**Ymarfer 13**

**Lone working**

Working alone carries increased risk because any dangers faced are encountered alone. For example, should a lone working employee become ill, have an accident or suffer an injury there isn’t anyone to assist them. Working alone can also make you more vulnerable to violence, theft or antisocial behaviour, as you may be seen as an easier target.

Different types of employees face different hazards when lone working. NHS staff, social workers and security personnel may face challenging behaviour from the public; estate agents and utility workers have to enter properties alone and salespeople can spend a lot of time on the road, putting them at a higher risk of road traffic accidents. Construction workers, engineers and surveyors are especially vulnerable to accidents or injury on site.

Therefore, lone worker risk assessments must be carried out for each individual job role and environment to ensure that the full picture of risks is understood.

The most commonly cited risk factors employees face in the workplace were outlined in the Health and Safety Executive’s (HSE) Health and Safety Statistics Annual Report, which highlighted that the biggest risk factor across all workplaces is ‘dealing with difficult customers, patients and pupils’ (65%).

Physical risks – including lifting/moving (59%), chemical/biological substances (52%), repetitive movements and slips (50%) and trips and falls (49%) – make up the majority of the other risks listed.

Being a lone worker doesn’t increase the likelihood of the majority of the risks outlined above – but if an incident occurs, there isn’t anyone else available to summon help.