

Heart of the South Care Agency Ltd Policies

Modern slavery statement:

This statement is made pursuant to comply with our legal obligation underlined within The Modern Slavery Act 2015. Our organisations statement sets out the steps that Heart of the south care agency Limited has taken and is continuing to take steps to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain.

Definition of modern slavery and human trafficking

Understanding for all:

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 consolidated and clarified previously existing laws that related to slavery and human trafficking. The Act categorises offences of 'slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour, and 'human trafficking. These crimes include knowingly holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them during or soon after. Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking without crossing a national border.

Areas of risk to our Business

Our policies/Our promise:

- At Heart of the south care agency Limited we supply support workers and health care workers to support people who require care throughout suppliers as such as Adult Social Care, Continuing Health Care, Supported living organisations and the Private Health care sector.
- Heart of the south supply care to 16 – 100 people, the provisions of care are supplied to the people who require care within their own homes, family's homes, supported living accommodations, hospices, care and nursing homes.
- The current COVID-19 pandemic virus exposure – Our organisation ensures that there are adequate COVID-19 risk assessments are in place to protect out service users, our employees and all others.
- Our organisation is operating in conjunction with the Government and NHS/ CCG requirements of weekly COVID -19 test and tracking, vaccinations for frontline staff.
- Exposure to our business operations restrictions – We work on reduced restrictions of using a Microsoft teams' platform, Zoom, memos and other online resources where lines of communication are required to continue with the activities of effective communication where this enables us to continue with our holistic approach with our employees and service users and other lines of business for everyday activities.

- We have our business contingency plan/pandemic contingency plan actively reviewed monthly.
- We have a COVID support officer who ensures the monitoring of all employees weekly COVID-19 testing, evidence of vaccinations and supplies are accessible, with full information support where required, in line with current legislation.
- Ongoing reminders to our employees reminding them of good hygiene measures with the use of communications and prompts through posters, memos, eLearning training, Policy and procedures, risk assessments, spot checks, and by supplying our employees and services with suitable PPE and further additional PPE such as Scrubs, face masks, Facial visors, antibacterial wipes, sanitation, hand soaps, blue roll tissue papers, handheld thermometers.
- Deep cleaning task sheets in each service to ensure each place of work has frequent deep cleans.
- All our employees are to keep us informed of any overseas holiday travel so we can manage their safe return to work.
- We remind employees of our annual leave cancellation procedures.
- Continuous monitoring of whether we have a lay off any employees with reduced pay clause in place in the event that you need to close the business temporarily.
- Ensuring the employees and service users are aware of coronavirus symptoms so they can spot it quickly and act accordingly under the government and NHS guidance.
- Careful consideration and assessments were taken to Assess whether employees can work from home instead of coming to the workplace, with a working from home risk assessment, and working from home policy and procedure in place to support this placement of work.
- We confirm the identities of all our new employees and their right to work in the UK.
- We also pay all our employees a competitive rate of pay above the National Living Wage.
- We continue to work on a performance-based pay rise scheme.
- Our flexible workforce from agency staff to our office staff.
- Our recruitment checks of identity and employment records are in line with the required regulations and legislation.
- Awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking training.
- Our ongoing commitment to employees personal and professional learning and development.
- We promote recognition schemes and employee of the month and present awards for being nominated from the whole workforce and our service users and their families, and others.
- We collect evidence-based performances throughout our provisions with quality assurances.

Policies and Procedures

- Our Anti-bullying and Harassment policy, grievance policy and Speak Up policy for support staff.
- Our Safeguarding, and Whistleblowing policy and procedures to raise concerns about poor working practices, and the prevention of any forms of acts of abuse.

- The Complaints Policy and Procedures made available to raise issues and to promote and encourage speaking up without fear of consequences, for building candour transparent working relationships.
- Our Equality and Diversity policy and procedures to ensure a non-discriminatory culture is promoted throughout our services, and a non-bias management culture.
- Our infection control COVID-19 Policy and Procedure in place to ensure the prevention of spreading of the virus, and the safety of everyone.
- Modern slavery statement understanding where action we will take if we have concerns about modern slavery and human trafficking operating in the services we provide. In our statement we have included our provisions of work, the way that operates in conjunction with The Health and Social Care Act 2018 (Amended regulations) to our services prevent and protect any potential risks of victims of modern slavery or human trafficking as part of our safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring modern slavery or human trafficking are not present in our provisions of care.

Health and Safety – Mental Health and wellbeing

- Regular reminders to our employees of any employee assistance programmes that are available to them if they have general concerns about the virus and the mental health and wellbeing this has on them or any others they work with.
- Regular keep in touch days, provided activities in full lockdown periods to stimulate staff's mental wellbeing, competitions, activities, these are provided for all our staff to ensure that we adhere to the duty of care and health, safety, and wellbeing of our employees.
- Regular consistent online one to one supervisions, observations and spot checks conducted under the COVID – 19 Government social distance rules.
- Online small group staff team meetings.
- Actively providing return-to-work meetings and risk assessments.
- An in-house HR wellbeing support scheme with wellbeing meetings where required.
- Providing Better Health and MIND resources and information to employees and service users.
- Provide support systems and training for ways of self-managing mental health and wellbeing.
- We pay for Peninsula counselling services which can be accessed by all staff, free of charge and includes counselling and referral services.

Training

- We have considered whether any employees are due to go to any large external events, e.g., training courses and whether attendance is now online, or the event has been cancelled.
- If training and meetings must take place, we are given assurances that the training providers provide a large room so participants can be at least two metres away from each other.
- We supply an additional eLearning course to help to understand the COVID-19 virus and ways to reduce the risk and return back to work the impact after being off from the Coronavirus.

- Creating new pathways to encourage involvement for service users and families to participate in ways of learning together, keeping one another safe under the Government guidance and as a supportive organisation.
- Promoting ongoing active personal development goals to give positive mental focus and further growth and skills and understanding.

Our company Performance indicators

The Government has relaxed the rules around compliance with modern slavery requirements. An updated Government guide makes clear that businesses must continue their activity to identify and address risks of modern slavery in their operations and supply chains but recognises the challenges presented by the virus in publishing their statement within the usual timeframe. It notes “reduced staff capacity” as one such challenge. It states that “businesses which need to delay the publication of their modern slavery statement by up to 6 months due to coronavirus-related pressures will not be penalised”. The reason for any delay to the publication should be set out in the delayed statement.

We are not legally obliged to publish this statement under the Modern Slavery Act. However, as a Health and social care provider we must operate in ways that are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998, including the right for people to be free from slavery and forced labour.

By publishing this statement, we will provide clarity to our employees, service users and their families, other professionals, other stakeholders on our role in combatting modern slavery and human trafficking and the actions that we are taking.