

International Recruitment

Bulletin 33
16th May 2025



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 (DHSC), 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.

Important Update

Under the new immigration rules introduced on 9 April, all care providers must now attempt to recruit displaced overseas care workers before seeking candidates from overseas. In addition, the recently published *Immigration White Paper* (for more information below) proposes a complete end to overseas care worker recruitment by the end of 2025.

We are currently transitioning from the 2024/25 to 2025/26 phase of the project and are awaiting further guidance from DHSC on how the scheme will evolve in response to these changes.

We are also scaling up our internal resources to meet the expected rise in enquiries and demand for displaced care workers and ensure continued support for providers.

In the meantime, to ensure compliance with the new rules, all providers must apply to our *Displaced Care Worker Recruitment Scheme* and meet our assurance requirements: This will ensure that we are able to report to UKVI that you have "actively engaged" with the scheme and considered displaced care workers already in the South-East, before pursuing international recruitment.

We are also continuing to offer grant funding of up to £5,000 per displaced care worker **until the end of June 2025** and will update as soon as possible regarding future funding and support arrangements.

**Displaced Care Worker Recruitment
Scheme – [Apply Here](#)**

What New Immigration White Paper Means for ASC Providers



On Monday 12 May 2025, the Government published a new Immigration White Paper, *Restoring Control Over the Immigration System*, with major consequences for care providers.

What You Need to Know

End of International Recruitment for Care Workers

- The Health and Care Worker visa route will close to new overseas applicants later this year meaning care assistants and senior care assistants will no longer be eligible for sponsorship from outside the UK.
- Transition period for care workers already in the UK until 2028: During this time, individuals can continue to extend their visas and switch sponsors. This does not mean they must leave the UK in 2028. Those with visas valid beyond 2028 will remain unaffected, though extensions beyond that date may no longer be possible. Further clarification from the Home Office is expected.
- Major focus on utilizing 10,000 displaced overseas care workers already in the UK, together with plans to attract more UK staff into the sector by improvements to pay, training and conditions.

Increased Costs and Sponsorship Rules

- Immigration Skills Charge to rise by 32%.
- Skill threshold rising to RQF Level 6 (degree-level) — most frontline care roles will no longer qualify (including those in the NHS).
- Settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain) period doubled from 5 to 10 years, requiring longer sponsorship and visa renewals and higher associated costs.

Stricter English Requirements

- Sponsored Care Workers will need to meet B2 level English.
- Adult dependants will also need to meet increasing language thresholds for entry, extension, and settlement.

Immigration White Paper Sector Reaction: "A Crisis Looming Over Social Care"



The Government's decision to stop ASC providers recruiting staff from overseas – at some point later this year – has sent shockwaves through the sector.

According to provider bodies, it risks creating “extreme workforce shortages” and consequent harm to older and disabled people (the **Homecare Association**) and was a “short-sighted” decision (**National Care Forum**), dealing a “crushing blow to an already fragile sector” (**Care England**).

On behalf of council leaders, the **Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)** has warned that the policy risked a “triple whammy” of greater reliance on more costly agency staff, greater levels of unmet need for care and more people giving up work to look after loved ones.

Kevin Humphrys, CEO of Oakland Care Group and Director of **West Sussex Partners in Care**, has publicly warned that the changes could push the care sector to breaking point.

In an article for LBC titled *The End of International Recruitment: A Crisis Looming Over Social Care*, he describes overseas recruitment as a “lifeline” for the sector and calls for urgent investment in the domestic workforce and professionalisation of care roles.

“Without access to skilled workers from overseas, it would have been significantly harder for us to ensure the right staff are in place to deliver the high-quality care our residents deserve.”

[Read Kevin Humphrys' LBC Article Here](#)

Further Information

- SESCO's Full News Article: [New Immigration White Paper: What It Means for Adult Social Care Providers](#)
- Full White Paper on GOV.UK: [Restoring Control Over the Immigration System](#)

SESCA will continue to provide updates and guidance as more details regarding the new White Paper emerge. Please stay tuned to our website and project bulletins.

Displaced Worker Recruitment Scheme Update



Our current scheme is proving to be a huge success — we have already supported **65 displaced care workers into new sponsored employment** and expect this number to grow significantly.

The response from providers has been remarkable, with **over 265 approved** so far. We're introducing them to highly capable care workers, supported by up to £5,000 funding.

We continue to be impressed by the high calibre of the displaced workers we're supporting. They bring experience, relevant training, and strong English language skills. Most are seeking roles in care homes or supported living settings, rather than domiciliary care, as they tend to be non-drivers.

FREE Legal Helpline Extended Until 18th July!

Our FREE legal helpline has been so busy in recent weeks that we've decided to extend it until **Friday 18th July**.

Providers are entitled to a Free 30-minute, no obligation, phone consultation with an immigration specialist at **Lester Aldridge Solicitors**.

Phone lines are open from 9am-5pm, Mon-Fri (with an answer phone operating outside these hours).

You can also email Lester Aldridge using the dedicated address below.

Phone: 01202 786126

Email: sescahelp@LA-Law.com

The service is open to all CQC-registered adult social care providers operating in the South-East.

[Click here full details](#)



Recent Webinar Review: Understanding the New Immigration Rules



Over the past month, SESCOA, alongside immigration experts from JMW Solicitors, delivered two high-impact webinars on the latest immigration policy changes and what they mean for international recruitment in adult social care.

The webinars were attended by **280 adult social care providers operating in the South East**, the majority of whom were senior decision-makers from organisations actively sponsoring overseas care workers.

Attendee Feedback

The webinars were extremely well received, achieving a **93% overall satisfaction rate**. Attendees highlighted improved understanding of the immigration rule changes, particularly around the new recruitment requirement to prioritise displaced care workers and SESCOA's role in facilitating this.

"Extremely informative webinar delivered with no jargon – thank you!"
"Thank you very much for this webinar ...essential learning in the current climate."
"Helpful session, great presentation, really relevant."

Questions & Answers

We will soon be updating the **FAQs** section of the SESCOA website, capturing the most common queries raised during the webinars, with legal responses provided by JMW Solicitors.

Looking Ahead

We expect to run further webinars in the near future, to provide clarity on:

- The 2025/26 Displaced Worker recruitment process
- The wider implications of the White Paper
- Updated guidance around compliance and best practice

Stay tuned to the SESCOA website and Project Bulletins for dates and details.

SESCA Conference 2025

09:30 – 15:30 – Thursday, 10th June 2025
Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher



We're excited to invite you to this year's SESCO Conference 2025 — a key event for adult social care providers across the South-East.

Join us for a day of learning, networking, and expert insights into the Southeast social care sector. Find out more about the impact of SESCO's work and updates on our International Recruitment Project – including grant funding – whilst connecting with peers, guest speakers, and exhibitors.

Featured Speakers

- **Erica Lockhart MBE** – Chair, SESCO: International Recruitment Update
- **Neil Eastwood** – Founder, Care Friends
- **Sultana Pasha** – Director, Manor Consulting
- **The Care Workers' Charity** – Sector Support & Commission Overview
- **Sharon Ellis** – Programme Manager (South), My Home Life England
- **Elizabeth Beh** – Founder, Tresacare



Plus...

A range of **exhibitor stands** from sector suppliers and support organisations

Last Few Places Remaining
[Register Now!](#)

FREE for registered providers in the Southeast



South East
Social Care Alliance



CARE
ASSOCIATION
ALLIANCE
SOUTH EAST

FREE International Recruitment Legal Helpline



Up to 30-mins FREE advice from immigration experts Lester Aldridge.

Covering the New Immigration Rules, Sponsor Licences, COS applications, SMS, UKVI compliance, Contracts, and more.

Commissioned by SESCO, as part of the DHSC's International Recruitment Funding initiative.

Open to all CQC-registered providers in the South-East.

 **Lester Aldridge**
01202 786126
 sescahelp@LA-Law.com

Phone lines open: 9am-5pm, Mon–Fri
(answerphone outside these hours)

Email and voicemail replies within 48 hours, or by the following Monday if received after 4pm Friday.

Lines Open Until Friday 18th July '25



South East
Social Care Alliance

Terms & Conditions apply - visit sesca.org.uk.



CARE
ASSOCIATION
ALLIANCE
SOUTH EAST

SESCA CONFERENCE

Tuesday, 10th June 2025
Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher
Arrival 9.30am. Start 10.15am - 3.30pm

PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE!



South East
Social Care Alliance

- Discover SESCO's pivotal role in the South-East adult social care sector
- Get the latest updates on our successful International Recruitment project
- Network with peers
- High-profile guest speaker Neil Eastwood from Care Friends
- Programme and Speakers to be announced soon!
- FREE for registered providers in the South-East
- Register now using the QR code to secure your place!



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, VISIT [SESCA.ORG.UK](https://www.sesca.org.uk)

Alternatively, use this link to register:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/south-east-social-care-alliance-sesca-conference-2025-tickets-1329459612489?aff=oddtcreator>