Seminar: Remote, flexible and precarious working: Exploring occupational health policies and practices

9th October 2019

www.bps.org.uk/dop
Occupational Psychology is the applied science of people at work.

The Division of Occupational Psychology (DOP) is part of the British Psychological Society (BPS).

We aim to develop and promote occupational psychology for the public good, and we represent the interests of occupational psychologists in the UK.

Occupational psychologists are regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council, and the title of Chartered Psychologist is the gold standard in our profession.

For more information or to find an occupational psychologist, visit www.bps.org.uk.
EAWOP 2021 is in Glasgow, Scotland
Chair’s welcome, introduction & housekeeping

Dr. Joanne Crawford, IOM

www.bps.org.uk/dop
Remote, flexible and precarious working: Exploring occupational health policies and practices

Dr Joanne Crawford
Head of Ergonomics and Human Factors
Presentation Outline

- Welcome
- Historical Perspective
- Overview of the day
- Housekeeping
Historical Perspective

• Home working is not new
• Skilled 19\textsuperscript{th} century workers such as blacksmiths, seamstresses or potters made and sold goods from home
• Then the industrial revolution happened which changed everything.
Historical Perspective

- Victorian remote work included the Sewer Hunter and the ‘Pure Finder’ for the tanning industry
Historical Perspective

- Precarious work – without supporting legislation for employment, safety and health and social insurance, everything was precarious
What’s changing in the world of work

- IOM completed this work in 2010 on behalf of the British Occupational Health Research Foundation
- Glad things have moved forward from there
What’s changing in the world of work

- Increased digitalisation – access anywhere, any time
- Electronic monitoring of where and when people are
- Potentially increased informal working – some debate on how much but not easy to measure
- Difficult to access populations for those involved in precarious work
What’s changing in work?

Diagram showing different types of work patterns and employment relationships, categorized as:
- Employee sharing
  - Job sharing
- Voucher based work
- Interim management
- Casual work
- ICT based, mobile work
- Portfolio work
  - Crowd employment
- Collaborative self-employment

Source: Eurofound, 2015
Overview of the day

- Great day ahead thinking of the issues from
  - A legal perspective.
  - A health perspective.
  - Technology implications
  - What happens in practice?
  - How can such workers be supported?
Remote, flexible and precarious working: An introduction

Mr. Alan Bradshaw
Remote, Flexible and Precarious Working: An Introduction (and Case Study)

Alan Bradshaw,
Business Psychologist
Work-Life Solutions
Alan Bradshaw Intro

• Worked in stress field since mid 90s, mostly independently, but also worked as Director of MH for OH Providers
• With large orgs such as BAE Systems, easyJet and large public sector orgs – all have challenges around remote and lone working
• Developed methodology, tools and training for managing stress risks at work (recently applied to today’s topic)
• Also, a best practice framework: Awareness, Prevention, Monitoring and Responding
• Aim: to make it easier to prevent and reduce stress, and promote wellbeing at work in a sustainable way
• I wondered who I could ask for first hand experience...
And then I looked in the mirror...!

- **Remote**.. someone who is employed by a company, but works outside of a traditional office environment (50% of UK workforce to work remotely by 2020)

- **Lone**.. those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. (about 6M workers)

- **Home**... working from their homes or from other premises of their choosing other than the workplace... (4.3M)

- **Gig economy**... the trend of companies hiring independent contractors and freelancers instead of full-time employees. Workers are paid for each individual "gig" they do (doubled to 4.7M)
Let’s do a quick poll...

• Who fits with one of those definitions?
• Who fits with two?
• Who with three?
• All four?

WELCOME TO CLUB ALL4!!!!

• What’s that like? What are the risks?
Causes of work-related stress...

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

Those are mine. Yours might be different?

Source: HSE
Is there are *darker* side? (It’s not just work stress)

- Loneliness and isolation
- Physical and mental exhaustion
- Financial incompetence and lack of planning
- No one to look out for your interests
- Implications for relationships and family life
- Poor self-care (including self-medication)
- Unsafe working
- Presenteeism (working when unwell)
Case study: Remote & Lone Working at PS Regional Office

- Had previously supported in this office with intervention to manage stress risks at work
- Used two tools:
  1. Stressful Situations Profiling Tool
  2. Stress Prevention and If-then Planning Tool
- We built in an upward feedback mechanism and fed back both profiles and plans to senior management and HR
- This enabled clarity around the issues but also discussion of both organisational and management support for the office
- Plans / changes were implemented and risk management efforts continued
- Used the same approach to look at remote and lone working...
What we found – Profile  
(Top 5 ranked in order of importance)

1. IT-related issues – the more remote, the more reliant you are, the more stressful it becomes when IT goes wrong
2. Isolation concerns – personal and professional
3. Working time – work/life balance, working from home, working too long without breaks
4. Travel / getting around – getting to remote locations in bad weather; time involved, then dealing at length with traumatic incidents, then travelling back when exhausted
5. Perceived pressures to work alone when you shouldn’t – putting pressure on self to work alone when better and safer to work accompanied; self-driven by conviction...
What we did - Plans

1. IT-related issues – feeding back to org, better use of tech e.g. remote printers, sharing of workarounds
2. Isolation concerns – come in more, more joint visits, use of volunteering days
3. Working time – turn off devices, better planning, mindful about emails
4. Travel / getting around – overnighting, better recording and monitoring, taking hard copies
5. Saying no, cross-division working, setting up comms pathways before embarking on lone working
What we did – Upward feedback to Org / Managers / HR

• This was absolutely key to making a difference
• Could make them aware of those remote and lone issues having most negative impact on wellbeing locally
• Could get commitment to providing a range of support with the issues identified
• Senior managers could challenge negative assumptions being made locally about saying No and making local decisions
• HR could gain insight into local issues, cultural and behaviours locally – could then inform strategy and policy development
Outcomes and lessons?

• Clear that this 3-stage approach could be effective in managing risks linked to remote and lone working
• An upward feedback mechanism needs to be built in
• Boosted a sense of control and taking responsibility around ‘what we can do’.
• Helped challenge assumptions around ‘what we can’t’
• Enabled organisational learning
• Facilitated team cohesion and cross-division working, and reduced silo working
• Boosted support at local, management and org levels
• Yielded practical solutions
• Potential for influencing culture, behaviours and trust
Participant Quotes

“I think the general theme of feeling like we were in a safe space to problem solve and to think of ideas (even just small workarounds) to make our lives easier, has continued. The receptiveness of management to listen to our ideas, has made us feel like we do have a voice and that our problems aren’t falling on deaf ears. I wouldn’t like to say whether this is because of a wider agenda to communicate better with staff, or whether we started something, but either way it has made us feel more in control – whilst still being supported by management.”

“One of the things that I have noticed is that a number of the things we thought were barriers, are just perceived barriers and not actually true! For example, there is no problem with us booking a hotel last minute if our working day gets extended, this is something that none of us were aware about – and wouldn’t have been brought up if it weren’t for the two way communication between us and managers following the session.”
Overall Conclusions

• Working patterns generally are being totally transformed, affecting much of the UK workforce
• There are risks to wellbeing but also some benefits
• We need to get much better at managing the risks
• Inside organisations we can make a positive difference
• A 3-step approach (Profiling, Planning, Upward feedback) showed real promise as a way forward
• Care needed to avoid making assumptions
• Need to involve people in profiling and planning and build in feedback to achieve best outcomes
Thanks for listening!

Alan’s contacts:

• Email: alan@work-life-solutions.co.uk

• LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/alanbradshaw2

• Mobile: 07947 127561

• Delighted to link up with attendees, and please get in touch if you’re interested in using the tools and approach covered in the presentation.
Remote working and technology - health implications and solutions

Professor Gail Kinman
Summary

• The rise of remote working – the role of technology

• Benefits and drawbacks for wellbeing

• Risks and protective factors

• E-resilience: guidance for individuals and organisations

• The way forward
Over half of our waking hours are spent engaged in media or comms

Any media and communications activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakfast time</th>
<th>Day time</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>Post peak</th>
<th>Night time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00am to 8.59am</td>
<td>9:00am to 5.30pm</td>
<td>5:30pm to 10.59pm</td>
<td>11:00pm to 12.29am</td>
<td>12:30pm to 5.59am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11 hours of media activity is carried out in less than 9 hours of real time, and this rises to 14 hours in 9 for 16-24 year olds.

Average time spent using media and comms per day

Source: Digital Day 7 day diary
Base: All activity records for adults aged 16+ (108782), 16-24 (6910), 25-34 (16035), 35-44 (25304), 45-54 (26662), 55-64 (19918), 65+ (13953)
Remote working: the detachment of ‘work’ from ‘place’

- The act or practice of working at home (or elsewhere) using a computer electronically linked to one’s ‘place’ of employment or network

- In 2015, 4.2 million UK workers worked remotely – expected to rise to 50% by 2020 (ONS)

- Many types of work are now compatible with e-working - most common in information and communications, least common in retail
The (potential) benefits of remote working

- Reduced overhead costs for employers (space and operating costs)
- Increased productivity (up to an extra day’s work pw)
- Increased retention (50% reduction)
- Reduced sickness absence (apparently sick days are now passé)
- Reduced costs to workers (e.g. commuting – also improves air quality)
- Benefits personal relationships (can juggle work and personal responsibilities)
- Accommodates preferences for working hours/locations
- Increased job control and flexibility can enhance mental and physical health
The (potential) drawbacks of remote working

- Can past costs onto workers (power, equipment etc)
- Lack of H & S input regarding safe working practices
- Enabled intensification (flexibility means freedom to work longer and harder)
- Poorer work-life balance (by weakening boundaries between work and home)
- Increased risk of loneliness and lack of social support
- Increased risk of presenteeism (continuing to work while sick)
- More distractions and multi-tasking (so performance reduces)
- Raises expectations of availability (work and personal); reduces recovery time
- Difficulties switching off – being always on
E-mail stress - the risks

• Our heart rate and blood pressure rise when anticipating our inbox

• Stress reduces and control increases when away from email (longer-term)

• ‘Switching’ costs for concentration – lengthens the working day

• Limits face-to-face contact, getting acquainted and social support

• Emails can be misunderstood – ‘tone’ and ‘intention’

• People typically self manage, but guidance needed on ‘healthy’ technology use (especially for remote workers)
Use of ICT for boundary-spanning – individual differences

• Needs for work-life integration/separation vary

• Impact on WLB/wellbeing depends on control and satisfaction with boundary management

• **BUT**, some separation is essential for wellbeing and work-life balance

Kossek & Lautsch (2008)
Our research findings: effects of technology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>239</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>238</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Work</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships at work</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Being</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well Being</td>
<td></td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships at work</td>
<td></td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kinman, McDowall et al. 2016)
Findings: guidance and responsibility

- 57% of organisations do NOT offer guidance on healthy technology management

- Individuals generally expected to self-manage (many do so badly)

- Whose responsibility is it to manage ICT engagement?
  - 33% IT
  - 23% line managers
  - 19% don’t know

- Whose responsibility should it be to manage ICT engagement?
  - 40% - the employer
  - 10% - the employee
  - 50% - a shared responsibility

(Kinman & McDowall (2016))
The need for ‘e-resilience’

• Remote working is here to stay and will soon be the norm

• “The characteristics of individuals and organisations that help them engage with technology in a healthy, efficient and sustainable way” (Kinman et al. 2016)

• A systemic approach is required where the responsibility to build e-resilience is shared between the employee and organisation
e-resilience for organisations: 1

- Be aware of your duty of care
- Take a systemic approach to managing ICT – input at all levels
- Consider your email challenge – how could it be reduced?
- What is your email culture? Is it healthy and sustainable?
- What are your e-mail norms? Set out expectations clearly
- Identify your e-resilience role models – what strategies do they use?
- Be aware of individual differences: e.g. boundary management preferences, work centrality, personality, caring responsibilities
- Adopt a PE fit approach – accommodate preferences if possible
e-resilience for organisations

- Assess/monitor competence, awareness and training needs
- Offer mentoring and coaching
- Encourage e-courtesy, empathy and respect
- When working remotely, employees need trust, feedback and support
- Resist ‘fads’ and one-size-fits-all approaches
- No single solution can help
- Evaluate changes introduced
E-resilience for individuals

- Take control – manage technology not vice versa
- Reflect on your behaviour and habits - track your usage
- Identify your flex-style and your personal preferences for ICT use
- To what extent are they congruent with your colleagues?
- Reflect on your own emotional responses to emails – build e-empathy
- Negotiate, appreciate and respect preferences and boundaries (own and others)
- Consider what actions you can take – small changes to start
- Do something different e.g. mindfulness/relaxation
Encourage digital detoxes

- Study of 2,025 UK adults – more than a third (15M) had taken a digital detox

- 25% had spent time away from the internet for half to a full day; 20% for up to a week

- Reasons: to do other things; spend quality time with family and friends

- Easier to switch off on holidays; no WiFi destinations are a conscious choice

- 33% felt more productive; 25% enjoyed life more

OFCOM (2016)
Moving forward

- Raise awareness of the importance of recovery and the wide-ranging benefits of e-resilience
- More research needed: applied and experimental
- A multidisciplinary approach is vital
- Aim to develop a competency framework
- How can we use theory (e.g. PE fit) to frame interventions?
- How can we build e-courtesy?
- How can we help organisations anticipate the challenges posed by rapid technological change?
Thanks to Professor Almuth McDowall for 10 years of collaboration on this and other work

Gail.kinman@beds.ac.uk
ProfGailK
https://www.beds.ac.uk/howtoapply/departments/psychology/staff/gail-kinman
Discussion with Q and A

Dr. Roxane L. Gervais

www.bps.org.uk/dop
How would you best describe yourself?

- As a practitioner who aims to support remote, flexible and/or precarious workers - 52%
- As someone interested in gaining more information on remote, flexible and/or precarious workers and their working practices - 43%
- As a remote, flexible and/or precarious worker - 37%
- As a researcher of remote, flexible and/or precarious workers - 17%
What do you think are the main occupational health concerns of remote, flexible and/or precarious working?
What is needed to improve occupational health practices for remote, flexible and/or precarious workers?
Legal issues relating to remote, flexible and precarious working

Professor Diana Kloss, MBE

www.bps.org.uk/dop
Legal issues relating to remote, flexible and precarious working

Professor Diana Kloss MBE, Hon FFOM, barrister
Employment status

• There are three basic kinds of employment relationship:
  • Employees, employed under a contract of employment
  • Workers, employed under either a contract of employment or a contract to provide personal services
  • Self-employed, in business on their own account

• There are many cases on the distinction between them because employment rights depend to a large extent into which category an individual falls
A further complication!

- A binding contract depends on mutuality of obligation
- If an employer agrees to offer work to an individual if and when it becomes available but does not promise to provide any work at all and...
- An individual does not promise to accept an offer of work if offered to him....
- There is no ‘umbrella’ contract, merely a series of short term agreements as and when work is offered and accepted (zero hours contracts)
Leading cases

• Autoclenz v Belcher (2011)
• Pimlico Plumbers v Smith (2018)
• Uber v Aslam and Farrar (2018)(on appeal to the Supreme Court)
• IWU(GB) v Roofoods Ltd t/a Deliveroo (2018)
Special cases

- Agency **Workers** Regulations 2010
- Fixed Term **Employees** Regulations 2002
- Part-time **Workers** Regulations 2000
The duty of the employer

- Duty to take reasonable care
- Duty to undertake a risk assessment
- Duty owed to employees and third parties affected by the employer’s undertaking
- NB Duty to provide statutory health surveillance owed only to employees

- Civil: common law of negligence: duty to take reasonable care to prevent foreseeable injury
- NB Action for breach of statutory duty abolished ERRA 2013
The duty of the employer

• The employer’s duty of care under both criminal and civil law covers both physical and mental health
• AND as a general rule it doesn’t matter whether the individual is an employee or not as long as the damage is foreseeable
Employment protection: statutory rights

Employees have the right to be given a written statement of terms and conditions, to complain of unfair dismissal (Employment Rights Act 1996), to claim a redundancy payment, to be protected against unlawful discrimination (Equality Act), to be protected by the Working Time Regulations 1998 eg be given breaks and paid holidays of 28 days a year, to receive National Minimum Wage and Statutory Sick Pay, to claim Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit.....

Workers’ rights are more limited, but they can claim National Minimum Wage, are protected by the Working Time Regulations, so can claim breaks and holiday pay, are protected against unlawful discrimination, but cannot claim unfair dismissal, SSP, IIDB

Self-employed people do not have statutory employment rights
Benefits and burdens

• Insecure employment is not good for health if the individual cannot count on a regular wage, or a minimum wage, cannot claim sick pay or holiday pay, is not entitled to information from the employer, can be dispensed with at will etc etc

• BUT some people benefit from being classified as self-employed because it carries tax and National Insurance benefits, they can choose when and how many hours to work, they can fix their own fees, they can work for several different employers etc etc. These are usually people who are well paid and whose services are in demand eg occupational physicians working for independent providers

• AND employers argue that too much regulation stifles enterprise and in the long term damages the economy (but see the Lofstedt Review)
Proposals for reform

• Taylor Review: Good Work: the Taylor Review of modern working practices
• More protection for zero hours workers
• Increased powers of enforcement eg by HMRC
• New definitions of employee/worker
• Expansion of right to Statutory Sick Pay etc etc......
Legislative changes

• From April 2019 written pay slips must be given to those paid by hours worked specifying the number of hours
• From April 2020 employers have a duty to give employees and workers a written statement of the terms and conditions of employment from Day One
Workers (Definition and Rights) Bill 2019

• Private Member’s Bill

• Would merge the definition of employee and worker to give identical employment rights to both categories

• Would require an employer to give at least seven days’ notice of shifts to zero hours workers and pay a financial penalty if the shift, once accepted, is cancelled

• Would allow an agency worker to bring an unlawful deduction of wages claim against the end user as well as against the agency
The effectiveness of legal sanctions?

• All the legislation in the world will not protect an individual if it is not enforced, or it costs too much to take legal proceedings to enforce it

• Austerity has reduced the numbers of public officials engaged in enforcement eg HSE inspections

• Individuals in insecure employment usually have no trade union to protect them

• There is evidence that some laws are regularly flouted eg protection of pregnant workers. Women and Equalities Committee (HC) Pregnancy and maternity discrimination (2016)

Managing health and safety across the distributive workforce

Dr. Rachel Lewis

www.bps.org.uk/dop
OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND?

Occupational Safety and Health for Distributed Workers
Rachel Lewis, Emma Donaldson-Feilder, Karina Nielsen, Kevin Daniels & Rachel Nayani
TODAY’S PRESENTATION

- Background and Introduction
- Methodology
- Findings of research
- Toolkit elements
- Key take homes
HOW DO WE DEFINE DISTRIBUTED WORKERS?

- Workers who spend part of their work working away from a main location
- They are characterized by:
  - less frequent contact with colleagues and managers
  - less frequent contact to sources of organisational information
  - more than one place of work, compared to office, or single location-bound workers
- In addition, they are:
  - A heterogeneous group
  - Exposed to a variety of risks and hazards
DISTRIBUTED WORKERS HAVE PARTICULAR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH NEEDS

Could management and leadership be key to managing these needs?

We know leadership makes a difference to employee OSH outcomes but...

Most leadership frameworks are relational and based on assumptions of face to face contact

There are limited opportunities for line and OSH managers to observe or directly intervene with distributed workers.
METHODOLOGY

Work package 1
Literature Review

Work package 2
Interviews

Work package 3
Multi-level Survey

Work package 4
Toolkit, Report Paper

11 experts & 42 OSH practitioners

19 organisations, 40 OSH practitioners, 112 line managers, 822 distributed workers

Drew on interviews for rich descriptions and cases
Included review by expert steering group
I. LITERATURE REVIEW

FINDINGS

- No leadership frameworks exist that capture the complexities of distributed working but existing frameworks are relevant.
- Supervisor support is useful, as well as line manager commitment to safety, use of motivational language and competent leadership.
- Other factors include good communication, clear and concise communication and high safety standards.
2. INTERVIEW FINDINGS

‘It’s that constant attempt to make things safe. And also it’s talking and engaging with them, what problems do they face, and giving them that confidence that if at any time they feel unsafe or if somebody asks them to do something unsafe, they can say no and stop.’

‘You have got to be seen to practice what you preach, and if you don’t do that people won’t respect you. In a safety environment or any environment. So it’s making sure that my team, managers, supervisors lead by that example.’

‘I think the personal connection, the actual physical connection, shaking someone’s hand, sitting next to them in a room, it starts to draw you to the recognition that if that person gets hurt, there is a personal impact on you as an individual.’
INTERVIEW FINDINGS

OSH Practitioner → Line Manager → Distributed worker

Cascade → Bypass
3. SURVEY FINDINGS

- Line manager leadership impacts on health and safety of distributed workers through one to one contact
- No evidence of cascade from OSH to line manager to worker
- Evidence of the bypass was clear – but strongest impact on OSH outcomes comes from the line manager
FOUR KEY THINGS THAT OSH PRACTITIONERS NEED TO DO:

1. Get the OSH message across to distributed workers
2. Listen and understand distributed workers and their role
3. Empower and collaborate with distributed workers
4. Support distributed workers via managers
FIVE BEHAVIOURAL AREAS FOR LINE MANAGERS:

1. Transactional leadership
2. Transformational Leadership
3. Leader-member exchange
4. Health specific leadership
5. Safety specific leadership
Out of sight, out of mind?

Research into the Occupational Safety and Health of Distributed Workers

Less well-defined workforce and recent changes to more flexible working patterns are introducing challenges to today’s workplaces. One of these transformations is exemplified by the way many workers spend at least some of their work time working away from a main office or location. Leading the occupational safety and health of these distributed workers is challenging, due to less opportunities for face-to-face contact and potential issues of access to safety, health and wellbeing resources.

The goal of this research is to understand the roles of both OSH practitioners and line managers play, to ensure the safety and health of distributed workers.

Out of sight, out of mind? - full research report
Out of sight, out of mind? - summary report

The research has generated a toolkit for OSH practitioners to enhance development of effective line management behaviours. It toolkit provides practical awareness in the form of tools, case studies and much more. As part of the toolkit you’ll also find materials to help you identify which type of leader you are and those abilities required to manage distributed workers.

Introduction to the toolkit materials video
Introduction to the toolkit materials video

OSH practitioner self-reflection framework
Interactive questionnaires
Hazards and risks

Barriers and facilitators
Top tips
Case studies

Additional materials

Managing Remote Work: Promoting the wellbeing and safety of remote workers
KEY TAKE-HOMES

• Managers have a key role to play in the health and wellbeing of distributed workers

• This will be most effective if line managers build a relationship with each worker individually

• Organisations and OSH practitioners have a role to play by:
  • Cascading - providing managers with knowledge, support and communication
  • Bypass – directly influencing distributed workers
THANK YOU

• To access the research:
  • https://www.iosh.com/outofsite

• To contact Rachel: Rachel@affinityhealthatwork.com
  Rachel.lewis@bbk.ac.uk
How can Trade Unions support remote, flexible and precarious workers?

Mr. Bud Hudspith
Unite is committed to improving health and safety in all workplaces.

Union organised workplaces are safer than non-organised workplaces.
You’re probably wondering why I’m here ...... ..... and so am I!
How can Trade Unions support remote, flexible and precarious working?

Bud Hudspith
Unite H&S Adviser
The Gig Economy & the fragmenting labour market
Where is Unite and what can we do?

June 2018

- Outsourced workers: 3.3m
- Casual workers: 1.2m
- Zero-hours workers: 901k
- Agency workers: 725k
- Bogus self-employed: 722k
Remote, flexible, precarious

- Employers avoid responsibility and push down terms and conditions
- Bogus self employment
- Vulnerable
- Low paid
- Multi jobs
- Avoid them!
“Lone workers have to be resilient because they are, effectively, cut adrift from the organisation for which they work, and don’t necessarily gain the support they may require to overcome a particularly difficult situation. . . . (they) require greater resilience against whatever stressful event occurs.”

A Chartered Psychologist
Lone Worker Alarms

- Face to Face checks?
- Ringing telephone
- Response teams
- 4 hours?
- “Fall down” alarms switched off
- What is the response?
Risk Assessment

• Has the employer thought about it?
• Identify the hazards
• Decide who might be harmed and how
• Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
• Record the significant findings
• Review assessment and update if necessary
A good workplace?

- Union appointed health and safety reps
- Strong union H&S organisation
- Strong H&S committees
- Good H&S procedures and agreements
- Good training
Safety Reps Rights

- consultation
- information
- inspections
- investigations
- time off
“Rather than expecting people to adapt to a design that forces them to work in an uncomfortable, stressful or dangerous way, ergonomists and human factors specialists seek to understand how a product, workplace or system can be designed to suit the people who need to use it.”

Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors
“My employer doesn’t listen to me”

Involve the people doing the job, and their representatives

Talk and **Listen** to your workforce
Workers are the solution, not the problem!
Stress Checklist

• Is stress a problem in your workplace?
• Has your employer taken effective action?
• Have they done a stress risk assessment?
• If not, or if it is inadequate – ask for one to be done (this is a legal requirement)
• Have they acted on the findings?
• Have they got a stress prevention policy/plan?
Safe systems of work

• Do they protect the workforce . . . or the organisation?
• Do they reflect what actually happens?
Work as Imagined
vs
Work as Done
Remote, flexible, precarious

- Risk assessment
- Form of working must not increase risks
- Is workplace stress an issue?
- Is there an alternative?
- Work must be managed
- Does the system work?
- Ask your workers!
What can be done?

• ‘Day one’ rights for Insecure Non-Permanent workers
  – Equal treatment, pay and conditions
• New Regs on procurement and outsourcing
  – Limits on activities that can be outsourced
• Extension of collective bargaining rights
  – Right to bargain on behalf of indirect workers and on issues related to procurement /outsourcing
Unite is committed to improving health and safety in all workplaces.

Union organised workplaces are safer than non-organised workplaces.
Summing up and next steps

Mr. Nick Pahl, Ms. Emilia Quist and Dr. Roxane Gervais
EAWOP 2021 is in Glasgow, Scotland