

Good practice guidance on managing working patterns

1. An important aspect of managing the provision of emergency cover outside normal hours is ensuring good management practice and, where necessary, ensuring appropriate protocols are put in place. This should reduce the difficulties arising from the unpredictability within the system.
2. Similarly, in line with good working practices, employers should ensure that staff are given adequate time to be made aware of their working patterns, as a guide, at least four weeks before they become operational.
3. Flexible working arrangements are a key element of the Improving Working Lives Standard and ensuring the effective management of the rostering process can impact on unexpected difficulties.
4. NHS Staff Council guidance on Improving Working Lives (IWL) can be found on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Partnership Group resources page¹. This substantial database of jointly agreed advice and guidance includes information on the importance of effective partnership working on health, safety and wellbeing, guidance on the prevention and management of stress at work and on the prevention and management of sickness absence. There are comparable initiatives providing similar information in each of the other UK countries (e.g. the PIN policies in NHS Scotland).
5. A series of Improving Working Lives toolkits have been produced to provide guidance to both managers and staff covering the whole range of issues within Improving Working Lives, including flexible working. Specific toolkits have also been produced aimed at particular staff groups, for example, allied health professionals and healthcare scientists. These documents can be downloaded from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Partnership Group resources page.

Pay circular (AfC) 2/2016: amendment number 36