

## **Policy Statement**

Modern Slavery is a crime that results in an abhorrent abuse of human rights. The Modern Slavery Act 2015, referred to as the Act, created offences of slavery, servitude and financial or compulsory labour.

## **Definitions of Modern Slavery**

Slavery, following the 1926 Slavery Convention, is the status or condition of a person over whom all or any of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. Since legal ownership of a person is not possible, the key element of slavery is the behaviour on the part of the offender as if he or she did own the person, which deprives the victim of their freedom.

Servitude is the obligation to provide services that are imposed by the use of coercion and includes the obligation of a serf to live on another person's property and the impossibility of changing his or her condition.

## **The Policy**

### **Forced or Compulsory Labour**

This is defined in international labour law by the International Labour Organisations (ILO) Forced Labour Convention 29 and Protocol. It involves coercion, either direct threats of violence or more subtle forms of compulsion. The key elements are that, work or service is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the person has not offered him/herself voluntarily.

### **Debt bondage**

Victims of forced labour may also be victims of debt bondage, where they are tricked into working for little or no money to repay a debt.

An employer or controller will use different tactics to trap the victim in an endless cycle of debt which can never be repaid and may even be passed on to their families. Poverty, threats, violence, surveillance and imprisonment are used to make sure they cannot leave or get help. Debt bondage can also be a significant factor in human trafficking. Victims may be offered a job abroad with "free" transportation, or they may borrow money from the employer/controller for travel and a job finding fee. Once they have arrived they then find the job either does not exist or is not what was originally offered, and are trapped trying to pay off the debt.

### **Human Trafficking**

An offence of human trafficking requires that a person arranges or facilitates the travel of another person with a view to that person being exploited. The offence can be committed even where the victim consents to travel. This reflects the fact that a victim may be deceived by the promise of a better life or job, or maybe a child who is influenced to travel by an adult. In addition, the exploitation of a potential victim does not need to have taken place for the offence to be committed. It means that the arranging or facilitating of the movement of the individual was with a view of exploiting them for sexual exploitation or non-sexual exploitation.

## **Child Labour**

This is defined by the ILO as children under 12 years working in any economic activity, those aged 12-14 engaged in more than light work, and all children engaged in the worst forms of child labour.

This policy is for adult providers only.

## **Compliance Requirements**

The transparency in supply chains provision within the Act seeks to address the role of businesses, across all sectors preventing modern slavery in their supply chains and organisations. The following guidance sets out how businesses can meet these requirements, as set out in the Act.

There is a requirement that any commercial organisation, in any sector, which supplies goods and services, and carries on a business, or part of a business, in the UK and is above a specified total turnover, must produce a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year of the organisation.

Regulations have set the total turnover threshold at £36 million,

The statement must set out what steps they have taken during the financial year to ensure modern slavery is not occurring in their supply chains and their organisations.

The Act requires businesses to be transparent about what is happening within their business, therefore if the business has taken no steps to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place, they must still publish a statement stating this to be the case.

Failure to comply with the production of a modern slavery statement for a particular financial year could mean an injunction through the High Court (or In Scotland, the Court Proceedings for Specific Performance of a Statutory Duty under Section 45 of the Court of Sessions Act 1998) requiring the organisation to comply. Failure to comply with the injunction is a contempt of a court order which is punishable by an unlimited fine. In practice, failure to comply with the provision will mean the organisation has not produced a statement or published it on their website in the relevant financial year.

## **Smaller Organisations**

Where there is no requirement to produce a statement, organisations are encouraged to voluntarily produce a slavery and human trafficking statement, especially where they are contracting with organisations above the threshold. We, as a small provider may be asked to provide such a statement to commissioners of services, suppliers etc on our approach to modern slavery and find it helpful to have such a statement, hence this policy.

All businesses are encouraged by the Act to be open and transparent about recruitment practices, policies and procedures in relation to Modern Slavery and to take steps that are consistent and proportionate with their sector, size and operational reach.

Our supply chains include procurement of staff, consumables, facilities maintenance, utilities and waste management. We will conduct a risk assessment and ensure that further steps are taken to support the eradication of modern slavery, that staff understand how to recognise modern slavery and the appropriate safeguarding reporting processes are followed should there be concerns within our supply chains, with customers or suppliers.

### **Reporting**

When staff believe there is a possibility of a modern slavery situation, they must in the first instance report it to their manager who will then take it forward by reporting it to the Modern Slavery Helpline via telephone, 08000121700, or online, <https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/report>.

This policy has been approved by the Director Prompt Healthcare Staffing