

DOCUMENT TITLE: JOB SHARE POLICY.

KEY POINTS:

- Job sharing is an arrangement whereby 2 people voluntarily choose to share and take the responsibility of 1 full time post.
- The purpose of job sharing is to provide flexibility, support the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy and improve our ability to recruit and retain staff.
- A job share register is held in the personnel department for anyone interested in job share opportunities in the Trust.
- Posts which have been identified as suitable for job sharing by the manager will be advertised as such.
- The recruitment and selection process is the same as current procedures except that in determining the suitability of a job share partnership, the selection panel must be satisfied that the proposed pattern of working meets the demands of the post.
- In the event that a job share partner leaves, the remaining partner may be offered a full time appointment if it is not possible to recruit another individual to job share, or else the full time post may be advertised.
- Job sharers will hold individual contracts based on the agreed work arrangements.

ACTION REQUIRED

Where possible, leavers should be made aware of above scheme and all requests for job share should be positively considered.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTION

Line Manager/Service/Heads of Department

WEST DORSET GENERAL HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

JOB SHARE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust endorses the principle of Job Sharing. It recognises that the option of job sharing opens up a range of career opportunities to those who, out of choice or necessity, cannot work full time. It also recognises that job sharing represents a flexible and innovative response to the management of human resources within this Trust and is an integral part of its Equal Opportunities Policy and initiatives on recruitment and retention of staff during the 1990's.
- 1.2 Job sharing is an arrangement whereby two people choose to share, and take the responsibility of, one full time job, the salary and benefits being divided between them according to the amount of time they each work. Each person's terms are equivalent to those of a full time member of staff, though pro rata.

2. VOLUNTARY ARRANGEMENT

- 2.1 West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust supports job sharing as a voluntary arrangement on the part of both management and staff.
- 2.2 In practice, this means that appointing officers may offer whole time equivalent posts as suitable for job sharing. Whole time posts may not, though be advertised only as suitable for job sharing since such an arrangement would preclude those who, out of choice or necessity, wish to work whole time.
- 2.3 Similarly, appointing officers may agree to whole time staff in posts moving to share their posts where such a request is voluntarily made.
- 2.4 Although there is no compulsion on appointing officers to agree to job share proposals made by either staff in post or applicants, appointing officers are encouraged to have regard to the equity of such proposals and current Equal Opportunities legislation as well as to the needs of the service, including the improved opportunity to recruit and retain staff.
- 2.5 Further, there will be no compulsion on whole time staff in post to share jobs unless they voluntarily express a desire to do so. Nor shall those making applications for whole time work in the Trust be compelled to consider job sharing instead.
- 2.6 This Trust's Job Share Policy is neither based upon or related to the Department of Employment's Job Share Scheme (which replaced its Job Splitting Scheme).

3. JOB SHARE REGISTER

- 3.1 A 'Job Share' Register will be maintained in the Trust's Personnel Department. This will be a voluntary register whose main purpose will be to provide a 'matching service' to applicants and existing employees wishing to make linked job share applications.

- 3.2 Inclusion on the register will be open to employees and non-employees who are interested in job share opportunities with the West Dorset General Hospitals Trust.
- 3.3 Those who register will be asked to specify the work, specialities and location (if appropriate) in which they are interested, as well as the hours of work and salary/grade which they would like to apply to them.
- 3.4 It will be the responsibility of new job share applicants to contact potential 'partners' on the register.
- 3.5 From time to time the Personnel Department will place general advertisements in the internal vacancy bulletin and local press inviting people to place their names on the register.

4. **JOB SHARE OPPORTUNITIES**

4.1 Vacant Posts

- 4.1.1 Where an appointing officer decides that a vacant whole time post is suitable for job sharing, he/she should notify this to the Trust's Personnel Department when the vacancy is released. The phrase 'suitable for job sharing' will then appear prominently under the advertising copy and in the Trust's vacancy list.
- 4.1.2 Where application forms are requested, the standard covering letter should advise applicants to indicate on return of their application if they wish to apply as a job share as well as being considered for full- time employment. It should also advise applicants that a job share register is available in the Trust's Personnel Department should they wish to make a linked application.
- 4.1.3 All posts should be considered as having potential for job sharing unless there are practical reasons preventing this.

4.2 Existing Post-Holders

- 4.2.1 An existing full time employee may formally apply to their manager for a job share arrangement to be agreed in respect of their post. Where the manager agrees to the request, a job share vacancy should be notified through the Trust's Personnel Department. The post-holder may consult with the Job Share Register to explore the possibility of finding suitable job share applicants. If this is unsuccessful, the post should move to advertisement and single job share applications be invited. It would be reasonable to advertise the post no more than twice in a twelve month period.
- 4.2.2 Only when a suitable candidate is appointed will the existing employee be able to commence job sharing.
- 4.2.3 If the manager is unable to agree to a request for job sharing, the reason will be explained to the applicant.

5. SELECTION PROCEDURES

- 5.1 The short-listing and selection of job share applications will be carried out in accordance with current recruitment practices.
- 5.2 At the selection stage, each short-listed candidate should be interviewed separately according to current procedures.
- 5.3 However, it is important that prospective job sharers meet each other before the selection stage, preferably after short-listing. The responsibility for arranging this rests with the applicant. To assist in this, job share candidates should be informed as to other short-listed candidates by the Personnel Department (or manager if recruitment is being carried out directly).
- 5.4 Members of interviewing panels will not treat job share applicants any differently than other applicants except that in determining the suitability of a job share partnership, the selection panel must be satisfied that the proposed pattern of working meets the demands of the post.
- 5.5 In the event of only one job share application being received for a whole time post advertised as 'suitable for job sharing' the applicant cannot be selected for interview unless they have indicated on applying that they would be prepared to work whole time if necessary. This will be explained to job share applicants if they are not selected at this stage.
- 5.6 If, at the short-listing stage, one half of a joint/linked application is rejected, the successful half should be given the option of continuing to the selection stage either with any unlinked short-listed job share applicant or as a whole applicant if they indicate a preparedness to work whole time. Similarly, if one half of a joint/linked application proves unsuccessful at the selection stage, they should be rejected. The remaining partner should be offered the option of being considered as a whole time applicant should they wish.

6. CONDITION OF SERVICE

- 6.1 Each job share partner will hold a contract of employment. The postholders' job share title will be given to the full time job with the endorsement - part time (job share).
- 6.2 Job sharers will be paid pro rata to the full time rate for the number of hours worked. Commencing salary and increments where applicable will be determined in accordance with normal practice. Individual sharers may be offered different rates of pay within the agreed salary scale.
- 6.3 Job share partners will qualify for Casual/Essential Car User Allowances in the same way as a whole-time post holder. Eligibility for Crown Cars will be determined by individual partner's work-related mileage and economic viability in line with the Trust's Lease Car arrangements. Alternatively a Crown Car might be shared between the job sharers if this is practical.
- 6.4 The hours to be worked will be individually stated in each partner's contract. Total hours will not exceed the established full time post. Each job share partner

will not work less than an average of 16 hours a week. Job sharers' hours will only be changed by mutual agreement. Management consent to flexible working hours or varying patterns of duty by job share partners must be sought and, subject to exigencies of service, will not be unreasonably withheld.

- 6.5 The work may be divided in a number of ways (e.g. with each partner working mornings/afternoons only or Wednesday through to Wednesday or even term-time/holiday time). Sharers and management should agree an established working pattern at the outset.
- 6.6 It may be necessary within this pattern that job sharers have a period of 'overlap' on a regular basis. When this is necessary, it should be part of the established pattern of work and will be contained within the working week.
- 6.7 Each job share partner will need to work more than the standard hours for the job before overtime payments are applicable.
- 6.8 The 8 statutory holidays will be allocated between the sharers on a basis agreed between them and acceptable to management. Annual leave will be pro rata to the average contracted hours. Job sharers may be required to increase their hours temporarily to cover the annual leave or short term sickness of their partner. Any temporary cover lasting more than four weeks must be by agreement with the sharer.
- 6.9 Job sharers working at least half of the standard hours of the whole time post will automatically be brought into the NHS Superannuation Scheme. If they do not wish to join they should sign a form SD502 in order to opt out.
- 6.10 Job sharers will be entitled to maternity leave as laid down by statute and/or their conditions of service. Payment during maternity leave will be pro rata to the average contracted hours.
- 6.11 If one partner in a job share arrangement leaves, the post may be offered as a whole time post to the remaining job sharer.
 - When the remaining partner does not wish to work whole time, the single job share post will be advertised after the job share register has first been consulted to try and find a suitable candidate. The post should be advertised at least once.
 - The remaining sharer may be offered extra hours temporarily, but is not compelled to take them.
 - If after 1 month after the last advert, another suitable job share partner cannot be found, and it is necessary to cover the post whole time, the remaining job share partner will, wherever possible, transfer to another post accommodating as far as possible the hours of work already agreed. The job sharer will be given a minimum of 3 months' notice of the transfer.
 - Only when all the above options have been exhausted will the termination of employment of the existing job sharer be implemented. This provision will be included in the Contract of Employment and must

be explained at the time of selection.

6.12 All rights which are available to full time staff for training opportunities will apply to job sharers including access to personal study facilities. The Training Department can advise on the availability of courses, of part time study, including open and distance learning.

6.13 Job sharers will be considered for promotion in the same way as full time employees.

The Trust will review the operation of the provisions of this policy one year after the implementation of the policy, in consultation with the staff organisations.

Existing job-sharers will be asked to comment on the working of the policy as part of this review.

WEST DORSET GENERAL HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

JOB SHARING - SOME BASIC QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS JOB SHARING?

1.1 Basically, job sharing takes place when two people with comparable skills and experience volunteer to share the responsibilities of one full-time position with the hours of work being split normally on an hourly, daily or weekly basis.

2. WHO CAN APPLY FOR A JOB SHARE?

1.2 Anyone who is currently working for the West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust or who is looking to work with the West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust.

3. DO I HAVE TO HAVE ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES TO APPLY FOR A JOB SHARE?

3.1 No. You don't have to have any special circumstances or reasons to be considered for a job share.

4. HOW DO I GO ABOUT FINDING A JOB SHARE PARTNER?

4.1 If you are already working for the West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust:

- You may formally apply to your manager for a job share arrangement to be agreed in respect of your post. If your manager agrees to your request you can make a joint application for a job share with someone from your own department or another department who is also interested in job sharing the same post as you.
- You can refer to the job share register held by the Trust's Personnel Department in order to find someone suitable who is interested in sharing your job and also willing to submit an application to this effect.
- Once you indicate your wish to job share, and your manager has agreed to this arrangement for your post, the other half of your job will be advertised as a vacant half of a job share up to twice in one year to enable a suitable candidate to be found.
- If you are returning from maternity leave and wish to request to job share your own post, you must notify your department of your intention at least three months prior to your return. If it is agreed that your post can be organised on a job share basis this will give management sufficient time to try to find a suitable job share partner for your return. If you can give us more than three months notice this will provide an even better opportunity for a partner to be found.
- You can complete an application form for entry to the job share register

and be considered for job sharing other posts than your own.

- Only when a suitable candidate is appointed will it be possible for you to commence job sharing.

4.2 If you are now looking for work with the West Dorset General Hospitals Trust you can submit a joint application with someone who is also interested in the same post as you. You can also contact the job share register for this purpose.

NB: Please note that all job share applications will be considered under the same selection procedure as single applicants and each partner will hold an individual contract.

5. **CAN I JOB SHARE MY PRESENT POST EVEN THOUGH THIS POST HAS ALWAYS BEEN FILLED ON A FULL TIME BASIS?**

5.1 Yes, as long as you fulfil the conditions mentioned in 4 above. Whilst there are no legal rights enabling you to do this, West Dorset General Hospitals Trust and its managers are fully committed to their Equal Opportunities Policy. Your manager will usually be able to provide a job share opportunity either in your existing post or a similar post. If your manager cannot accept your application he/she will explain the reasons to you.

6. **WHAT IS THE JOB SHARE REGISTER?**

6.1 There is a job share register which is maintained by the Trust's Personnel Department at Trust Headquarters, for your reference. This comprises a list of people who wish to work on a job share basis with the West Dorset General Hospitals Trust. You can get on to this list by completing a job share register application form. To obtain an application form you should write to the Trust's Personnel Manager. You may see this register at any time if you are considering job sharing.

7. **HOW WOULD THE WORKING HOURS BE ARRANGED BETWEEN MY PARTNER AND ME?**

7.1 Working hours can be in one of a number of combinations. For example:

- Your partner works one week and you work another week;
- Your partner works 2½ days;
- Your partner works mornings one week and you work afternoons and vice versa;
- Your partner works term-times and you work during school holidays.

8. **WHAT HAPPENS IF MY PARTNER LEAVES?**

8.1 If your partner leave the post will be offered to you as a full time post.

8.2 If you do not wish to work full time the other half of the post will be advertised and the recruitment process put into motion after the job share register has first been consulted to try to find a suitable candidate.

8.3 If no suitable job share partner can be found by your manager, and it is

necessary for the post to be covered on a whole time basis, you will be required to transfer to a suitable alternative post accommodating as far as possible your currently agreed hours of work. You will be given a minimum of three months notice if this has to happen.

- 8.4 Only if all the above options have been exhausted will your employment with the West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust be terminated.

9. **CAN I APPLY FOR PROMOTION WHILE JOB SHARING?**

- 9.1 Yes. And your job share partner can apply for promotion jointly or if your partner is not ready for this then you can apply for promotion on your own.

10. **WILL I BE CONSIDERED FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING COURSES WHILE I AM JOB SHARING?**

- 10.1 Yes. All staff development and training courses which are available to full time staff will be equally available to you. The Training Department also has details of training arrangements for staff who cannot attend full time courses.

11. **WHAT ARE MY LEGAL EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS?**

- 11.1 The minimum requirements of a job share is that you work an average of at least 16 hours a week, therefore, under statutory employment law an average working week of 16 hours plus, in some cases, 2 years employment with the West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust will mean you would be covered by all statutory employment legislation and benefits. You must remember that job sharing is meant to extend the benefits and rights of full time employment to those people working shorter hours.

12. **CAN I STILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPERANNUATION SCHEME?**

- 12.1 Yes, if you are working at least half the standard hours of the grade you can join or still contribute to the Superannuation Scheme. In fact those employees working half the standard hours of the grade will automatically be brought into the scheme unless form SD502 is completed to opt out of the scheme. However, if you work less than half time you cannot join the scheme or remain in it. Alternatively, any member of staff can now make their own pension arrangements.

13. **WILL I GET ANY OF THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS?**

As far as possible all benefits will be those provided to full time staff but provided to you pro rata.

13.1 **Paid Annual Leave**

Yes, all job sharers get paid annual leave in proportion to average weekly hours in the same manner as full time workers.

13.2 **Maternity Leave with Pay**

Yes, provided you satisfy the qualifying conditions in the same manner as full

time staff.

13.3 Sick Leave with Pay

Yes, provided you satisfy the qualifying conditions, you will receive sick pay in proportion to your average weekly hours in the same manner as full time workers.

13.4 How about time off for Public Duties and Trade Union Duties and Activities

You will get time off with or without pay in accordance with the terms of Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 in the same manner as full time employees.

14. **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DECIDE TO GO BACK TO FULL TIME WORK?**

14.1 You can go back to full time employment in one of three ways:

- You can apply for any vacant post within the West Dorset General Hospitals NHS Trust on a full time basis;
- You can apply to assume full time responsibility for your post when your job share partner leaves;
- You can agree with your partner that he/she applies for another job share post.