Your Questions Answered – 25 March

Below are some of the questions we've received from staff regarding our response to COVID-19. We'll share more answers to questions as soon as we can so keep sending them in to using the online form (intranet only) or to Communications.Team@wales.nhs.uk Title your email STAFF QUESTION.

1. **Can staff refuse to adopt a new working pattern or attend a different venue proposed as part of risk mitigation measures/school closure response/redeployment of workforce?**

   We find ourselves in exceptional circumstances and, like our colleagues throughout the NHS, we are trying to support staff to stay well and at work.

   To respond accordingly at the scale required, we are trying to adapt to new ways of working, and at pace. Any changes to ways of working, e.g. working pattern, work location, or role should be carried out in a reasonable manner, both in terms of the notice that is given and the extent and duration of the changes.

   Wherever possible we are seeking to make these changes on a voluntary basis. If an individual has any difficulty with proposed arrangements then it is really helpful to understand the reasons why they are unable to comply or would have particular difficulty in complying, and these will be taken into account on a case by case basis. We would encourage managers and individuals to discuss in the first instance and to seek advice tailored to their specific circumstances by emailing the People and OD team at PeopleSupport.PHW@wales.nhs.uk

2. **I have had to cancel leave due to COVID. Can you please tell me if this will be carried over automatically, or do I need to do something?**

   If you have outstanding annual leave from the leave year ending 31 March 2020, please e-mail the number of annual leave hours to be carried forward to PeopleSupport.PHW@wales.nhs.uk and we will ask the ESR Team to update your ESR record accordingly.

3. **I'm waiting to do my Covid19 training so am doing the 'day job' for the moment. Will I get a letter of introduction so I can travel to and from work for the time being for my day job until I'm pulled over to Covid? I'm not able to work from home.**

   Only people working on Covid-19 or a business critical function has received a letter to enable them to move around for work during the incident. No one else should need to move around for work purposes as there is no 'business as usual' being undertaken.

   Once they are deployed to Covid-19 they will receive a letter if they are unable to work from home to undertake the work.

4. **Where teams are in the process of, or have plans to recruit staff?**

   At the present time there is no change to the established recruitment process, however as recruiting managers you are encouraged to take a pragmatic approach:
   - If the post is not essential to the organisation's response to COVID-19, can a recruitment be paused for the time being?
   - If you need to press ahead with the appointment, consider the use of Skype to conduct the selection process.
   - If you've already made an appointment and this has been confirmed but you now find it difficult to induct a new employee at this time, can the new employee's start date be deferred?
   - Where a start date cannot be deferred and work cannot be easily established, can you consider whether the employee can provide support to the COVID-19 contact centre in the short term?

   If you wish to discuss the circumstances of a particular appointment then please e-mail the People and OD Team on
   PeopleSupport.PHW@wales.nhs.uk

   Recruitment Services have also provided the following information:

   From Wednesday 25 March 2020 – the Recruitment Helpdesk will be open from 09:00 to 16:30 each day for the foreseeable future. The helpdesk number is 029 2090 5353. Recruitment Advisors will be on hand to assist with recruitment queries, although there is likely to be a slightly longer waiting time than normal.

   The recruitment mailbox for Public Health Wales (Central.Recruitment@wales.nhs.uk) remains in operation. However, it should be noted that the Recruitment Advisors will have limited access

and **we strongly advise that you communicate to the recruitment team using the communications function on Trac.**