



## Yorkshire and Humber International Recruitment Project

### Key Updates for Care Providers and Partners; September 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.

The UK Government have invested £16 million nationally 2024-2025 to support displaced international care workers find new sponsored employment, showing their recognition of the vital skills and experience these workers bring to our sector.

### Changes to Sponsorship in the Care Sector from 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

In June the Government published the [Restoring control over the immigration system white paper](#); a following update was issued on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025: [Major immigration reforms delivered to restore order and control - GOV.UK](#) which came into effect from 22 July 2025.

The main change for the care sector is that the recruitment of overseas international workers (new to the UK), to come to work in the UK in the care sector has closed. However, from now until the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2028 ('the transition period' which is being kept under review) **care providers can still recruit and sponsor international workers who are already legally here in the UK**, this includes those on student, graduate and dependant visas (after 3 months employment with you) and those who already have a Health and Care Visa who are seeking to switch employer.

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). People who are already sponsored to work in the care sector via a Health and Care Visa can also switch employers, providing the new employer continues to sponsor them.

This is good news and care providers are strongly encouraged to embrace the skills of international workers who are legally already here in the UK, between now and 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2028 (and beyond subject to immigration policy). These workers are currently able to claim residency when they have legally worked in the UK for a 5-year period, and many of them who have already held sponsorship on a Health and Care Visa are already working towards that period, meaning you can secure their talent for the long term beyond the transition period of July 2028.

**Students and Graduates;** Individuals who hold a student or graduate visa can legally work in the care sector on those visas (students have restrictions on the hours they can work during term time)

without needing sponsorship. Please do utilise this talent now where these individuals show they are suitable applicants for your vacancies. The Government have committed to review the student and graduate visa routes, potentially reducing the Graduate Visa duration to 18 months (currently 2 years) and raising the bar for entry to the UK for study on a student visa, so this source of talent is likely to reduce in future, so please embrace this now whilst you can.

It also means that care providers can continue to offer sponsorship to those currently on student and graduate visas, and dependent visa who are seeking full time sponsored employment in the care sector (providing the individual has been an existing employee for 3 or more months prior to switching route), these individuals have played a vital role in workforce capacity in recent years.

### Feedback and thanks; displaced migrant workers.

We're fortunate in the Yorkshire and Humber to have found over 350 displaced workers new sponsored employment, here's what some of our workers have recently said about the support they have received;

*'Kindly note that I have received my visa approval today. I would like to thank you and your team for all the support you gave me. I am grateful.'* – Maryaan B

*'I have just received my 2 year visa, sincere appreciation to you and your team for all your support, thanks so much!'* – Adebukola O.

*"I also went to say a very big thank you for all assistance and support in helping me secure this job. I sincerely appreciate"* - Obinna E

### Sponsorship and Fees; briefly explained;

All UK employers who wish to sponsor workers, will need to apply for a sponsorship licence. The fee is Small or Charitable Sponsors: £574. Medium or Large Sponsors: £1,579.

Once you have been awarded a licence, if you chose to sponsor a worker under the Health and Social Care Visa scheme, you will incur the following costs;

- Immigration Skills Charge £1000\* / Year for the Certificate of Sponsorship (COS)
- Admin fee £525\* / Certificate. If you only purchase the certificate for a year and proceed to extend it for another year, you will incur the admin charge again. Hence purchasing a COS for a duration beyond 1 year is more cost effective. \*Fees as at August 2025

You **must not** recoup, or attempt to recoup, by any means, any part of the CoS fee, or associated administrative costs, from any workers you sponsor. If UKVI find you have done this, they will normally automatically revoke your licence.

## Sponsorship and Fees; briefly explained - continued

If you choose to hire legal representatives to administrate the issuing of certificates of sponsorship, or employee contracts, you **must not** pass any of these fees to the workers.

You do not have to hire legal representatives to manage your sponsorships. The YHIR project has received some intelligence that some Care Providers are being hoodwinked into thinking that they must engage legal representatives to be legally compliant sponsors. This is not the case. Please contact us if you have any concerns or questions about this.

The worker will have to pay for their own Visa (although it is permitted for the employer to pay for it if they wish) You must also **never** require workers to take legal advice nor force them to pay for these services. Note; workers on the Health and Social Care Visa route do not have to pay the Health Surcharge.

### Case Study, Hill View Care Home; Sponsorship Costs

In May 2025 Hill View Care Home sponsored Adaku, an international Care Worker, as a Care Assistant. Hill View wanted to hire Adaku in the most cost effective, but compliant way and contacted the YHIR project for guidance. They had 2 options and chose option 1.

**Option 1;** In May 2025 Hill View applied for a 3-year Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) (they could have applied for up to 5 years maximum) for Adaku. They chose 3 years as due to budget they could not commit to the 5 years, which is the maximum period allowed, at this time;

- Immigration Skills Charge (£1000 per sponsored year) = £3000
- Admin charge = £525

**The total cost for the 3 year sponsorship was £3,525.**

**Option 2;** Hill View could have chosen to sponsor Adaku on a year upon year basis over the 3 year duration, however they would have had to pay the admin charge on each application and would have been subject to any future increases to the Immigration Skills Charge making the total cost at least £4,575.

Furthermore, each time a Provider assigns a new COS, the Provider needs to pay the hourly rate associated with the current Immigration Rules at the time of issuing the new COS, as at April 2025 this is £12.82 or £25,000 (whichever is higher). As Hill View chose option 1 and only issued the COS once for the 3 year period, they have to pay the hourly rate of £12.82 until anytime in which the National Minimum Wage is increased to a rate that overtakes £12.82. As long as a provider is paying at least the higher hourly rate, whether that is NMW or the immigration hourly rate applied at time of issuing the COS, they are **not** tied to pay any new (likely higher) hourly rate associated with the Immigration Rules during the period of the sponsorship, (which is likely to increase higher than £12.82 from April 2026).

If Hill View had started the 3 year sponsorship period back in 2024 instead of paying a min £12.82, they could pay £12.21 from April 2025, saving 61p per hr hour which over a year amounts to £1,177. This savings could offset the annual sponsorship fee of £1,000. In effect for employers that pay national min wage to their workers, after year one the sponsorship licence pays for itself in terms of avoiding higher min sponsored salaries. Add in the Bursary available of £1750 (see below) and sponsoring migrants costs become negligible, especially when offsetting against avoidance of agency workers, recruitment advertising and retention costs.

If Hill View had chosen option 2, they would have to pay the salary rate associated with the Immigration Rules at the point of issuing each annual COS. This rate typically rises every year, therefore if they assign a new COS each year for the 3 year period it is more costly salary wise. Whilst it is a long-term financial commitment, assigning a Certificate of Sponsorship for a 3 year period, rather than year on year is much more cost effective, especially compared to agency worker costs. It also means the worker is less likely to seek work with other Care Providers each year as the end of their COS approaches.

## 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 **£574** (small employer < 50 staff) or **£1579** (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): [yhirsouthyorkshire@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:yhirsouthyorkshire@sheffield.gov.uk)

York and North Yorkshire: [Makecarematter@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Makecarematter@northyorks.gov.uk)

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

The Humber (includes the East Riding, Hull, North Lincs, and North-East Lincs.): [international.recruitment@adassyh.org.uk](mailto:international.recruitment@adassyh.org.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 **£304** – 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.

## Contacts and Information

For advice and resources please visit our dedicated website; [Yorkshire and Humber Regional International Recruitment Hub > NY Resourcing](#)

South Yorkshire (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, & Sheffield): [yhirsouthyorkshire@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:yhirsouthyorkshire@sheffield.gov.uk)

York and North Yorkshire: [Makecarematter@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Makecarematter@northyorks.gov.uk)

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

The Humber (includes the East Riding, Hull, North Lincs, and North-East Lincs.): [international.recruitment@adassyh.org.uk](mailto:international.recruitment@adassyh.org.uk)