**Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment Project**

**Update to Care Providers and Partners- March 2025**

Core focus of the Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment project and the fund is to match displaced migrant workers with new sustainable sponsored work in the care sector.

Government has made some recent announcements; the YHIR programme would like to raise awareness of these.

**Salary threshold**

The Home Office has announced an increase to the minimum sponsored salary threshold for care workers and senior care workers from £23,200 to **£25,000 or £12.82 per hour, whichever is higher**. It is standard practice to update this and other salary requirements across work visa routes each year, this ensures these salary requirements continue to reflect the latest pay situation for UK workers.

The full statement of changes is available here: [Immigration Rules: statement of changes - GOV.UK](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fcollections%2Fimmigration-rules-statement-of-changes&data=05%7C02%7CSarah.France-Gorton%40northyorks.gov.uk%7Caad874684bce46ccbfb408dd621211b0%7Cad3d9c73983044a1b487e1055441c70e%7C0%7C0%7C638774551919176031%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=BN2z575PTVEamWqzbR9mO6fwEObbFDnq9fiDRen9pOM%3D&reserved=0)

**Important Reminder**: The rate change **only applies to the certificate of sponsorships that are new, extended or renewed after the April change**, existing certificate of sponsorships retain the min sponsorship salary that it was at the time of issue (i.e. if issued between April 2024 and March 2025 this would be £11.90/£23,200). In addition to sponsorship regulations employers must also meet UK law, and therefore the National Minimum Wage increase to £12.21 per hour will impact on all workers, including sponsored migrants.

Illustrative example: COS issued 1st May 2024 for a 3-year sponsorship. The min salary to meet conditions of sponsorship are £11.90/£23,200 whichever is highest. This worker must be paid a min of £11.90/£23,200 from 1st May until 5th April 2025, and £12.21 from 6th April 2025, the workers must be paid at least national min wage up to 30th April 2027, and if the sponsorship is renewed/extended from 1st May 2027 they must be paid at least what the min sponsored wage is as of May 2027.

Care Providers are concerned regarding the pay differential between sponsored workers and domestic workers, therefore one way to minimise this differential and minimise cost is to issue sponsorship licences for longer periods. The outlay is larger upfront, if the person leaves prior to expiry this pro rata unused time should be repaid by UKVI. A quick reminder that the worker would have the opportunity to apply for citizenship after 5 years qualifying period in the UK.

Changes are also being made to the rules concerning deductions from an applicant’s salary. These changes are being made to ensure for consistency with how paid allowances for the same purposes are treated and to mitigate against sponsorship costs being passed on to applicants. Quick reminder that *sponsorships costs cannot be passed onto the worker in any circumstance*, and also that *lawful deductions from wages must never result in the worker receiving less than the national minimum wage*.

You can find more information in YHIR employers guidance here: [Employer Guide; Sponsoring and supporting migrant workers in the care sector > NY Resourcing](https://nyresourcing.co.uk/yorkshire-and-humber-regional-international-recruitment-hub/help-for-adult-social-care-employers-sponsoring-workers/employer-guide-sponsoring-and-supporting-migrant-workers-in-the-care-sector/)

**Prioritising Sponsored Migrants in the UK - Changes to relating to international recruitment of care workers**

International recruitment plays a valuable role in our adult social care workforce. However, with increases in international recruitment, there have also been unacceptable increases in unethical practices and the exploitation of international recruits in the adult social care sector.  Providers found to be unethical in their practices are having their licence to sponsor international recruits revoked. This has led to a significant number of dedicated adult social care workers who have been displaced from their original employer and potentially left without work, through no fault of their own.

Significant work has been ongoing across government, in collaboration with the care sector, to ensure high standards across the immigration system.

Our Yorkshire & Humber International Recruitment partnerships is working hard to prevent and respond to unethical international recruitment practices in the sector.  We are prioritising support for international recruits to understand their employment rights and to support individuals to switch employers and remain working in the care sector when they have been impacted by their sponsor’s license being revoked.

The Home Office has announced first steps to deliver on their manifesto commitment to ban rogue employers from sponsoring overseas workers.

**From 9th April, care providers operating wholly in England who wish to recruit a new worker from overseas, or those switching from another visa route, will have to first prove that they have attempted to recruit a worker from within the UK who is already in the route and needs new sponsorship**. This ensures that those who came to the UK to pursue a career in adult social care can do so.

Providers will need to work with Yorkshire and Humber regional partnership colleagues to recruit from a pool of workers impacted by revocation **before** they can sponsor a care worker or senior care worker from another route or from overseas.

The new rules will not apply to international workers who are already being sponsored as a care worker (SOC 6135) or senior care worker (SOC 6136) or where providers are seeking to sponsor someone switching from another immigration route who has already been working for them for at least three months. This means providers can continue to renew sponsorship of their existing care workers in the normal way and care workers can continue to switch sponsors.

The full statement is available here: [Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fquestions-statements.parliament.uk%2Fwritten-statements%2Fdetail%2F2025-03-12%2Fhcws515&data=05%7C02%7CSarah.France-Gorton%40northyorks.gov.uk%7Caad874684bce46ccbfb408dd621211b0%7Cad3d9c73983044a1b487e1055441c70e%7C0%7C0%7C638774551919133401%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LhffeUEeA6GgiLSqdicAAUwMeKOpUCnDGXXgeLqVttE%3D&reserved=0)

As this is a very new announcement, we await further detail regarding supporting processes, we appreciate that the devil is in the detail here and that there may be unanswered questions. Meanwhile YHIR are here to help Care Providers recruit and sponsor new Care Workers that are already in the UK, in our region through the care workers sponsored migrant route.

We have at least 600 workers in the region seeking new sponsorship, the Government are indicating that we need to secure these workers sponsored employment before we seek sponsor workers from other immigration routes.

**Year 3 Funding**

To support the Government’s aim to secure in country sponsored care workers new sponsorship and provide good sustainable employment in the sector, the Department for Health and Social Care have confirmed that they are providing funding for a 3rd year, although the fund will be lower (circa 80% of the current fund).

We know that securing ethical, complaint and good sponsorship for displaced workers is the core priority of the fund and therefore the YHIR steering board is commencing the planning for a year 3 programme delivery.

A reminder regarding the update provided in February regarding Bursaries available to Care Providers and Workers is available [**here for you**](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fnyresourcing.co.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2025%2F02%2FComms-Feb-2025-17.2.25.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) :

**Key Messages**

YHIR work closely with UKVI, Home Office and DHSC to raise migrant workforce issues and gain information about the latest policies and approaches. In the last update we shared with you that there is a very clear message that if Care Providers wish to engage migrant workers, they need to sponsor them directly in a compliant way and not via additional hours.

In addition to this YHIR predict that UKVI will recommence the issuing of curtailment letters; these are the instructions to individuals whose sponsorship has come to an end that they must find new sponsored work within 60 or return home. This has been temporarily paused by UKVI. We do not know the exact plan around this however when reintroduced it is expected that this will have a significant impact. The availability of workers will reduce, employers will need to sponsor staff directly if they want to use international workforce and those reliant on additional hours will need to find new ways to cover work demand. There is a concern that workers are over relying on additional hours instead of core sponsored work, and Providers are engaging workers on additional hours to have maximum flexibility.

We encourage Care Providers to consider this now, so as to be prepared.

We look forward to helping you further.

**Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment Programme**