

RT001 – Lone Working Policy

Policy Name: RT001 – Lone Working Policy

Policy Owner: Rutland Therapists

Written and Agreed: August 2026

Review Date: August 2027

1. Purpose

Rutland Therapists is committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all therapists working within the practice.

Due to the nature of our work, therapists may work alone, at different times and from different locations. This may include face-to-face therapy, online therapy, administrative work and working during evenings or outside usual working hours.

Lone workers may face the same risks as those working alongside others; however, there may be an increased risk if immediate help or support is not available should something go wrong.

This policy sets out the arrangements and reasonable precautions in place to support safe lone working within Rutland Therapists.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all therapists working as part of Rutland Therapists.

Lone working includes any situation where a therapist is working without another person immediately available to provide assistance.

This may include:

- providing one-to-one therapy;

- working from therapy rooms or other agreed locations;
- working at different locations from other Rutland Therapists;
- working during evenings or outside usual working hours;
- working from home;
- providing online or telephone therapy; and
- undertaking administrative work alone.

All therapists are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and following the arrangements set out within this policy.

3. Professional Responsibilities

All therapists working within Rutland Therapists will:

- hold appropriate professional indemnity insurance;
- maintain appropriate professional registration or membership with BACP and/or NCPS, as applicable;
- work within their professional competence and relevant ethical framework;
- undertake appropriate clinical supervision;
- familiarise themselves with this policy and associated documents; and
- raise and discuss any concerns that may affect safe lone working.

No therapist should undertake or continue lone working where they reasonably believe that doing so would place themselves or another person at unnecessary risk.

4. Lone Working Risk Assessment

Therapists should consider the risks associated with the location and circumstances in which they are working.

Each therapist should complete and review **RT001B – Lone Working Risk Assessment** for the location(s) from which they regularly work.

The risk assessment should consider, where relevant:

- safe access to and exit from the premises;

- security of the building;
- parking and lighting, particularly when working during the evening;
- access to a charged mobile phone and telephone signal;
- fire and emergency arrangements;
- whether other people are present within or near the building;
- the ability to summon assistance if required;
- any known concerns relating to a client; and
- check-in/check-out arrangements where appropriate.

The risk assessment should be reviewed if working arrangements or locations change, following an incident or near miss, or where a new risk is identified.

Where a significant risk is identified, appropriate action should be taken before lone working continues.

5. Working Alone With Clients

Therapists should use their professional judgement when arranging and undertaking sessions with clients.

Where information is known that may indicate an increased risk, consideration should be given to whether additional precautions are required.

These may include:

- changing the appointment time or location;
- ensuring another person is present within or near the building;
- agreeing additional check-in arrangements;
- offering an online session where appropriate; or
- discussing concerns with another therapist or clinical supervisor.

Therapists are not expected to continue a session if they feel threatened, intimidated or unsafe.

If at any point a therapist feels that their safety may be at risk, they should prioritise their own safety and may end the session, leave the premises and/or seek assistance as appropriate.

6. Keeping in Contact

When working alone, therapists should ensure that a nominated person is aware of where they are working and approximately when they expect to finish.

Where appropriate, particularly when working late, in an unfamiliar location or where an increased risk has been identified, a simple check-in/check-out arrangement should be agreed with another therapist or nominated person.

The therapist should confirm when they have safely finished.

If an expected check-out is not received, the nominated person should attempt to contact the therapist. If contact cannot be made and there is reason to believe that the therapist may be at risk, appropriate action should be taken. This may include contacting the therapist's nominated emergency contact and/or the emergency services, depending upon the circumstances.

7. Emergency Contact Details

Each therapist must complete **RT001A – Emergency Contact Details Form**, providing up-to-date details for a nominated emergency contact.

Emergency contact details will be stored securely and will only be accessed where there is a genuine concern for the therapist's safety or wellbeing, or in an emergency.

A nominated emergency contact may be contacted where:

- there is a genuine concern for the therapist's safety or wellbeing;
- the therapist has failed to complete an agreed check-in or check-out and attempts to contact them have been unsuccessful; or
- an emergency has occurred and contacting their nominated person is considered appropriate.

Therapists are responsible for informing Rutland Therapists if their emergency contact details change and for completing an updated **RT001A – Emergency Contact Details Form** where necessary.

Client confidentiality must be maintained throughout any lone-working or emergency procedure. Only the minimum information necessary should be shared.

8. Personal Safety

When working alone, therapists should:

- keep a charged mobile phone accessible;
- know the full address of the location from which they are working;
- be aware of exits and how to leave the premises safely;
- ensure doors and premises are appropriately secured;
- take additional care when arriving at or leaving premises after dark;
- consider parking and their route to and from the premises;
- avoid putting themselves at unnecessary risk; and
- act on any situation or behaviour that causes concern.

Therapists should not ignore concerns simply because an incident has not occurred. If something does not feel safe, the therapist should reassess the situation and take appropriate action.

9. Emergencies and Incidents

In an immediate emergency, therapists should contact **999**.

Each therapist working with Rutland Therapists will ensure that the other therapists are aware of where they are working and their expected working times, so that each therapist's whereabouts are known when lone working.

Any significant incident, threat, aggressive or inappropriate behaviour, near miss, or situation in which a therapist has felt unsafe should be recorded using RT001C – Lone Working Incident / Near Miss Form and, where appropriate, discussed with the other therapists and/or clinical supervisor.

Following an incident or near miss, RT001B – Lone Working Risk Assessment should also be reviewed to determine whether any additional precautions or changes to lone-working arrangements are required.

Where an incident relates to an individual client, consideration should also be given to whether any client-specific risk assessment or future working arrangements need to be reviewed.

10. Online and Home Working

Therapists working from home or providing online or telephone therapy should ensure that they have:

- a private and confidential working space;
- appropriate security for client information and electronic devices;
- access to a telephone in case of emergency; and
- appropriate arrangements for responding to safeguarding or immediate risk concerns.

Therapists should not routinely disclose their private home address to clients unless the address is intentionally being used as an agreed therapy location and appropriate risk considerations have been addressed.

11. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All information relating to lone working must be managed in accordance with Rutland Therapists' confidentiality and data protection arrangements, including the requirements of UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Each therapist working with Rutland Therapists (RT) is responsible for maintaining their own appropriate registration with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Information about a therapist's location, emergency contact or a client should only be shared where necessary and proportionate.

RT001A – Emergency Contact Details Forms contain personal information and must be stored securely, with access limited to those who may reasonably need the information in an emergency.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where:

- there is a significant incident or near miss;
- working arrangements or locations change;
- a new risk is identified;
- experience indicates that existing arrangements need to change; or
- relevant professional or legal guidance changes.

All therapists are responsible for raising any concerns or suggested improvements relating to lone-working arrangements.

Related Documents and Guidance

Rutland Therapists

- **RT001A – Emergency Contact Details Form**
- **RT001B – Lone Working Risk Assessment**
- **RT003 – Confidentiality Policy**
- **RT004 – Safeguarding Policy**
- **RT007 – Online Therapy Policy**

External Guidance

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety Executive guidance on lone working

- BACP Ethical Framework and relevant guidance
 - NCPS Code of Ethical Practice
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Policy Agreement

We confirm that we have read, understood and agree to follow **RT001 – Lone Working Policy** and the associated lone-working arrangements.

Name: Kim Searle _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name: Lou Burt _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name: Catherine Andrew _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____