

Sir Jim Mackey,
CEO NHS England
Jim.Mackey@nhs.net

By Email

15th December 2025

Dear Jim,

Unite's formal opposition to the announcements regarding hybrid and homeworking

Unite members were shocked and in some cases left distraught by the announcement on 10th December that there would be a requirement to work 60% of the week in an office and that home working contracts would no longer be issued. We feel that the stark announcement shows no regard or empathy with staff and the upheavals and uncertainty they have been experiencing since the Prime Minister's announcement to abolish NHSE.

We are extremely disappointed that there were no discussions in partnership on these issues and that these announcements were presented as a *fait accompli*.

Unite members believe that the announce change to 60% in the office is arbitrary and has no evidence-based rationale. The position smacks of distrusting staff. It takes no account of changing office locations, and the added stress and cost which more, and potentially longer commutes will have. It also takes no account of office capacity and is massively disruptive to people who have planned their lives around the current working arrangements.

Evidence strongly supports the benefits of home and hybrid working for both productivity and mental health. For example, a King's College London study (2025) found a 10.5% productivity increase following remote work adoption. Similarly, the CIPD (2025) reports that 73% of UK managers believe remote employees are as productive as office-based staff, with 41% of employers noting productivity improvements under flexible arrangements.

Mental health benefits are equally clear: Cambridge University research (2024) shows improved job satisfaction and mental health, particularly for women and those using flexible schedules. The NIHR systematic review (2023) confirms that homeworking generally enhances well-being by reducing stress and offering greater autonomy, provided isolation risks are managed.

With regards to the homeworking contract announcement, Unite members are equally dismayed. This has substantial equalities implications, and we are fearful that it will only be a matter of time before existing homeworker contracts will be changed. It is worth noting that we have no objections to staff working in the office if they so choose, though it must be a personal preference.

We are asking the DHSC change its position and issue a new statement reassuring staff that the current hybrid and homeworking arrangements and policies will remain following feedback. This matter is a red line to Unite members. If there is no retraction, we will have no option to start seeking members views on a formal dispute.

We hope that NHSE will take our position seriously and respond to us within a week.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Munn on behalf of Unite at NHSE
Unite National Officer, Health

Cc - Rachel Allsop, Ben Morrin, Pete McCurry and Matt Tagney

References

- King's College London (2025) Study on productivity gains from remote work. Available at: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk> (Accessed: 12 December 2025).
- CIPD (2025) Flexible and hybrid working report. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Available at: <https://www.cipd.co.uk> (Accessed: 12 December 2025).
- Cambridge University (2024) Research on job satisfaction and mental health in flexible work arrangements. Journal of Demographic Economics.
- NIHR (2023) Systematic review on homeworking and well-being. National Institute for Health and Care Research. Available at: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk> (Accessed: 12 December 2025).