout the day and stretch. Make use of natural interruptions e.g. occasionally standing to answer the phone.

## Exercises for the shoulders and upper back

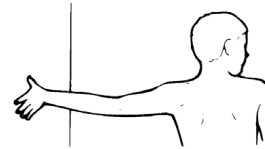


**C** Clasp hands, keeping back / neck straight, raise arms gently backwards and look towards the ceiling.

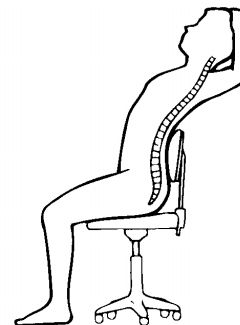
Hold for count of three and repeat once hourly.



**D** With hands on shoulders, circle elbows 10 times vigorously, as frequently as necessary.



**E** Place palm of hand on wall and gently straighten elbow, keeping shoulder down. Do not push to the extent that pain is felt. Hold for count of three. Repeat once an hour.



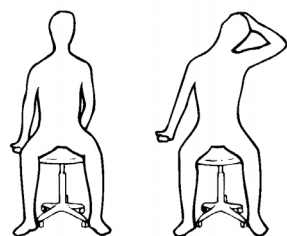
**F** Place hands on crown of head, keeping chin tucked in; gently stretch upwards and backwards. Hold for count of three. Repeat three to five times a day.

## Exercises for arms and hands

### When working intensively on the keyboard

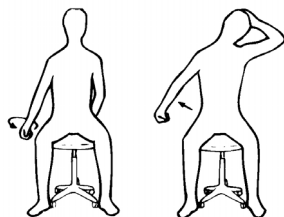
## Exercises for relieving tension in the arm

when working with a mouse or when handwriting



# G

With arm by side, palm facing forwards, gently push down shoulder and lengthen arm; bend wrist back keeping fingers straight. If there is no pain, gently stretch head away. Hold for count of three.

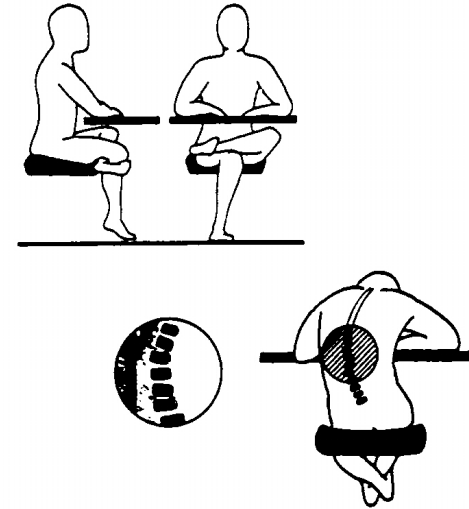


# H

With arm by side and palm facing forward, gently push shoulder down and lengthen arm. Make a fist, with thumb tucked into hand, pull fingers up towards body turning arm in. If there is no pain, gently elevate arm away from body and stretch head away. Hold for count of three.

## Employee 10 step guide to prevent discomfort while using DSE

- ❖ Follow the correct postural and ergonomic guidance provided in this booklet. Try different arrangements of keyboard, screen and mouse to find the best arrangement for you.
- ❖ Throughout the day, regularly change your position and do some stretching exercises. **Do not** stay in the same static position for long periods.
- ❖ Avoid visual fatigue by ensuring that you change your focal distances by looking 2-3 metres away from your screen. Ensure the ergonomics set up of your workstation is correct for your vision requirements.
- ❖ Take regular screen breaks or changes of activity, e.g., minutes 5 –10 minutes every hour, preferably during which time simple neck and shoulder exercises are practised.
- ❖ If possible, introduce job rotation and/or task variation to change fixed, stressed postures.
- ❖ Be aware of poor work postures and minimise the 'stressful effect'.



- ❖ Report distracting noise, poor lighting, uncomfortable temperature / humidity or poor air quality to your supervisor.
- ❖ Have your eyes tested to identify any visual problems.
- ❖ Remember, your body is not an extension of your computer - it has limits. Do not push your own physical/mental limit.
- ❖ “Body awareness” - listen and feel. If you experience aches and pains thought to be connected to DSE use, speak to your supervisor promptly.