



GOSHA Newsletter **September and October 2021**

Prepare for Coronavirus!

Assess - Prevent - Reduce – Protect

COVID-19

COVID-19 continues to be a threat.

There remains no room for us to be complacent, so please continue to refer to communications from our Government:

www.covid19.gov.gg/

and, specifically in relation to workplace safety:

www.gov.gg/hse

GOSHA Activities

We have not so far organised a new programme of talks but hope that the position will be sufficiently improved to arrange a speaker with our AGM before the end of November.

We will, of course, let you know what is planned.

Subscription Fees

We did not charge a subscription fee for the current year because we knew that our ability to organize events would be so limited.

We will continue to keep our fee on hold until we can recommence a more normal programme of activities.

We are so grateful for the support of members: through your membership and a variety of ways you support GOSHA. Thank you.

Learning Lessons, Working Well

It has been great to see so many businesses in Guernsey adapting to the current circumstances in which we trade. Being knowledgeable and proactively managing the risks we face are key principles upon which GOSHA is based. The good environment, management and proactive approach taken by our Government (and in particular Public Health) have ensured life can move forward in Guernsey and businesses are in a position to trade profitably as a result.

There are many lessons to learn from the Pandemic, especially the value of knowledge and doing things to reduce and manage the risks faced. Being prepared for interruption and the effects of COVID (and other sources of interruption) have been learning events for many. The robustness of business continuity plans have been challenged and many have needed to re-adjust their preparedness for interruption to normal trading conditions. Thankfully, we have not needed to work

from home for too long but for those in that position, it has been apparent that conditions at home need to be similarly conducive to the work we are required to do as those in a workplace environment: that means ensuring the proper siting of PCs and that other equipment needed for work at home is provided and is safe.

As in the UK, some people have taken the opportunity to work from home more often and, if you do, make sure that you have a good environment in which to work. Take a look at the local HSE website. The comments under the heading *Reducing risks, protecting people* are well worth reading and reflecting upon : *those who create the risks are best placed to manage them.*

There are always helpful articles and guidance to read in our HSE website and the UK's website is, as you may expect, well-resourced and should be referred to (www.hse.gov.uk) when guidance here is more limited at www.gov.gg/hse.

An example is the **Protect Home Workers** section of hse.gov.uk. It reminds us, as does our HSE:

As an employer, you have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers.

When someone is working from home, permanently or temporarily, as an employer you should consider:

- *How will you keep in touch with them?*
- *What work activity will they be doing (and for how long)?*
- *Can it be done safely?*
- *Do you need to put control measures in place to protect them?*

Lone working without supervision

There will always be greater risks for lone workers with no direct supervision or anyone to help them if things go wrong.

Keep in touch with lone workers, including those working from home, and ensure regular contact to make sure they are healthy and safe.

Working with display screen equipment

For those people who are working at home on a long-term basis, the risks associated with [using display screen equipment \(DSE\)](#) must be controlled. This includes them doing workstation assessments at home.

There is no increased risk from DSE work for those working at home temporarily. So in that situation employers do not need to ask them to carry out home workstation assessments.

However, employers should provide workers with advice on completing their own basic assessment at home. This practical [workstation checklist \(PDF\)](#) may help them and the following video will assist too:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Af7q5j14muc

Stress and mental health

1. Home working can cause work-related stress and affect people's mental health.
2. Being away from managers and colleagues could make it difficult to get proper support.

Keep in touch

3. Put procedures in place so you can keep in direct contact with home workers so you can [recognise signs of stress](#) as early as possible.

4. It is also important to have an emergency point of contact and to share this so people know how to get help if they need it

And the team at Guernsey Mind, who have given talks to GOSHA members in the past, are excellent and well worth contacting if help is needed: www.guernseymind.org.gg