

# MANCHESTER INSTITUTE FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY

## LONE WORKING POLICY

### **Purpose:**

The aim of this policy is to alert therapists working from MIP and at home of the risks presented by “lone working”, to identify the responsibilities each person has in the situation and to describe procedures that will minimise such risks.

It is intended to give therapists working from MIP and from home a framework for managing potential risky situations.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to therapists and trainees working alone at MIP and at home.

### **Therapists Working from MIP - Safeguarding Issues**

- \* Where possible, therapists should only be working where there is at least one other person from MIP in the building.
- \* Make sure that the admin at MIP knows you are working in the building - when you start and end.
- \* Make sure that you have your mobile phone and charger with you at all times.
- \* Make sure that you have the MIP Safeguarding Lead contact numbers stored in your phone in case of emergency situations.
- \* Make sure that the “client you are working with” has been adequately assessed by yourself or by the referral processes at MIP.
- \* Make sure you feel safe working from your therapy room at MIP - and ensure that you and your clients know of exit points when working from MIP.
- \* Ensure that you use the “clocking in/card” system on entering and exiting the building.

### **Therapists Must Ensure:**

- \* That the therapy room door is unlocked
- \* That they keep their phone nearby in the therapy room in case of emergency
- \* That they take responsibility for risk assessing whether the room is a safe and suitable therapeutic space

## **Security:**

- \* That the front and rear exit doors of MIP are lockable
- \* Make sure you have the alarm code for the alarm system at MIP.

### Questions to ask yourself

1. Could you get locked in at MIP? (with or without your client)
2. Could you get locked out at MIP? (with or without your client)
3. Is someone else in the building when you have a new client? This is for safety and to make the client aware that you are not alone in the building.

## **Therapists Working from Home**

### **Reflections:**

- \* How safe might you feel working alone?
- \* Will you be working alone for part or all of the time?
- \* Do you have safeguarding procedures in place?
- \* Does somebody know when you are working - beginning and ending sessions?
- \* Do you have a “buddy system” in operation?

### **Security:**

- \* Is the outer door of your property lockable?
- \* Can you get locked in (with or without your client)?
- \* Can you get locked out (with or without your client)?
- \* Is there an additional exit door to your property?
- \* Does your client know of the exit door?
- \* You must have your mobile phone with you in and out of the therapy session.
- \* Have you considering having a “panic” button installed in your therapy room?

### **Assessment Procedures:**

- \* Have you done an adequate risk assessment procedure, either online or by phone before seeing your client?
- \* Be prepared to say “no” to offering therapy if
  - (1) the client is unsuitable for therapy
  - (2) if you feel uncomfortable with the client
  - (3) don't succumb to financial (or any other) pressure to take on every potential client.
- \* Have you talked through with your supervisor your “lone” working policy?

- \* It might be important to obtain personal details before agreeing to meet.
- \* Do you need to make amendments or additions to your current lone/working safety arrangements?

*This policy will be reviewed every 18 months and updated a minimum of every 36 months.*

*Revised January 2021*

