

Enabling and Supporting Staff in a Hybrid Era

Background

I have been tasked with moving my teams to a Hybrid working solution, this is to reduce estate reliance on Admin and Clerical staff within the health board, and to improve services for clinical teams. A change of site will be taking place by the end of 2022, due to this; a smaller office footprint will be available for my teams.

The initial outlay of costs for a new building will be saved in long term by the reuse of our current accommodation by clinical teams, this is line with our Healthier Mid and West Wales plan. The strategic goal is to move Unscheduled Care and Scheduled care to one site, supporting the rest of the health board through an improved community support network.

The re-use of our current building will be part of this improvement moving community physio/ diabetes and other services closer to the patient population of the health board. This along with joining other HR (Human Resources) functions into a single base will provide better working practices. An initial investment of hardware is needed for staff to work from home; over the long term this investment will be repaid with staff not using additional electric and fuel within the current sites.

Methodology

A literature review and staff survey were used to generate data and determine trends in relation to Hybrid working. Open and Closed questions were used to get a better understanding from staff what their expectations of Hybrid working are.

The use of qualitative and quantitative research supports the findings within the research paper.

The survey targeted the teams undertaking the move to Hybrid working within Bank and E-Rostering Teams. The online survey was available in English and Welsh (on request). It was sent to 14 staff; the return rate was 100%.

Key Findings

The want for Hybrid working – 60% office working with 40% home working was the favoured response with no staff selecting 100% office working.

What is your ideal balance between remote working and office-based working?



Systems and Digital Tools – 'They have the power' - all staff felt they had the systems and digital tools required for Hybrid working.

Home Offices: The new normal? – The majority of staff already had a home office set up to support Hybrid Working.

Are you working at home on an office desk or other table?



The need for social connection - All employees requested the need to be able to link in with their teams through virtual coffee breaks or team meetings. This was in line with the research conducted; employees want to feel part of a team even when working from home.

Key Findings (cont.)

Does this have an impact on Development and Wellbeing? According to the survey most of staff feel it does not with 12 of the 14-feeling development would not be affected and 13 out of the 14-feeling wellbeing would be the same. Further work to review this impact will continue post rollout.

What should Hybrid look like? The survey and research suggest that staff should be given the ability to choose, allowing them to plan their lives around their workload and having the ability to plan their personal lives around their work instead of it being driven by employment.

The boring bit: According to the survey; all staff have undertaken all work from home risk assessments and read the home working guidance; this shows how much of a priority Hybrid working is for employees they are ensuring there are no issues from a governance perspective to stop them working from home.

Conclusion

Hybrid working is here to stay, the research and surveys support this viewpoint, employees are likely to prioritise health and wellbeing over work since the pandemic and Hybrid working fits in with this mindset.

The team can work from home; staff feel empowered by being given the opportunity and trust to work as they need. Communication and feeling like a team are still important; the survey points to staff not wanting to lose this due to work being a large part of most people's social circles.

Ensuring staff have the benefits of Hybrid working while managing the risks will need to continue to be reviewed, understanding the impact on productivity and wellbeing will be a priority.

Recommendations from the research are set out in a Petcha Kutcha presentation.

Acknowledgments

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Daniel John Michael Owen
Senior Workforce Manager:
Bank & E-Roster

Company Profile

Hywel Dda is a **health board** that supports the health of West Wales, across the counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. They employ 13,000 staff.