

**Meeting:** Trust Board Meeting in Public

**31 July 2024**

<b>Agenda item</b>	Modern Slavery Act – Annual Statement	
<b>Board Lead</b>	Bridget O’Kelly, Chief People Officer	
<b>Type name of Author</b>	Joanna James, Trust Board Business Manager	
<b>Attachments</b>	None	
<b>Purpose</b>	Approval	
<b>Previously considered</b>	n/a	

### Executive Summary

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires organisations operating in the UK with an annual turnover of above £36m, including public sector bodies with a budget of £36m or greater, to take action to identify, prevent and mitigate modern slavery in the organisation and its supply chains and produce an annual statement to report on such actions.

The statement applying to 2023/24 is due to be published, with Board approval and Executive Director sign off, on the Trust website by 30 September 2024.

<b>Decision</b>	The Board is requested to approve the annual statement for publication on the Trust website.
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### Relevant Strategic Priority

Outstanding Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Healthy Communities <input type="checkbox"/>	Great Place to Work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Net Zero <input type="checkbox"/>
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### Relevant objective

<input type="checkbox"/> Improve waiting times in ED	<input type="checkbox"/> Give children living in most deprived communities the best start in life	<input type="checkbox"/> Zero tolerance to bullying
<input type="checkbox"/> Improve elective waiting times	<input type="checkbox"/> Outpatient blood pressure checks	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improve safety through clinical accreditation		

### Implications / Impact

<b>Patient Safety</b>	Healthcare organisations may offer victims of human slavery a unique opportunity to access help and support.
<b>Risk: link to Board Assurance Framework (BAF)/Risk Register</b>	Principal Risk 1 – Failure to provide care that consistently meets or exceeds quality and performance standards.
<b>Financial</b>	The Trust is required to comply with procurement regulations within this Act as well as other relevant guidance.
<b>Compliance</b>	Modern Slavery Act 2015 (section 54)
<b>Partnership: consultation / communication</b>	The 2023/24 statement has been updated through collaborative working with leads for Procurement, Safeguarding, Communications, Recruitment and the Trust Freedom to Speak Up Guardian. The updated statement will be published on the Trust website in line with requirements.
<b>Equality</b>	This report does not have any detrimental impact on any protected characteristics. It

	provides positive reinforcement of the need to protect vulnerable individuals.
<b>Quality Impact Assessment [QIA] completion required?</b>	No

## 1 Introduction

Modern slavery is the recruitment, movement, harbouring or receiving children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or any other means for the purpose of exploitation. Individuals may be trafficked into, out of or within the UK and they may have been trafficked for a number of reasons including sexual exploitation, forced labour, criminal activities, domestic servitude and organ harvesting.

Healthcare settings should be safe places where victims of modern slavery have what may be their only opportunity to come into contact with people who have knowledge of modern slavery, can identify signs of trafficking and can refer them to organisations which can provide support. It is estimated that more than 130,000 individuals are trapped in slavery in the UK.

## 2 Modern Slavery Act

In March 2015, the Modern Slavery Act was passed by Parliament and the provisions of this Act came into force in October 2015. The Act sets out a range of measures on how modern slavery and trafficking should be dealt with in the UK.

The Act requires organisations operating in the UK with an annual turnover of above £36m or public bodies with a budget of £36m or more to both take action to identify, prevent and mitigate modern slavery in the organisation and its supply chains and publish an annual statement to report on such actions within six months of the financial year to which they apply.

The statement is required to cover a number of specific areas:

- Organisation and supply chain structure.
- Policies on modern slavery and human trafficking.
- Due diligence processes.
- Risk assessment and management.
- Actions taken to prevent modern slavery.
- Staffing training.

Statements for 2023/24 are required to be published by 30 September 2024 and include Board approval and Executive Director sign off.

## 3 BHT Annual Statement

In line with the above requirements, below is the statement relating to the financial year 2023/24:

# Modern slavery declaration

## Modern Slavery Act 2015 Section 54 – Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires all organisations to set out the steps the organisation has taken during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains, and in any part of its own business.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (BHT) aims to follow good practice and take all reasonable steps to prevent slavery and human trafficking. We are committed to ensuring that all of our employees are aware of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and their safeguarding duty to protect and prevent any further harm and abuse when it is identified or suspected that the individual may be or is at risk of modern slavery/human trafficking.

We are committed to ensuring that no modern slavery or human trafficking takes place in any part of our business or our supply chain. This statement sets out actions taken by BHT to understand all potential modern slavery and human trafficking risks and to implement effective systems and controls.

## **Trust Structure and Principle Activities**

BHT is a major provider of integrated hospital and community services for people living in Buckinghamshire and the surrounding area, including Thame (Oxfordshire), Tring (Hertfordshire) and Leighton Buzzard (Bedfordshire), providing care to over half a million patients every year in our hospitals, community settings and people's own homes.

We are recognised nationally for a number of our services that we provide. Stoke Mandeville Hospital is home to the internationally recognised National Spinal Injuries Centre, our stoke service is one of the best in the region and we are a regional centre for burn care, plastic surgery and dermatology.

We are part of the Buckinghamshire Place-base Partnership which is comprised of Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, FedBucks GP Federation and Buckinghamshire Council. The Trust is also part of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (ICS) and works closely with the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (ICB).

We procure goods and services from a range of providers. Contracts vary from small one-off purchases to large service contracts. All spend, aside from a few exceptions such as rates, is paid via Purchase Order (PO). The Applicable Contract Terms Policy applies to any NHS organisation and states that where an NHS body issues a PO the standard Terms & Conditions apply.

## **Organisational policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking**

BHT has internal policies and procedures in place that assess supplier risk in relation to the potential for modern slavery or human trafficking.

The BHT Safeguarding Adult and Children Policy includes information on modern day slavery/human trafficking.

The BHT Incident Reporting Policy states that colleagues should report incidents of all types and this includes concerns regarding modern slavery and human trafficking. By using the local risk management system (Datix) appropriate teams, including safeguarding are made aware.

All colleagues have access to the BHT Safeguarding team for support and guidance when they are concerned about modern day slavery or trafficking.

BHT has a small team of Freedom to Speak Up Guardians who provide daily outreach to colleagues across the Trust offering support to an individual or to teams who wish to raise a concern. The FTSU team also work to identify and breakdown barriers to Speaking Up and raise awareness of it's importance to both staff and patient safety across the Trust. The role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian is covered at the Trust's monthly corporate induction, the Trust has adopted the National Freedom to Speak Up Policy in line with national guidance and the importance of speaking up is celebrated annually via October Speaking Up Month. The FTSU Service also provides the Trust Board with reports twice a year one of which is the Annual Report summarising all key activity.

Trust activities and policies are required to have an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) completed.

## **Assessing and managing risk and due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking**

We are committed to ensuring that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our business.

The Trust reviews its Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement on an annual basis and presents it at a Board meeting in Public. This demonstrates a public commitment, ensures visibility and encourages reporting standards.

To identify and mitigate the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our own business and our supply chain:

- The Trust adheres to the National NHS Employment Checks/Standards (this includes employees UK address, right to work in the UK and suitable references).
- The Trust has systems to encourage the raising and reporting of concerns and the protection of those that do so.
- The Trust purchases a significant number of products through NHS Supply Chain, whose Supplier Code of Conduct includes a clause stating that 'the supplier shall make no use of forced or compulsory labour'. Where possible, all other contracts are governed by standard NHS Terms & Conditions which include significant requirements related to modern slavery as well as environmental, social and labour laws.
- The majority of our purchases use existing supply contracts or framework agreements which have been negotiated under the NHS Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract. The framework agreements are governed by NHS Standard Terms & Conditions.
- All suppliers are required by law to comply with the provisions of the UK Modern Slavery Act (2015). This will be reinforced where appropriate by Standard Selection Questionnaires as part of tender processes along with use of NHS Standard Terms and Conditions either direct with suppliers or through framework agreements. The most recent update to these contracts strengthen the position on Modern Slavery, including the option to terminate for breaches.

## **Effective action taken to address modern slavery – Performance Indicators**

The Trust is committed to social and environmental responsibility and has zero tolerance for Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. Any identified concerns regarding Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking are escalated as part of the internal governance and organisational safeguarding processes. This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes BHTs slavery and human trafficking statement for the current financial year.

All employees have a personal responsibility for the successful prevention of slavery and human trafficking with the procurement department taking responsibility for overall compliance.

A Freedom to Speak Up Report is submitted quarterly to the Trust Strategic People Committee and twice a year to the Trust Board. Any themes or trends are highlighted through these reporting mechanisms but should something be of concern such as trafficking or modern slavery these would be raised immediately either by exception reporting or direct to an executive director as appropriate.

## **Training on modern slavery and trafficking**

Safeguarding training is mandatory for all colleagues and includes information on trafficking and modern-day slavery in order to promote the knowledge and understanding of escalating concerns via the Home Office national referral mechanism/duty to notify process.

## **Conclusion**

This statement has been approved by the Board, who will review and update it on an annual basis.

- Approved by Board: 31 July 2024 (TBC)
- Next review: July 2025

#### **4 Action required from the Board/Committee**

The Board is requested to note the activities in place related to modern slavery which are reflected in the above statement and approve the statement for publication on the Trust website.