

Annual Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2023

Our Commitment

Whispers Care Solutions is passionately committed to maintaining high standards throughout our dealings with employees, customers, and suppliers, conducting every aspect of our business with inclusivity, honesty, integrity and openness. We will continue to review and seek feedback on our practices, to meet these standards.

Key elements that we seek to address:

Policy

We are committed to ensuring that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of our business. We have a defined clear policy for our staff and expect this to be adhered to, always. The policy is communicated to all staff, through onboarding and inductions, to encourage them to act responsibly.

Risk management

We have identified that our greatest potential risks in relation to modern slavery exist in our recruitment and in parts of our supply chain. A risk management approach has been taken to help us identify and understand the potential risks and to ensure we can respond appropriately to any challenges. We will continue to review this approach and seek to strengthen our processes.

Awareness

We recognise our responsibility to ensure staff are aware of the reality of modern slavery in the UK and worldwide. We provide online and induction training that enables staff to recognise and respond to any instances of modern slavery - during work time or otherwise. Our Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement will be updated and published annually.

This Statement has been approved by the Board of Directors and is signed on their behalf by Di Jones, Operations Director.



1st Dec 2023

Introduction

Modern Slavery can take place in a wide range of employment sectors, including social care. In addition to the potential risk to employees, people using our services may also be victims of modern slavery or human trafficking.

As a caring organisation, Modern Slavery goes against our company values which have kindness and integrity at their core. We recognise the responsibility that we have to the people that we employ and support, and are committed to preventing any slavery or human trafficking, taking all necessary steps to mitigate any potential risk.

Annual Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement reflects our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships, and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place anywhere in our business or our supply chains.

Our Organisation

Whispers Care Solutions has been providing quality care since 2017. We provide solutions that enable individuals to maintain independence in their own homes or facilitate them to return home from hospital to rehabilitate, following illness or injury, in familiar surroundings. We operate a professional care service that enables independence and choice while providing comfort, companionship and support, whether it is for half an hour a week or 24 hours a day.

Our Policies

We have policies that ensure we are conducting business in an ethical and transparent manner.

- We have an Anti-Slavery Policy which is reviewed on an annual basis.
- Whistleblowing Policy - we encourage our customers, suppliers, and employees to use the Whistle Blowing policy to report any concerns, including issues regarding Modern Slavery, to the Board. We have a process in place and clear steps to take if modern slavery was to be discovered in our business. This includes escalation to line management in the first instance, or contacting police if we believe someone is in immediate danger. If required, we would seek advice from the UK Government Modern Slavery Helpline 0800 0121 700.
- Complaints Policy. Whilst aimed at receiving complaints or concerns about our care provision or conduct, all complaints received will be fully investigated and appropriate remedial actions taken. We will work collaboratively with our social care and health partners to ensure our safeguarding policies and procedures dovetail with local procedures and best practice.
- Recruitment Policy. Our robust Recruitment practices always respect human rights by ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all. New employees are screened in compliance with right to work checks. All employees have agreed terms and conditions which accord with employment law and we have a commitment to pay our employees above national minimum wage regardless of age. We have a zero-tolerance approach to slavery, trafficking or forced labour.

- An Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy. It is our policy to promote our business being conducted in an honest and ethical manner. We are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships.

Training

We have incorporated training on modern slavery into the induction programme for all new carers. The training aims to increase awareness on modern slavery and human trafficking, explaining how to identify if this type of abuse is happening and what to do if you think it may be taking place. We will ensure that all employees are made aware of our Anti-Slavery Policy and their obligations within it.

Our Supply Chain

The main way of mitigating the risks posed by modern day slavery is to fully understand how, and on what we spend money, and the country of origin for each area of our supply chain. Our main areas of expenditure are currently:

- Recruitment
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Our Risk Assessment identifies that our priorities with respect to Modern Slavery should be in the recruitment of staff and the purchase of PPE; people are the output of the service of recruitment and due to the nature of our service our people have a requirement for PPE.

Where direct employment is not possible, we work with reputable partners and agencies who share our approach and commitment to ensuring Modern Slavery is not present in our organisation or our supply chain. All employees are paid directly by Whispers Care Solutions have a written contract of employment and will be made aware of their statutory rights including sick pay, holiday pay and any other benefits they may be entitled to.

For PPE we are working with UK suppliers where possible so that we can fully audit their premises if necessary. We seek to work with these suppliers to increase our knowledge of the full supply chain so that we can mitigate evolving risks if and when identified.

Progress and Future Actions

Whispers Care Solutions recognises that addressing the risk of modern slavery within our business and the supply chain is an ongoing process and we are committed to continual review to ensure that we uphold the commitments set out in this statement.

As no reports have been received from employees, the public, law enforcement agencies or local safeguarding teams we are confident that the steps we are taking to ensure slavery is not taking place within our business are effective.

This document constitutes our Annual Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for 2023, the current financial year. It has been published on 1st December 2021 and has been created in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.