**Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment Project: Update to Care Providers and Partners- June 2025**

The Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment project has a core focus on matching displaced migrant workers with new sustainable sponsored work in the care sector.

Last month the Government published the [Restoring control over the immigration system white paper](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6821aec3f16c0654b19060ac/restoring-control-over-the-immigration-system-white-paper.pdf) ; a following update was issued on 1st July 2025: [Major immigration reforms delivered to restore order and control - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-immigration-reforms-delivered-to-restore-order-and-control) which subject to parliamentary approval will come into effect from 22 July 2025. The YHIR project team want to communicate our local position. Whilst some details are available, more will follow, so this note focusses on the immediate impact of the paper in the Adults Social Care Sector.

**Key messages to the Care Sector**

Our key message to those working in the care sector is please do not panic; the paper announces the end of overseas recruitment for Adult Social Care, but this is about stopping the ability to recruit **new** care workers from abroad from 22nd July 2025.

International care workers who are already legally working in the sector are permitted between now and 22nd July 2028 (‘the transition period’ which is being kept under review) to continue to do so.

Where they (sponsored migrant workers) may need to change employer, they are permitted to participate in in-country switching. This means that where a worker has been displaced, they are able to apply for other jobs (so long as they continue with working rights). It also means that care providers can continue to be able to access students and individuals on the graduate route who have played a vital role in workforce capacity in recent years (providing they have been an existing employee for 3 or more months prior to switching route).

The switching will be limited to:

1. Health & Care visa holders whose most recent sponsorship was under SOC 6145 (6135 since April 2024) Care workers and home carers’ or 6146 (6136 since April 2024) ‘senior care workers’ and;
2. Individuals switching from other visa routes who have been legally working for the sponsor as a care worker or senior care worker for at least three months at the date of the application. This means that, for example, a student who is working in the social care sector part-time, could apply to continue working in the sector on a skilled worker visa during this transitional period. Further details will be set out in the Governments sponsor guidance in due course

At the end of the transition period (22nd July 2028), international care workers will be able to continue to extend their stay, change sponsors and apply to settle, subject to the settlement rules in place at the time (Government will consult on settlement rules later in the year). These arrangements include those who need to switch employers following a sponsor licence revocation.

It is important that, for both international and domestic care workers, the sector continues to offer ‘good’ work. This means being able to evidence full time, genuine vacancies with guaranteed work and sustainable pay. This is important for compliance with both UK employment law and minimum sponsorship requirements when taking on an international care worker.

The window of opportunity to recruit talented international care workers is closing. As a sector we know that the overseas pipeline has been critical to sustaining our capacity and being a home office approved sponsor will enable employers to secure the maximum available workforce available to them in the UK now and in the future. Those employers that do not have a sponsorship licence will only have access to domestic workers, and workforce data has persistently demonstrated a decrease in this pool of people.

Additional hours being completed by international care workers with either expired or revoked sponsorship are not permitted. If you wish to engage a migrant workforce, you will be required to sponsor them.

We are aware of concerns about incurring additional costs when sponsoring international care workers, but the evidence suggests that there is a return on investment:

* Offering longer term sponsorship ‘locks in’ the minimum salary rate for sponsored migrants that isn’t subject to retrospective/subsequent increases. (pay in the next tax year, is typically overtaken by the national minimum wage and therefore removes the wage differential- see e.g. below)
* Whilst the sponsorship licence costs are incurred, the c£1k per year Immigration Skills Charge is significantly lower than agency costs and given retention is higher owing to sponsored migrants’ inability to work in other sectors such as retail/hospitality, a reduction in recruitment costs are also realised.
* The Immigration Skills Charge will be increasing by 32% (date to be confirmed) therefore more cost effective to sponsor now at this rate, than further down the line when increased.

Whilst we await further details of the Governments White paper, typically new rules are applied to new sponsorship arrangements and existing arrangements are typically honoured.

**The future of international recruitment in adult social care**

It is worth noting that ‘new’ immigration into the sector had reduced significantly prior to the white paper announcements. In *March 2024,* the home office stopped new dependent visas for care workersand in *April 2025* they introduced the need foremployers to seek international care workers from the regional hub, before they could apply to seek workers from abroad. These changes have significantly reduced the number of people entering the UK on a care worker visa.

From 22nd July, the requirement introduced in April 2025 for providers to first attempt to recruit from the pool of workers impacted by sponsor non-compliance, as per the redeployment pool process, and the administrative role for the regional partnerships in UKVI’s process **will cease**. However YHIR will continue our role supporting displaced workers into new employment in line with programme funding.

It is likely that once the details are published on the white paper announcements, there will be increased expectations on both sponsors and workers. These include:

* the level for ‘skilled workers’ will return to RQF 6 or above (graduate/degree equivalent will be a min requirement)
* the Salary thresholds will rise.
* the Immigration Skills Charge will rise (first time since 2017), by 32% in line with inflation.
* International care workers (and their adult dependents) will be required to speak or learn English *(current requirement but may be strengthened),* and to demonstrate language progression for any visa extension
* the Points-Based System for settlement and citizenship will be reformed including an increase to the standard qualifying period for settlement to ten years. NB. There is an opportunity for individuals to reduce the qualifying period by demonstrating contributions to the UK economy and society (employment in the care sector is likely to contribute to this).
* Greater regulation and scrutiny, with priority action being taken by the home office to prevent illegal migration, overstaying, exploitation and undercutting; as well as activity to address concerns of exploitation and abuse in the adult social care sector
* increasing the threshold requirement of international students and reducing the ability for Graduates to remain in the UK after their studies (to a period of 18 months rather than current 2 years).

**The future of recruitment in adult social care**

In addition to changing the rules around international recruitment, the White Paper makes important statements about recruitment in the sector more generally.

The White Paper acknowledges that there aren’t enough people working in social care, and says it wants to fix this by creating Fair Pay Agreements. These agreements will let workers, employers, and others in the sector work together to improve pay and job conditions.

The White Paper also commits to improving the use of data by central government to understand the alternatives to migration and implementing new requirements for workforce strategies where there are high levels of recruitment from abroad. They are looking to explore how they can incentivise investment by employers in boosting domestic talent, including options to restrict employers sponsoring skilled visas if they are not committed to increasing skills training.

Given the future regulation and stronger enforcement, it is imperative that the sector assesses employment practices to meet UK law in addition to sponsorship requirements.

**Key Messages to Migrant Workers**

We are aware that the white paper announcements have created heightened concern in the sector for both employers and for international care workers. Our key messages to those workers are:

* Your contribution to our sector matters
* If you are currently being sponsored as a Care Worker and you believe that you and your employer are meeting the minimum sponsorship requirements, there should be no immediate change and there is an opportunity to extend and or switch visa routes at least until 22nd July 2028..
* If you are currently being sponsored as a Care Worker but your employer’s licence has been revoked or you believe that the employer is not meeting their current sponsorship requirements; you are strongly advised to seek and gain new sponsored work to secure the ability to work in the UK. Contact us [here](https://nyresourcing.co.uk/yorkshire-and-humber-regional-international-recruitment-hub/help-for-workers-whose-employer-has-had-their-sponsorship-licence-revoked/)
* Part of your current sponsorship requirements is the ability for you to meet the minimum English language requirements. If your English language ability is not advanced, we recommend that you seek to develop this to ensure that you meet these requirements into the future.
* Many roles in the care sector require you to travel within communities and so the legal ability to drive in the UK is directly linked to your employability prospects in the sector. You are encouraged to ensure that you secure the ability to drive in the UK and have independent methods of transport.
* If you believe that you are being exploited, you are not receiving the hours or wage that you were promised, you are having excessive deductions from wages or being charged for your employer’s recruitment/sponsorship costs, you are strongly encouraged to report this. Seek help and support and prioritise finding new sponsored employment. Contact us [here](https://nyresourcing.co.uk/yorkshire-and-humber-regional-international-recruitment-hub/help-for-workers-whose-employer-has-had-their-sponsorship-licence-revoked/)

**Bursary Support Available Reminder**

Our project wants to maximise the support on offer for both Care Providers and eligible displaced workers. We have matching services covering all of the 15 places that makeup Yorkshire and Humber, and in addition to this, we are able to offer bursaries and support as outlined below.

**Care Providers Home Office Approved Sponsor (HOAS) Bursary:** This bursary is for Care Providers who do **not** currently hold a sponsorship licence, but who wish to apply to the Home Office to become an approved sponsor.

We have developed a comprehensive support package to help Providers understand their responsibilities and the commitment of being a sponsor, prior to applying.

As part of our support, we will communicate with the home office once you have submitted their application to request that the processing is expedited.

Upon approval of becoming a Home Office Approved Sponsor (HOAS), the project will reimburse the cost of the application which will either be £536 (small employer < 50 staff) or £1476 (large > 50 staff).

**Care Providers Sponsorship Bursary:** To support HOAS sponsors who make an offer of employment to a displaced worker (introduced via this project), there is a bursary of **£1750**, which can be offered subject to eligibility criteria. The project will provide support to Providers to confirm eligibility, and the bursary will be released once the worker starts employment.

**How to apply for a Bursary:** Care Providers who have vacancies available for displaced workers and want to apply for the bursaries, or to access the new HOAS support package, please email their sub-regional project contact:

South Yorkshire (includes Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, & Sheffield): international.recruitment@adassyh.org.uk

York and North Yorkshire: Makecarematter@northyorks.gov.uk

West Yorkshire (includes Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, & Wakefield): yhirwestyorkshire@bradford.gov.uk

The Humber (includes the East Riding, Hull, North Lincs, and North-East Lincs.): irf.humber@eastriding.gov.uk

For providers who operate across areas, please contact the area in which you have the most provision of care.

**Workers Bursary Visa cost:** It is recognised that many displaced international workers do not have a balance of cash available to make more than small purchases, hence the cost of applying for a new Visa once they secure a new offer of sponsored employment, can be challenging. The bursary for eligible workers provides a cash bursary of **£284** – the cost of a Visa, upon written receipt of a conditional offer of new employment. Workers eligible for this will be a confirmed displaced worker who will already be on the existing project caseload. They will be supported by their nominated Case Worker (within the local authority area that they live in) to apply for this bursary and funds will be provided upfront to enable them to pay for their Visa. Eligibility and proof of offer of employment will apply.

Since YHIR introduced the Bursary schemes the rates have been increased, the steering board will consider if there is an opportunity to increase the bursaries to mirror new rates, subject to funding and will update in due course.

**Salary Threshold Reminder:**

The Home Office has set the minimum sponsored salary threshold for care workers and senior care workers at **£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 from April 2025 are 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 Indefinite Leave to Remain after 5 years qualifying period in the UK, although the government may change this (see above).

Changes have been made to the rules concerning deductions from an applicant’s salary. *Lawful deductions from wages must never result in the worker receiving less than the national minimum wage*. Additionally, s*ponsorships costs cannot be passed onto the worker in any circumstance*.

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 - Reminder**

As outlined above, f**rom 9th April to 22nd July 2025, 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. After 22nd July 2025 it will **no longer be possible to sponsor migrants from abroad**, the only option to recruit is either in country switching (see above) or the local domestic workforce.

The YHIR regionally matching service is available to help employers recruit from a pool of in country displaced workers now and into the future, at least until June 2026.

Providers will need to work with us 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. Please use the contact details above (in the Bursaries Section) to access your local sponsored migrants matching service.

The new rules will not apply to international workers who are already being sponsored as a care worker (SOC 6135 -previously 6145) or senior care worker (SOC 6136 – previously 6146) 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) and from 1st July here: [Major immigration reforms delivered to restore order and control - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-immigration-reforms-delivered-to-restore-order-and-control)

**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).

The main uses of the fund in year 3 is to ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to deliver the matching service to displaced workers and make introductions to care providers, and also to extend the Bursary scheme to provide financial support to care providers and workers, further enabling sponsorship. In addition to this, we hope to provide some free training to overseas workers who have been matched to new employers, including person-centred dementia and end of life care, food and nutrition, cultural awareness, YH dialect.

Funding for training and developing overseas workers via LDSS

Overseas workers have no recourse to public funds but care employers can access the Learning and Development Support Scheme (LDSS) to help support the costs of overseas workers achieving qualifications and training programmes listed on the approved list.

As an employer you need to register for the scheme, complete the Skills for Care Adult Social Care Workforce Dataset (ASC-WDS) and can then claim back funds through the scheme.

For more information please visit: [Learning and development funding for adult social care](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Funding/Learning-and-development-funding-for-adult-social-care.aspx)

We look forward to helping you further.

**Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment Programme**

[Yorkshire and Humber Regional International Recruitment Hub > NY Resourcing](https://nyresourcing.co.uk/yorkshire-and-humber-regional-international-recruitment-hub/)