

# Flexible Working Guide



## For Managers and Staff

## Contents Page

Introduction .....	3
Advantages of Flexible Working .....	4
Applying for Flexible Working .....	5
Permanent or Temporary Reduced Hours.....	6
Permanent or Temporary Increased Hours .....	7
Staggered Working Hours .....	8
Job Sharing.....	9
Term Time Hours .....	11
Term Time Plus Hours .....	13
Phased Return to Work.....	14
Annualised Hours.....	15
Home Working .....	17
Flexible Retirement .....	18
Useful Information & Contacts.....	20
EPUT Staff Stories.....	21
Comments and Feedback .....	25

**(To navigate through the Contents Page, click Ctrl + the title of the page you would like to go to)**

## Introduction

Welcome to EPUT's flexible working guide which we hope will help you to make some informed decisions about your role. As a working mum with a family with a long commute - it gives me great pleasure to write the foreword.

We have been championing the benefits of flexible working and see the power offering flexibility has for our staff. It makes them stay longer – feel fulfilled in their role and allows them the freedom to balance their commitments outside of work whether they are family, grandchildren, older relatives - or time to pursue personal activities or other development and work.

It is now legal to offer all staff at least one opportunity a year to request flexible working and more details about these processes and timescales are available in our flexible working policy which should be read in conjunction with this booklet. Of course the need for provision of services which meet the needs of our patients will always be top priority. But we encourage smart, modern and flexible ways of working and hope that this booklet will give you some food for thought in planning any changes to your role. Talk to your colleagues – talk to your manager - seek out other people in the organisation (and outside) who are working flexibly and consider their Do and Don't check list.

I have worked here at EPUT in different roles for about 20 years now – testament to the fact that allowing your staff to work flexibly and have a home life balance – brings huge reward for the organisation in terms of commitment and productivity. I have been supported through family bereavement, two babies, two lots of reduced hours, house moves, health issues and they are all in there and I am grateful to EPUT for supporting me through all of them by allowing me to work flexibly.

I have temporarily reduced my hours – gone part time – taken annual leave at VERY short notice – taken paid carers leave – worked from home and much more.

So we hope this guide helps you to plan and gain the balance you are looking for.

Finally we are always looking for new and innovative examples of flexible working either in terms of times and hours – or places of work. So once your new working plan is in place – do get in touch and tell us your story so that we can publish it here and share it with others.



**Jo Debenham**  
Head of Staff Engagement

## Advantages of Flexible Working

There are so many advantages to take into consideration when submitting a request for flexible working. Please see these below:

### Advantages for the Employer

- Likely to attract people to the NHS
- Reduces the need for overtime
- Can help with seasonal fluctuations e.g. winter bed pressures
- Reduces absence levels
- Improves the organisation's image
- Helps to retain staff who might leave
- Can alleviate recruitment difficulties
- Helps to cover a 24hr/365 days a year service
- Improves labour flexibility
- Reduces time off for childcare problems
- More availability of staff at peak times
- Reduces off duty problems – covering unpopular shifts
- Improves morale
- Recruit staff who would not otherwise take a post
- Possibility of extra shifts
- Can be greater sense of loyalty

### Advantages for the Individual

- Helps to achieve a better work-life balance
- Plan around personal and/or family life
- Ability to maintain professional skills without the need to retrain
- Ability to avoid stressful commute times and find a car parking space
- Employment benefits of contracted employee (compared to bank employee)
- Part of a team
- Regular salary
- Access to training and development
- Stability and security
- Holiday break
- Health issues (less stressed if regular work hours)

## Applying for Flexible Working

The Trust has a Flexible Working Policy and Procedure which are available on the Intranet. We encourage all staff to start talking to their manager as early as possible to assist with the planning of the formal application for their request. This could be in your supervision or a separate meeting.

The following documents are available on the Trusts Intranet for you to download.

- Flexible Working Policy
- Flexible Working Procedure
- Job Share Procedure
- Job Share Trial Report Form
- Flexible Working Application Process
- Flexible Working Application Form

### Important considerations when preparing your application:

- Can the service realistically cope with your proposals?
- How flexible can you be with what you're asking?  
What if your employer agrees to part and not all of your request?
- Think about whether there will be any financial impacts on your request. Will you earn less money? Will your pension be affected?
- Have similar requests been refused in the past? How will yours be different?



## Permanent or Temporary Reduced Hours

### DEFINITION

An arrangement which enables employees to work reduced hours on a permanent or temporary basis. This could include part-time working, job sharing and term time working.

The employee would be able to reduce their working hours from the hours initially contracted to work (subject to Application process). Salary would be pro rata to the Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) salary and would involve a variation to their contract of employment.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Can service needs be covered without the burden of additional cost?
- What is the impact on the rest of the team?
- Arrangements for new contracts must be agreed between the employee and manager before changes to working hours are implemented.

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

Salary and all pay related benefits are reduced pro rata to the full time entitlement e.g.

- Salary increases
- Life Assurance
- Pension
- Redundancy pay
- Holidays and Special leave/pay
- Sick pay
- Maternity Pay

QUESTION	ANSWER
How would this affect my annual leave?	Leave is calculated as pro rata to the WTE allowance.
If I reduce my hours, am I able to work outside my normal hours for the department?	Yes, but considerations would need to be given to the same issues as someone opting for staggered hours
Can I work extra hours?	Yes, if there is a service need and by mutual agreement
Can I agree to work only on certain fixed days of the week?	Yes, but only if there is no compromise to service standards or any adverse impact on the rest of the team.

## Permanent or Temporary Increased Hours

### DEFINITION

An arrangement which enables employees to work increased hours on a permanent or temporary basis.

The employee would be able to increase their working hours from the hours initially contracted to work (subject to Application process). Salary would be increased on a pro rata to the Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) salary and would involve a variation to their contract of employment.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Is there is vacancy which suits the employee's request for increased hours?
- What is the impact on the rest of the team?
- Arrangements for variation to contracts must be agreed between the employee and manager before changes to working hours are implemented.

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

Salary and all pay related benefits are increased pro rata to the full time entitlement or up to the full time entitlement e.g.

- Salary increases
- Life Assurance
- Pension
- Redundancy pay
- Holidays and Special leave/pay
- Sick pay
- Maternity Pay

QUESTION	ANSWER
How would this affect my annual leave?	Leave is calculated as pro rata to the WTE allowance or leave is now based on full-time working.
Can I agree to work only on certain fixed days of the week?	Yes, but only if there is no compromise to service standards or any adverse impact on the rest of the team.



## Staggered Working Hours

### DEFINITION

An agreement where normal working hours are varied to suit an individual's needs, whilst working the full time contracted hours for the post over the week. For example working from 10am - 6pm rather than from 9am - 5pm.

Working hours may be staggered on a permanent or temporary basis, throughout the week or just on one or two days of the week.

Allows for greater coverage of the working day by the department and provides flexibility for the individual.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Agreement with the line manager must be sought in advance and actual timings need to be defined to ensure that service needs are not compromised.
- Minimum break times must be taken during the working day according to Trust policy and relevant legislation.
- Are there any particular health and safety or security issues, which need to be considered when working outside of the normal hours?

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay and benefits are not affected on the basis that the full time hours for the job are worked over five days or less.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Could a staggered working hours arrangement include weekend work?	No, not unless your existing work pattern includes weekend work.
Could a staggered working hours arrangement allow for longer but fewer shifts?	Only if there is no compromise to service standards or any adverse impact on the rest of your team.
If my full time hours are 36 a week, could I work them over 4 days?	Yes, but you would need to work nine paid hours daily, excluding breaks.
Could I reduce my daily hours by working through my breaks?	No, a meal/rest break must be provided during your attendance hours. Note: meal/rest breaks are unpaid.
Can I work staggered hours if I work part time?	Yes, as long as the arrangement is able to meet the needs of the service.

## Job Sharing

### DEFINITION

Job Sharing is a form of part-time employment. It means that two people share the responsibility of one full-time position. The salary and other benefits are divided between them according to the hours each sharer works.

It is intended to:-

- increase employment opportunities for people committed to caring for children, partners, or other relatives;
- make it easier for employees returning from maternity leave to cope with career and family, thus retaining the benefits of their skills and experience;
- improve possibilities of career development for people who work part-time

The essence of job sharing is that the sharers accept joint responsibility for the whole job and there is a high level of interaction, communication and co-operation. Although jointly responsible for the job, individuals are accountable for their own actions.

When considering setting up a job share post the needs of the service should be looked at carefully. If it is not possible to grant an employee's request to job share, the reasons for this should be fully explained to the individual, for example, if work involving the split of caseloads may be difficult.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

The following points should be considered to establish whether a role is suitable for job share consideration:-

- Can duties and responsibilities be clearly defined and measured for each person?
- If the role requires a broad range of skills, would two or more people provide those skills between them?
- Would the role benefit from longer than the normal full time working hours per week?
- Accountabilities for each "Job-Sharer" will need to be clearly defined.
- One successful candidate can be appointed to a vacant post on a job share basis and the remaining portion advertised.

### IMPACT ON PAY & BENEFITS

Salary and all pay related benefits are reduced pro rata to the full-time entitlement e.g.:-

- Salary increases
- Life Assurance
- Pension
- Redundancy pay
- Holidays and Special leave/pay
- Sick pay
- Maternity pay

QUESTION	ANSWER
If I want to work a job share can the Trust find someone to share with me?	It is an individual's responsibility to find a job share partner, and we would encourage you to find out if anyone else in your team or department might be interested. We can help by reviewing any other person who has expressed a wish to work part time, and by placing an advert in the Internal Vacancy Bulletin.
Does a job share have to work on an equal split of time and responsibilities?	Not necessarily. It will depend very much on the requirement of the job to be shared and the skills brought to it by the job sharers.
If the person I job share with is on annual leave or sick do I have to cover for them?	There should be no contractual expectation, however if practical and possible there may be time when the other sharer can cover.



## Term Time Hours

### DEFINITION

Employees work just 39 weeks per year. Their salary is calculated over 12 months and an equal monthly salary is paid every month.

Annual Leave entitlement is included within the 13 weeks leave.

It allows for greater coverage of the working day by the department and provides flexibility for the individual.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Agreement with the line manager must be sought in advance
- Can the service accommodate or adapt to lengthy periods of absence?
- Minimum break times must be taken during the working day according to Trust policy and relevant legislation.

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay and benefits are affected on the basis that the annual salary is reduced by 13 weeks (minus annual leave entitlement). Salary is paid over 12 equal monthly instalments with a recovery clause for any overpayment if an individual leaves the organisation.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is it possible to work term time only for an agreed period of years?	No – It would need to be agreed permanently and a new application submitted when you decide to change your hours.
What if everyone in the department wanted to work this way?	It would not be possible to meet the needs of the service therefore an option would be Term Time Plus working whereby some of the holidays are worked.

**DEFINITION**

Employee’s work 39 weeks per year but increase their hours within this period to cover the 13 weeks holiday thus enabling their monthly salary to remain the same.

This type of working is more appropriate to part-time working as it is more feasible to increase the daily working hours.

Allows for greater coverage of the working day during term time and provides flexibility for the individual.

**Example**

Qualified nurse working part-time (0.5 whole time equivalent – 18.75 hours)  
 Annual Leave Entitlement 13.5 days  
 13 weeks holiday (65 days) minus AL entitlement = 51.5 days holiday (10.3 weeks)  
 193 hours need to be made up  
 193 divided by 39 = 4.95 hours per week extra to be worked

**POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Agreement with the line manager must be sought in advance
- Can the service accommodate or adapt to lengthy periods of absence?
- Minimum break times must be taken during the working day according to Trust policy and relevant legislation.

**IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS**

Pay and benefits are not affected on the basis that the part time hours for the job are worked over 39 weeks of the year. Salary is paid over 12 equal monthly instalments with a recovery clause for any overpayment if an individual leaves the organisation.

QUESTION	ANSWER
Could this be used for someone working full-time?	No, it would not be feasible to build up the extra hours needed to take 13 weeks off.
What if everyone in the department wanted to work this way?	It would not be possible to meet the needs of the service therefore an option would be Term Time Plus working whereby some of the holidays are worked
Could I increase my daily hours by working through my breaks?	No, a meal/rest break must be provided for during your attendance hours.  Note: meal/rest breaks are unpaid.

## Term Time Plus Hours

### DEFINITION

Employees work 39 weeks during term times plus commit to work a further 4 weeks per year. These additional weeks are worked as follows:

- 1 week at Christmas
- 2 weeks during the summer months
- 1 week at Easter

No additional annual leave is given. Salaries are based on 39 weeks, plus 4 weeks, divided by 12 to give a regular monthly salary.

### **Additional Floating Week**

Managers may consider it necessary to have employees working an additional week thus increasing the additional weeks to 5 per year. This additional week being used as a float that could be used by negotiation at the best possible time for the service and the post holder.

It allows for greater coverage of the working day by the department and provides flexibility for the individual.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Agreement with the line manager must be sought in advance
- Can the service accommodate or adapt to lengthy periods of absence?
- Minimum break times must be taken during the working day according to Trust policy and relevant legislation.

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

Pay and benefits are not affected on the basis that the full time hours for the job are worked over five days or less. Salary is paid over 12 equal monthly instalments with a recovery clause for any overpayment if an individual leaves the organisation.

QUESTION	ANSWER
What if everyone in the department wanted to work this way?	This arrangement could meet the needs of the service, as there is commitment to work additional weeks. Regular review periods will ascertain the benefits and concerns on both sides of the arrangement.
Could regular reviews mean that working hours are changed?	It may be necessary to readjust the arrangements if things are not working rather than them becoming imbedded.

## Phased Return to Work

### DEFINITION

Phased return to work after a period of extended leave e.g. maternity leave, career break, serious illness or prolonged sick leave. Normal hours of work are reduced initially on a temporary basis before returning to work full-time. It may be necessary to investigate the possibility of a reduction of normal hours or light duties within another department if applicable.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

#### After Maternity Leave

- A phased return to work could commence before the end of the maternity leave period after the birth of the baby
- Alternatively, a phased return to work could commence after the end of the maternity leave after the birth of the baby

#### After Career Break

- A phased return to work following an extended career break might be appropriate to allow someone to adjust to his or her work regime and duties.

#### After Sick Leave

- After serious or prolonged illness GPs or Occupational Health often recommend a phased return to work. Any recommendations must be accompanied by a medical statement/certificate indicating 'fit to return to work' and clearance from our occupational Health department with relevant guidance for the individual.

Those involved in a rehabilitation programme should include the Employee, Line Manager, HR, Staff Representative and Occupational Health department. The aim is to develop an agreed timeframe and shift pattern suited to the individual circumstances and assist the employee back to their contracted hours.

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

#### After Maternity Leave

Staff returning from maternity leave will receive pay and benefits pro rata to the hours worked.

#### After Career Break

Staff returning after a period of unpaid leave, pay and benefits will be paid pro rata to the hours being worked.

#### After Sick Leave

Staff returning after a period of sick leave will receive full pay and benefits.

QUESTION	ANSWER
How long is the set period for which I can have a phased return to work?	Normally up to 3 months. However, the exact period will be decided in conjunction with the Line Manager following guidance from the Occupational Health Department.
What is a phased return to work?	This could be a reduction in working hours or reduction in role and responsibilities.

## Annualised Hours

### DEFINITION

A contract in which hours of work are spread unevenly through the year (i.e. 37 hours per week = approx. 1665 hours per annum, taking account of annual leave entitlement, bank holidays etc.). A pattern of working a majority of hours is agreed with the employee. The balance of hours maybe held in reserve and the employer asks the employee to work additional hours to meet the needs of the service sometimes at short notice, for example during school holiday periods. Annual hours schemes aim to achieve a more even match between supply and demand for staff, by distributing hours worked to coincide with actual levels of need.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Minimum staffing and skill mix required throughout the daily work cycle and provision for unforeseen events.
- Agreement has to be reached for making roster changes at short notice.
- A limit needs to be set on how much time owing or time owed can be accumulated.
- A system for keeping track of hours worked must be agreed. For example a monthly timesheet which shows:
  - total contracted annual hours
  - schedule of hours worked that month
  - total hours worked
  - total hours remaining
  - leave due/taken

### CALCULATING HOURS

An annual hour's scheme is based on a calculation of the hours to be worked in each year in total less holiday entitlement.

Leap years can be acknowledged by calculating over a 52.25 week period. The year must be clearly defined. E.g. April to March.

Example hours:

Normal Week	Total Annual Hours	Total Working Hours (less annual leave + public holidays)
35 hours	1820 hours	1575 hours
37.5 hours	1950 hours	1687.5 hours
40 hours	2080 hours	1800 hours

A year must be clearly defined e.g. April to April.

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

If staff do not work the full time hours for the post, salary and all pay related benefits are reduced pro-rata to the full time entitlement e.g..

- Salary Increases
- Life Assurance
- Pension
- Redundancy Pay
- Holiday and Special Leave Pay
- Sick Pay
- Maternity Pay
- Paternity pay

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is an annual hours arrangement only available for part-time workers?	No, it may be possible to work full time hours over a period of less than 12 months, but great care must be taken that your working pattern does not contravene the meal/rest breaks or the rules of the Working Time Directive. Your Human Resources Adviser can advise you in detail.
If I have an Annual Hours contract, can I vary the hours I work each week?	It may be possible to vary your weekly hours providing you work your contracted hours within the agreed period. This would be as agreed with your manager and according to the needs of the service.
If I work additional hours, how is payment for these hours calculated?	All overtime must be agreed with your manager. Hours are reconciled on a monthly basis to ensure that at year end you have worked your annual contracted hours. If you have worked more than your contracted annual hours an adjustment will be made. Payment may be made for additional hours at the appropriate rate. Payment for additional hours is at the standard hourly rate until you have worked the full-time annual hours. Any hours in excess of this will be at the appropriate premium rate.
How will my annual leave be calculated?	On the basis of an annual entitlement calculated in hours. Your manager will be able to advise you in detail.
Can the service accommodate or adapt to lengthy periods of absence e.g. during school holidays?	This will vary within each directorate and will differ in clinical and non-clinical areas.
How will pay be administered?	Salary is paid over 12 equal monthly instalments with a recovery clause for any overpayment if an individual leave before completing the contracted hours for the period and a payment clause if an individual has worked for more hours than they have been paid.

## Home Working

### DEFINITION

An arrangement whereby the employee works at home for an agreed period of time.

### POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Before an agreement with an employee can be finalised, the confidentiality aspect will need to be investigated thoroughly.
- People working from home must be clear about exactly what is expected of them and how performance will be assessed.
- Setting of objectives and realistic targets

### IMPACT ON PAY AND BENEFITS

Salary and all pay related benefits should not be affected if the hours worked are exactly the same.

QUESTION	ANSWER
What support will I get from colleagues?	“Keep-in-touch meetings” will help remote workers to feel part of the team.
Does this suit all employees?	Working at home demands great self-discipline and motivation – not everyone is suited to it. Most of us rely quite heavily on colleagues and their social support. Being surrounded by the demands of family life can get in the way and complicate working from home.
What work can be done at home?	Working at home can increase productivity especially when particular reports or other written documents require uninterrupted concentration.
What work cannot be done at home?	Some roles are not conducive to home working due to access to files/ systems etc. and confidentiality aspects.

## Flexible Retirement

Flexible retirement is a great way for the NHS to match supply with demand for qualified and experienced staff in the NHS. For staff, flexible retirement is a way of increasing their normal pension schemes tax-free and a way to wind down from full time work into a life of leisure.

### How it works

As people approach retirement, managers may offer additional pension contributions in return for working during retirement. Simply stopping work and starting to draw a pension is not the only option. The main alternatives are:

- To wind down into part-time work in the ways that do not reduce pension benefits
- To step down into a less demanding, lower-paid role in a way that preserves pension entitlement from the higher-level post
- To retire and start receiving pension, but carry on with part-time or full-time work.

There is generally a mistaken belief that people moving from part-time work in the years leading up to retirement may reduce the eventual pension. In fact, pension benefits for part-time staff are calculated on the whole time of equivalent pay, so moving from full-time to part-time work, rather than retiring, will not affect the level of pension.

Leading up to the last three years of employment, employers can agree to step down their employees into a lower level role and preserve the rights of earnings gained from previous, higher-level roles. This can be a valuable staff retention tool for the managers, as it holds onto key workers who have critical skills and experience to contribute to patient care. Furthermore, it allows junior staff members to also benefit from the schemes as it enables them to develop their skills from senior staff members.

The Workforce Development and Training Department aim to provide a 'Pre-retirement' Programme designed to meet the needs of early retirees or redundant personnel. The course aims to have a varied and interesting content over a one-day period. The best time for attendees to attend is at least a year prior to retirement, this way, individuals can reflect on important retirement issues leading up to retirement.

To book your place on this one-day course – booked via study leave. Contact Sara Diffin on [sara.diffin@eput.nhs.uk](mailto:sara.diffin@eput.nhs.uk)

### Post-retirement employment

If you are retired and collect a pension it doesn't necessarily mean that you cannot resume part time, full time or temporary work. You can retire, receive a pension and resume working. If you decide you would like to return to work, you will be unable to build on your pension entitlement but at the same time it will not affect the earnings from your pension. (It is advised to consult the Pension Helpline for more specific information). The conditions attached to this option are:

- Pensioners aged younger than 60 cannot earn more through pension and post-retirement employment than their salary at retirement. Where this happens, their pension will be reduced to bring total income down to the required level.
- (Pensioners under 60 who have taken an actuarially reduced pension are excluded from this option)
- Pensioners cannot work 16 hours a week or more within the first calendar month of retirement; otherwise their pension will be suspended.

- Thousands of healthcare professionals have returned to the NHS in the last few years. No two return journeys are ever quite the same.

**Below is an outline of what options you can take in returning to work after retirement:**

- Contact the Return to Practice Co-ordinator at your local Workforce Development Confederation
- Contact the manager of the professional department you would like to return to
- Respond to a specific job advertisement

There are no specialised websites or agencies that are designed to help you choose a job that is right for your needs after retirement. You do have the option of working part time or even if you wish, continue full employment. The NHS jobs website ([www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)) has thousands of jobs with 550 trusts to choose from. You can select a particular field you wish to search for, such as, job title, location and desirable salary; simply click on search and it will match your criteria. Once searched, the results will find possible matches, which vary from: location, salary and hours of work. When searching for Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, browse by employers in the A-Z directory and find EPUT.

You may feel you have lost some of your knowledge and skills since you left. However, you will be able to brush up on your skills and be put on a refresher-training course provided by the Trust. It will be up to the judgement of you and your manager as to what refresher training you need to do the job competently again. Whatever is decided, the support will be available to ensure you can quickly become a valuable member of the team again.

All staff considering flexible retired are strongly advised to consider the implications for their pensions and we advise early planning with your own financial advisor and contact with the NHS Pension Scheme.

**NHS PENSION SCHEME** – There are two NHS Pension Schemes:-

- The 1995/2008 Scheme
- The 2015 Scheme

Detailed information about the NHS pension Scheme is available at [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pensions](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pensions)

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LPGS)** – Detailed information about the LPGS is available at [www.lgpsmember.org](http://www.lgpsmember.org)

**STATE GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME** – Detailed information about the state pension scheme is available at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension>

## Useful Information & Contacts

The Trust's Flexible working policy and procedure are located on EPUT's Intranet.

### Optima Health

Optima Health is our Occupational health provider

To book an appointment or for any queries, contact:

Address: Occupational Health & Wellbeing Service, Tern House,  
Gloucester Centre, Morpeth Close, Orton Longueville,  
Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 7JU

Telephone number: 0345 643 4368

Website: [optimahealth.co.uk](http://optimahealth.co.uk)

Email address: [ang-sa.occupationalhealth@nhs.net](mailto:ang-sa.occupationalhealth@nhs.net)

### Counselling & Employee Assistance Programme

This is available through Help Employee Assistance Programme please contact:

0800 731 8627 free 24 hours a day

Website: [www.eput-help.wellbeingzone.co.uk](http://www.eput-help.wellbeingzone.co.uk)

Access code = EPUT1

All contact remains confidential.

Produced by The Employee Experience Team.

The Employee Experience Team specialise in the overall engagement of the EPUT workforce.

We are here to support EPUT employees and signpost you to the services that the Trust can offer you internally or externally as well as organising specialist events. Please feel free to contact our team at any time and we will be happy to help you.

Hours of Operation

09:00 – 17:00 Monday – Friday

Phone: 01268 739 711

### EPUT – HR

01375 364 508

### NHS Pension Scheme

Members helpline – 0300 3301 346

### Working Families

[www.workingfamilies.org.uk/](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/)

## EPUT Staff Stories

Permanently Reduced Hours, Part Time & Job Share  
Resourcing Assistant, Thurrock Hospital

I joined the Trust in August 2003 on a fixed term, part-time contract covering a maternity leave and after a short while started on a permanent basis. I worked 18.5 hours per week in a job-share position until going on maternity leave in June 2005. I returned from maternity leave in June 2006 and requested to reduce my hours. I wanted to only work 2 days per week as I wished to spend more time with my daughter. The flexibility with my role has really enabled me to support my mother in caring for my grandmother, spend valuable time with my daughter and continue working for the Trust. This has enabled my department to retain a trained and dedicated employee.

Staggered Working Hours  
Nursing Assistant, Rawreth Ward

I have worked for the Trust for 13 years and at present work 37.5 hours per week based at Rawreth Court. I have 2 sons Jamie aged 10 & Liam aged 7. I work my hours over a three day period on a Mon, Tues and Wed. I find this very beneficial to my family life and child care issues. This also means that I can have input into my children's schooling and that I am at home at least 2 days per week to take them and pick them up from school which is important to them. My ward manager Karen MacNamara along with my colleagues are very supportive and helpful with my flexible working hours, I feel that being supported in this way has helped the Trust retain a member of staff with 13 years' experience.

Job Share  
Clerical Officer, Rochford Hospital

I have worked for the Trust for over 20 years and prior to going on my first Maternity Leave worked full time on Boleyn One Ward at Runwell Hospital. Whilst on my first Maternity Leave I applied for the post of Ward Clerk for 2 days per week at Rawreth Court. I am a part time job share working Wednesdays and Thursdays. It works well for me and I have just returned back to work after having my second child. Both my children attend the Nursery at Basildon General Hospital who have been very helpful and supportive on my return to work. It goes without saying that my colleagues on the ward have been really supportive. I feel that the Trust has benefited, as the ward have been able to retain 2 experienced members of staff.

Part time Working

Complaints Manager, The Lodge

I joined the Trust on a part-time contract working 25 hours per week initially which then increased to 27 hours. I have worked within the Complaints Department for 8 years. I work 9.00am till 3.00pm on Mondays & Tuesdays and 10.00am till 3.00pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Most times, I need to increase my hours due to work requirements and therefore extend my working day but have the added advantage that should I need to I can leave at 3.00pm. Over the years, I have enjoyed the flexibility of my role as I have been able to be there for my children, especially when they were young. I feel that the Trust has benefited from continuity and experience within the department.

Term Time Hours

Community Nurse, Canvey Island

Member of staff met with Team Leader extremely distressed as she had split from her husband who was not being supportive with her childcare needs to enable her to work, this was especially a problem during the term breaks from school. Met with team leader who discussed applying for term time contract via the flexible working policy. Flexible working form completed with a review of 6 months. Staff member retained working for EPUT community nursing team and has a supported work/life balance. She remains on the term time contact as this agreement is able to be accommodated within the team. Staff member felt very supported and much happier.

Annual Hours

Administration Officer, Harland Centre

I am on an 18 hour a week annualised contract which works out as 841 hours per year. It equates to me working 9.30am till 2.45pm five (sometimes four) days a week, term time only. However, I work one week in the middle of the summer holidays, as I could not leave my manager for a six week stretch. I review the hours on a monthly basis so by the end of each month no hours are owed either to me or by me. I drop off my two daughters at school in the mornings, then come straight into work and reverse the process on the way home. When I am needed at school (assemblies etc.) then I come into the office as soon as I can. If one of my family members is ill, I take the time off work and make up the hours by working a five day week at a later time. My manager is happy with this arrangement as she knows that we keep a tab on the hours and I make up the hours whenever I can. At the end of each month, I make sure that no hours are owed to/by me.

Working Opposite Shifts  
Nursing Assistant, Rawreth Court

Both myself and my mother work for the Trust. I work as a nursing assistant and my mother works nights at Runwell Hospital as a qualified nurse. I have a daughter Kayley aged 14 and my young sister Melissa aged 10. My mother and I share the child care. This includes sickness and school holidays, which in turn means that we only very occasionally need to apply for carers leave if one of the girls is ill. This works very well not only for ourselves but for both of the wards that we work on, due to the fact that we very rarely have to take emergency annual leave or carers leave at short notice leaving the ward hard to cover.

Increased Hours  
Community Nurse, Canvey Island

Newly qualified nurse started with us Sept '16 but lives in Maldon, Essex. Due to work load she was working over her hours continually and feeling stressed with travelling backwards and forwards 5 days a week with some additional days on bank to support the service. Was thinking of looking at leaving to work in the hospital as they work long days; she was not convinced that she would be happy to do this as she wanted to remain working in the community. Met with team leader who discussed trialling long days in the community, flexible working form completed with a review of 3 months. Staff member retained working for EPUT community nursing team, has a much improved work/life balance and is able to support the service with working bank as she has more days available without feeling stressed.

Staggered Hours  
Community Nurse, Thundersley

Nurse returning from maternity leave but needed to work set days due to child care. She had been looking at moving into practise nurse role as she would be able to work set days but felt her expertise lie within the community nursing teams. Met with team leader who discussed how we could support her in working set days. They looked at the current team structure and felt that this could be supported if she moved to a different team, to ensure optimum service delivery is maintained. Flexible working form completed with a review date of 6 months post commencing the agreed terms. Keep in touch days undertaken within the new team to ensure a smooth transition. Staff member retained working for EPUT community nursing team. Happy with the new working agreement, she is able to maintain some flexibility with weekend working as long as she is given enough notice. 6 month review undertaken and agreed to carry on with current working agreement.

Condensed Hours

*Deputy Director of HR & Communications, The Lodge*

Was working 9 days every fortnight. From the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 will be working 4 days a week full time. Working flexibly will have a positive effect as allowing me to do a 4 day week will allow me to be able to look after my grandchild on my daughters return to work.

Reduced Hours

*Community Nurse, Hockley*

Full time HCA whose wife is the main financial contributor to home. His son is disabled and they had been supporting him between them but his wife had recently received a promotion which meant that he would have to be more available at home. He was looking to reduce his hours to 0.6WTE to accommodate this. Met with team leader who discussed applying for long days the flexible working policy. This also enabled him to consider only having to reduce his working hours by 0.2WTE as these days could be worked over the 3 days. Flexible working policy given to staff member for completion. Staff member is currently considering his options as he does not need to make a decision till April but has expressed how supportive the team leader has been and that there was options available to him to consider.

Phased Return to Work

*Employee Experience Manager, Thurrock Hospital*

I have been employed with the Trust for 20 years in various HR roles. In 2002 I resigned from my position in order to care for my new baby full time. However the Trust kindly agreed to allow me a short return in order that I could retain my occupational maternity benefits. I proposed working two days a week - one of which would be based at home and this was agreed. At the end of the 3 month period when I was due to leave permanently, we mutually agreed that this arrangement was beneficial to both of us and it became a long term arrangement. My key role is to carry out HR project work which I am able to work on at home. As most people who work from home will agree – the amount of work I am able to complete in the quiet of home is almost double that which I can do in the workplace. I have since had another child and recently returned to work on a graduated return. Initially I have only worked one day per week as I wanted to gradually get used to working again after having 1 year’s maternity leave. This arrangement has enabled me to continue in my chosen career as well as spend valuable time with my children. I have also been allowed to start later in the morning so that I can take my daughter to school, and work on later in the evening to make up the time. I feel extremely loyal to this Trust, particularly bearing in mind that they have allowed me to work flexibly. On the few occasions where family requirements mean I need to swap my day, this is normally allowed. In return, on the occasions when I am required to work on a day when I would not normally, I go out of my way to be there and make alternative childcare arrangements. If the children are ill, I am allowed to swap my day and I feel totally included and involved in the work of the team which I know is not always the case with part time workers who can feel ‘out of the loop’. The Trust is extremely family orientated, and I feel has retained many experienced staff by being family friendly.

