



# Supporting Employees who are Homeworking

Whilst a number of organisations are preparing to return their employees to the physical work place, as we ease out of lockdown, many are planning to continue to have colleagues working at home.

The HSE advise employers to protect home workers from risks such as lone working; mental health and working with display screen equipment. PAM Group has a range of services to support employers in their duty of care and support employees with optimising health, improving performance, as well as identifying and controlling risks.

The impact on individual's homeworking can be:

## Musculoskeletal

Muscle deconditioning • Global muscle weakness • Reduced range of movement in upper limb • Pain and discomfort

## Medical/Physical

Underlying health conditions exacerbated • Change in lifestyle habits

## Psychological

Loss of confidence in abilities • Loneliness and Isolation \* Situational anxiety due to family, finances, health • Exacerbation of an existing mental health conditions • Burn-out \* Anxiety linked to changes in role \* Challenges maintaining focus \*



## Homeworking Challenges

Despite lockdown measures lifting, the percentage of the UK workforce homeworking will have doubled compared with the levels of homeworking in 2019.

In the Working at Home Wellbeing Survey (IES, 2020), conducted two weeks into lockdown, participants were asked how homeworking is affecting their physical and mental wellbeing. This is what they reported:

- **A significant increase in musculoskeletal complaints**
- **20% increase in alcohol consumption**
- **33% report eating a less healthy diet**
- **60% acknowledge that they are exercising less**
- **Poor sleep and an increase in exhaustion, with 64% attributing this to worrying more**

In other research, the top concerns managers have about their employees working from home are that they may be overworking and not taking the necessary breaks; that productivity may reduce over time; an increase in loneliness; and communication is more challenging. In fact, Managers are reporting that they struggle to engage with employees due to difficulties with knowing how to start the conversation around mental health and knowing the boundaries and types of questions to pose. This could mean that issues remain unidentified and support is not put in place, causing issues to worsen.

Below we have provided a brief summary of each service. If you wish to find out more about any of these services please request a client briefing document from your Account Manager, in order to obtain a more detailed overview of the aim, outcome, referral method, application and cost.

Service	People	Teams	Organisations
Home worker health assessment	✓		
Homeworkers ergonomic workstation assessment	✓		
Mental health Wellcheck	✓	✓	
A range of health and wellbeing webinars for employees and managers	✓	✓	✓
PAMLife	✓	✓	✓

## Homeworker health assessment

To assess physical, psychological and musculoskeletal health of the homeworker using validated health assessment questionnaires

- Advice and signposting where applicable to the individual
- Provision of an outcome report which details outcome; advice provided to the individual and where appropriate, advice on interventions to improve physical; mental and musculoskeletal health
- The option of a review should any changes be suggested. This assessment is standalone but can be arranged at an annual recall for those permanent homeworkers should you wish.

## Homeworkers Ergonomic workstation assessment

A remote Display Screen assessment using Zoom technology to assess the individual's workstation and workplace ergonomically.

- Provision of advice to the individual on how to set up their workstation more effectively and support on managing their musculoskeletal health whilst working from home

- Outcome report to management advising on any ergonomic equipment that may be required; advice on specialist support if any pain and discomfort is noted or fitness levels have decreased. Keeping them informed them of advice provided to the employee

## Mental Health Wellcheck

Mental Health Wellcheck appointments are facilitated by registered psychotherapists who aim to check how work issues may be impacting on an employee but also how home issues may be impacting on work. The aim of the session is to equip the employee with strategies to manage their emotional wellbeing.

## A range of health and wellbeing Webinars for Employees and Managers

Interactive, remote education and upskilling sessions which can target a number of individuals simultaneously on sleep; Nutrition; Physical Exercise and Mental Wellbeing. In addition, there is a range of webinars available which focus on supporting Managers in their role as a Managers. These include, Managing the Unknown, Wellness Recovery and Preparation after Lockdown, and Having Difficult Conversations. Please request a brochure

## PAMLife

PAMLife is a personal health and wellbeing APP for employees of health-conscious companies looking to improve the wellness of their workforce, providing individual employees with direct access to the tools and expert coaching needed to make positive changes in their lives. PAMLife focuses on Health, Nutrition, Fitness and Mind. The APP helps organisations identify trends and improve employee engagement, productivity and wellness. All this data is recorded securely and anonymously and presented at an aggregate level through reports, along with analysis, insight and recommendations.

If you are looking to return employees to the physical workplace please see PAM Group's PREP (Prepare, React, Evaluate, Protect) Programme.

