

International Recruitment

Bulletin 28
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Welcome to our latest International Recruitment Project Bulletin!



Erica Lockhart MBE, Chair

Background

SESCA, in partnership with Southeast ADASS, is leading the 2024/25 International Recruitment project, funded by Department of Health and Social Care, to support southeast ASC providers, with two main goals:

- **Assist Displaced Migrant Care Workers** affected by sponsor licence revocations secure new roles with approved providers.
- **Support Providers:** Enable access to displaced workers, provide onboarding financial support, and offer guidance around compliance and best practice.

Displaced Migrant Care Worker Sponsorship Update

Our scheme is gaining incredible momentum, and **15 sponsored placements** have already been secured!

We have established a pool of highly skilled, experienced displaced migrant care workers who are ready to bring their expertise to providers in the Southeast.

The response from providers has been phenomenal— with **over 100 already approved!** These providers will be introduced to exceptional carers, backed by funding of **up to £5,000 per worker**, and expert support to ensure a smooth and successful onboarding process.

We're extremely impressed by the calibre of displaced care workers applying for support. They bring extensive experience, training, and strong English language skills, making them valuable assets to any care team.

Most of these workers are seeking roles in care homes or supported living services, rather than domiciliary care (due to the expiration of their international driving licences, and current delays in being able to obtain a UK licence).

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Funding Increased to up to £5,000 Per Displaced Worker



We have increased the amount of funding which employers can access to help offset the recruitment costs for sponsoring displaced international care workers.

How Much is Available?

Part 1: Initial Grant - £2,000 per worker

- Available for up to **three workers per CQC-registered location**
- Can be claimed **once the CoS has been assigned** to the recruited worker.

Part 2: Additional Funding - Up to £3,000 per worker

- Can be claimed **8 weeks after the worker has started employment**.
- Evidence must be provided to demonstrate **costs above £2,000**.
- Funding may be used to cover costs such as:
 - **UKVI Fees** (e.g., Immigration Skills Charge, CoS costs).
 - **Legal and Compliance Costs** (e.g., solicitor fees, compliance platform fees).
 - **Specialist Training** (e.g., English language courses, cultural adaptation).
 - **Payments to Workers for Additional Training** beyond standard induction
 - **Enhanced Induction Support** (e.g., buddying or mentoring costs).
- **Ineligible Costs:** include standard recruitment costs (e.g., uniforms, DBS checks) and expenses passed on to the worker.

How to Apply for Funding

1. **Step 1:** Employers submit an **online application** once the CoS is assigned.
2. **Step 2:** Our team reviews and confirms eligibility.
3. **Step 3: £2,000 is paid** in the next payment run.
4. **Step 4:** After 8 weeks, providers can apply for **up to £3,000 in additional funding** with supporting evidence.

Key Benefits of Sponsoring a Displaced Care Worker

- **Up to £5,000 in Funding Support!**
 - **£2,000 Initial Grant:** once job offer accepted and CoS assigned.
 - **Up to £3,000 Retention Grant:** after 8 weeks' employment to support costs inc. induction & training
- **Pre-Screened Care Professionals:** Verified care experience, strong English skills, committed to care.
- **Quick Onboarding:** SESCOA can help fast-track CoS applications and Visa renewals
- **No Relocation Delays:** Workers already in the UK, saving time and costs.
- **Free Training:** e.g. Everyday English & Buddy Training

*CoS (Certificate of Sponsorship) applications may be subject to Local Authority processing.

With applications soaring, secure your place in the scheme before it ends in June 2025. Don't miss this opportunity— [click here](#) to register your interest today.

Increasing Costs – Are You Prepared?



Update on Minimum Salary for Sponsored Overseas Carers

The Home Office has yet to confirm the new minimum salary for sponsored care workers following the National Minimum Wage (NMW) increase to **£12.21 from 1st April 2025**. At a minimum, sponsored workers will need to be paid at least **£23,809.50 per year**, based on a 37.5-hour week at the new NMW rate of £12.21 per hour.

Last year, the minimum hourly rate for sponsored care workers was set above NMW (£11.90 vs. £11.44). If this arrangement continues, we estimate a new minimum hourly rate of **around £12.70**, bringing the annual salary to **approximately £24,765**.

Key Considerations for Providers

- **Financial Impact:** Plan for a salary increase of **£1,500+ per sponsored care worker per year**.
- **Pay Discrimination Risks:** Whilst a two-tier pay structure (pre/post-April 2025 salaries) may be permissible with NMW legislation, it could lead to discrimination claims.

Official confirmation is expected from the Home Office in mid-March 2025 via a "Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules".

Proposed Increase to CoS Fees

The Home Office recently proposed plans to increase the Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) fee **from £239 to £525**, nearly doubling the cost for both new CoS applications and renewals. The proposal is awaiting parliamentary approval, but it is highly likely to be implemented before April 2025.

Top Ten Transport Tips

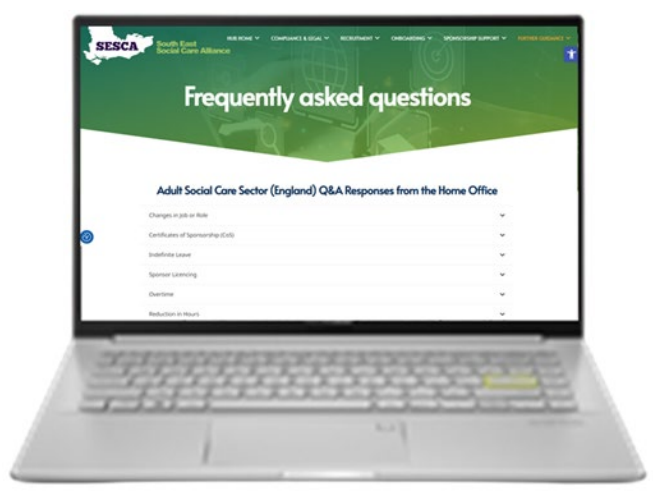
Maximizing the Potential of Staff Without a UK Driving Licence

These practical solutions were compiled following an open discussion session with home care providers, where we explored ways to overcome the challenge of sponsoring non-drivers.



1. **Pair Non-Drivers with Drivers:** to cover more service users efficiently.
2. **Proximity-Based Rostering:** assign non-drivers to nearby service users within walking / cycling distance.
3. **Public Transport Route Planning:** Focus on clients near public transport hubs and provide staff with travel cards or passes.
4. **Route Planning Software:** Invest in software to optimize travel routes and reduce reliance on drivers.
5. **Real-Time Transport Updates:** Equip staff with apps for real-time public transport tracking.
6. **Driving Lesson Sponsorship:** Offer intensive lessons and test preparation support to help staff gain UK driving licences
7. **Company Car-Pools:** Create a shared vehicle pool for staff who have obtained licences.
8. **Bike Loan or Purchase Schemes:** Provide bike loans or subsidies, including electric bikes for longer routes.
9. **Electric Scooter Schemes:** Explore loan schemes where legal (e.g., Brighton, Portsmouth, Southampton).
10. **Travel Allowances:** Offer financial support for public transport fares or bike maintenance costs.

New Home Office Q&A Resource



We've added a comprehensive Q&A resource provided by the Home Office, answering some of the most common questions asked by care providers.

This resource covers key areas, including:

- **Changes in Job or Role**
- **Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS)**
- **Indefinite Leave**
- **Sponsor Licensing**
- **Overtime & Reduction in Hours**
- **Reporting & Record Keeping Duties**
- **Supplementary Employment**

Here are just three examples to give you an idea of the wide range of topics included:

What happens if a provider loses a contract with a private client or local authority, leaving no work for their sponsored staff?

Are open contracts with councils (zero/unlimited hours) acceptable as evidence for meeting CoS requirements?

Can a staffing agency sponsor workers if they don't provide direct care services and aren't CQC registered?

With detailed Home Office responses, this Q&A addresses a broad range of challenges care providers face.

[Access the new Q&A resource here](#)

Thanks for reading our latest update!
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Skilled Displaced Care Workers Available Now!

SESCA are offering a unique opportunity to sponsor skilled overseas care workers already in the south-east. These "displaced" care workers need new sponsorship due to their original sponsor's licence revocation.

Up to £5,000 Funding per Worker

- £2,000 Initial Grant – Claimable after job offer accepted
- Up to £3,000 Retention Grant – Paid after 8 weeks' employment to support costs such as legal support, induction & training

Why Hire Through This Scheme?

- **No Relocation** – workers already in the southeast, saving you time and costs.
- **Pre-Screened Professionals** – Verified experience and English language competency
- **Quick Onboarding** – fast-tracked Certificates of Sponsorship and visa renewals

Free Training for Sponsored Workers

- Sponsored workers can access free training including Everyday English and Cultural Awareness

Act Now! Scheme Ends June 2025

If you're an existing sponsor licence holder offering genuine full-time vacancies, act now to secure skilled, dependable staff!

NOTE: Most workers seeking care homes or supported living over domiciliary care due to expired international licences and UK licence delays.

Apply at
[sesca.org.uk](https://www.sesca.org.uk)



Open to CQC
registered adult social
care providers in the
south-east.

